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Being a teacher in homeopathy or a psycho-sociological X-ray of a teacher $\stackrel{\mbox{\tiny $\%$}}{}$

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SUMMARY

Dr. Roland Zissu (1919–2016) dedicated his life to the transmission of homeopathy. This paper reports on a training session in the St. Augustine's Health Centre, 13th June 1983, designed to give a closely argued description of the problems which a homeopathy teacher may encounter. This account, recorded during this meeting, twenty years after the creation of the French National Institute of Homeopathy, is still relevant, and demonstrates the teaching abilities of a doctor totally devoted to the transmission of his encyclopaedic knowledge and of his homeopathic practice to other professionals.

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RÉSUMÉ

Le docteur Roland Zissu (1919–2016) a consacré son existence à la transmission de l'homéopathie. Ce document rend compte d'une séance de formation au sein du dispensaire Saint– Augustin, le 30 juin 1983, pour donner un avis argumenté sur les problèmes que peut rencontrer un enseignant en homéopathie. Ce compte-rendu enregistré au cours de cette réunion, vingt ans après la création de l'Institut national homéopathique français, est toujours d'actualité, et démontre le talent de pédagogue d'un médecin totalement dévoué à la transmission de son savoir encyclopédique et de sa pratique homéopathique auprès d'autres professionnels. © 2017 Elsevier Masson SAS. Tous droits réservés.

INTRODUCTION

As an introduction, we can say that any teaching should be considered in two parts:

- The container, that is to say, the teacher himself facing students;
- The content or the lecture itself.

THE TEACHER FACING THE CLASS

Whatever one thinks or one does, a lecture resembles a show. There are similarities between a lecture and a show, but also some differences;

Similarities

From the show point of view, there is a stage; from the teaching point of view, there is an audience. The current must pass in both directions. Students have come out to attend the

http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.revhom.2017.01.006 © 2017 Elsevier Masson SAS. Tous droits réservés. lecture like spectators attending a performance. In both cases, the listener, the student or the spectator, have come to see and hear, in other words they are at the receiving end. Theoretically, the artist and teacher have prepared their performance or their lecture; Above all, one thing is essential (which can be assimilated in homeopathy to an "eliminating sign"), it is the vocation for teaching.

Differences

The artistic program is not concerned with the profession of their audience. In general, the spectators come for fun, to relax and possibly to learn (conference, film club, debate, etc.). Here the lecturer shares the same profession as the audience, and this point is crucial. You teach homeopathy and you have in front of you colleagues who have come first and foremost to learn. Secondly, and if you interest them, they can learn while being entertained or even come to enjoy what they hear.

KEYWORDS

Homeopathy teacher Teaching homeopathy

MOTS CLÉS

Enseignant d'homéopathie Enseignant homéopathe

Translator's note In order to avoid clumsy "he/she" or "his/her", it has been assumed that the teacher, students and patients referred to in this article were male. This is a purely arbitrary choice.

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Daily practice

These are the essential psychological differences between a lecture and a show,

Vocation

According to the dictionary, a "vocation" should be understood in the sense of an attraction, a predisposition; a taste for the job and pleasure come in second place. It is obvious that a teacher should love to teach; otherwise the audience will sense it and be bored.

Your vocation can come as you teach, but if it does not, the teacher should realise this very quickly and should not persevere, or feel compelled to continue in order to please this or that person. There are great homeopaths who are poor teachers: their only crime is to persevere in a way that does not suit them, to the detriment of students.

To teach is to learn

The only way to "stay at the top", to exercise the "little grey cells" is to teach because it enables you to keep in touch with students. This requires teachers to constantly improve and engage in continuing and fruitful research so as to keep on improving their teaching and their knowledge.

THE CONTACT WITH STUDENTS

The Golden Rule is that you must be interested in them.

The size of the audience is important

When there are few listeners, you are dealing with individuals, so relationships are more personal. When there are many, you are dealing with an undifferentiated mass.

With a small group, the teacher can know each student, which is obviously impossible with a large audience. When the number of students increases rapidly, as was the case at the St. Augustine's Health Centre, this is felt as an aggression both by the original students, and by the teacher. The latter no longer "sees" anyone, the old students miss the friendly atmosphere and warm contact of the original small group; the new can experience a sense of rejection or a lack of integration. In summary, the shape of the lecture and its tone should be adapted to the number of listeners.

Understanding and appreciating the psychological state of students

We can broadly classify students into 4 groups:

First group: the "hardcore"

These students are not attending just any lecture but come for the lecture by a given teacher. They accept a priori, without criticism, the content of the lecture. This is indeed a phenomenon that is also found in patients: some worship their practitioner, and refuses the consultation of a locum. It's a feeling that can be flattering for the teacher but which could lead to intellectual laziness, or even to sclerotic thought processes.

Second group: the challengers or the critics

The "negative" challengers come to criticise as a matter of course. Unfortunately, they may have a dangerous effect, but they quickly run into the faithful group of students; this offsets their negative action and they usually drop out of their own volition.

The "positive" challengers ask for further detail, forcing the teacher to question himself, and to explain more clearly what he is saying. It is clear that the "critic" will intervene more readily in a small group (the feeling of shyness is less present).

Third group: those who are slow to understand?

For a basic level lecture, a new teacher, always a little bit apprehensive, tends to give his lecture too quickly or to skim quickly over notions which seem elementary to him, but which for students who discover them, seem on the contrary very complex.

With a small audience, the teacher soon realises when students are getting lost, which is not the case with a large number of students. It is therefore crucial to check the expectations of students and to slow down or repeat. The lecture must be structured so that important points are highlighted, definitions dictated and time for explanation inserted between two major points.

Despite the teacher's attention, especially with a large audience, it is inevitable that some students who are "slow to understand" cannot keep up. It is difficult to deliver a lecture to suit these few "stragglers" at the expense of the majority. It is a good idea then to identify who they are and have a word with them after the lecture.

Fourth group: those who misunderstand the point made

They too are difficult to spot because they are usually silent. And always when the audience is large, the teacher is not able to help them. One has to be kind and take them apart later because it is essential for a beginner student not to fall by the wayside from the outset because they may feel completely lost and give up.

Audience fatigue

This fatigue in the audience must be detected as early as possible by the teacher so that he can change the pace of the course accordingly. How does one identify this listener fatigue? There are three unmistakeable signs:

- Yawning,
- Blinking
- Staring.

The teacher has at least two advantages over the students: first a basic knowledge of homeopathy and therefore an overview, and then in theory, a perfect knowledge of the lecture. The teacher needs to realise that students have different strengths, so he should not be over complicated or too fast, assuming that basics (for him) facts are known, but that in fact the students are only just discovering. In addition, other causes involve circumstances rather than the teacher: lectures held in the evening after a tiring day at work, or during late morning or afternoon.

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