

# ONTARIO COLLEGE OF HOMEOPATHIC MEDICINE

209 - 1245 DANFORTH AVENUE, TORONTO, ON M4J 5B5

TEL: 416.535.5995 | WWW.OCHM.CA | INFO@OCHM.CA



## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE HEALTHY?

The World Health Organization defines health as a state of complete physical and social well being and not merely an absence of disease or infirmity.

The medical model has been most prominent in North America throughout the 20th century. Most medical professionals view the body as something that requires fixing when broken. The emphasis primarily lies on the physical disease of a patient and on individual systems...not the body as a whole. The mental/emotional/social state of a patient is often ignored and preventative measures are not considered when it comes to discussing good health. The medical model therefore measures health by the absence of physical disease and a high level of physical functioning. This model is not an accurate one.

The holistic model of health as stated by the World Health Organization broadens that medical perspective to include a mental/emotional and social piece. Still, health cannot be measured with this model either. Should we be able to measure it? How do we define health exactly?

The World Health Organization, in 1984 proposed moving away from viewing health as a state and toward thinking of health as a dynamic model that presented as a process or a force.

The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (1986) changed their definition of health to include: "The extent to which an individual or group is able to realize aspirations and satisfy needs, and to change or cope with the environment. Health is a resource for everyday life, not the objective of living; it is a positive concept, emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities."

This dynamic state that the World Health Organization and Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion refer to is a concept that is not new. In homeopathy, we refer to it as vital force.

Homeopathy explains the various dimensions of health in terms of a dynamic force. Dr. Hahnemann (the founder of Homeopathy) says: "In the healthy condition of man, the spiritual vital force, the dynamis that animates the material body, rules with unbounded sway, and retains all the parts of the organism in admirable, harmonious, vital operation, as regards both sensations and functions, so that our indwelling, reason-gifted mind can freely employ this living healthy instrument for the higher purpose of our existence".

While health is defined here as the physical body being in balance, it also emphasizes that the mind and spirit must also be in homeostatic balance so that each person may live their life to achieve their higher purpose. THAT is the definition of health! If mind, body and spirit are "healthy" one can live life in order to achieve a higher purpose.

Dis-ease therefore is the alternation in one's state of health, which is expressed by signs and symptoms. Signs and symptoms show that one's state of health is out of balance. In order to treat this dynamic system, a dynamic medicine must be used. Thus health, disease and cure are all operating in the dynamic plain. Since we are dynamic beings, our state of health is also dynamic and the goal is to try and achieve that higher purpose in our lives.