

AN OVERVIEW OF TEMPERAMENTS

BY

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INTRODUCTION

Homoeopathic system of medicine is based on therapeutic law of nature where patient is cured by considering law of similimum. While selecting similimum individualistic approach is considered because the main Principle of Homoeopathy is that every human being is different and unique. That means no two persons are alike, their constitutions, their physical and mental makeup is totally different. By considering this fact of the individual we have to select similimum on the basis of Individualization.

As we know that everybody comes into existence with our own set of the inherited traits which are genetically forwarded from our parents and forefathers, but they are not exact copy of any one person. Various Homoeopaths have been collectively working and dedicated towards exploration of homoeopathy. New concepts and trends have been emerged in homoeopathic practice. On the contrary it has also being observed that physicians are moving away from the cardinal concepts of homoeopathy. For providing boon of our science & give rational healing to our patients it is important to find out homoeopathic similimum and prescribe accordingly. Many practitioners tend to miss the importance of temperaments and sometime it increases the patients suffering. In order to deal with every patient in a unique way as every individual being different, it is necessary to understand the various temperaments and its importance. Thus we are studying the different temperaments of individuals and their importance in selecting the similimum.

Definitions:

- 1) Psychological and biological organization peculiar to individual including one's character or personality predispositions which influence the manner of thought and action general views of life. – Stedman's Medical Dictionary.
- 2) Characteristics combination of bodily, mental, moral qualities, which together constitution the character and disposition of an individual and predispose to act and behave in a particular manner. – Webster Universal Dictionary.

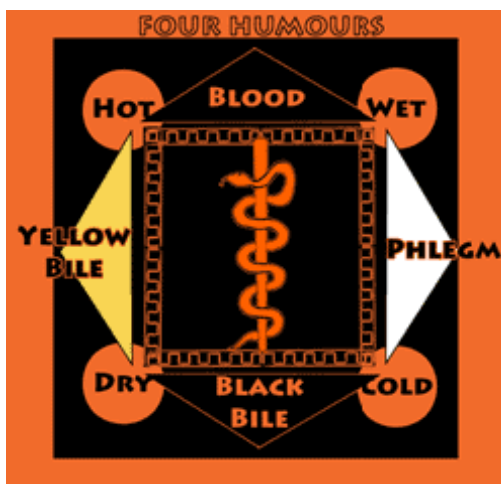
AIM:

To understand the utility of temperament for selection of similimum.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To study temperament in detail and its types.
2. To study the utility and importance of temperament in selecting homoeopathic similimum.

EVOLUTION OF TEMPERAMENTS



Hippocrates' Humorism- Hippocrates (400 B.C.) believed that body is composed of Four Humors viz Blood, Phlegm, Yellow bile and Black bile. The Imbalance of Humors or *Dyscrasia* was thought to be the Cause of all Diseases.

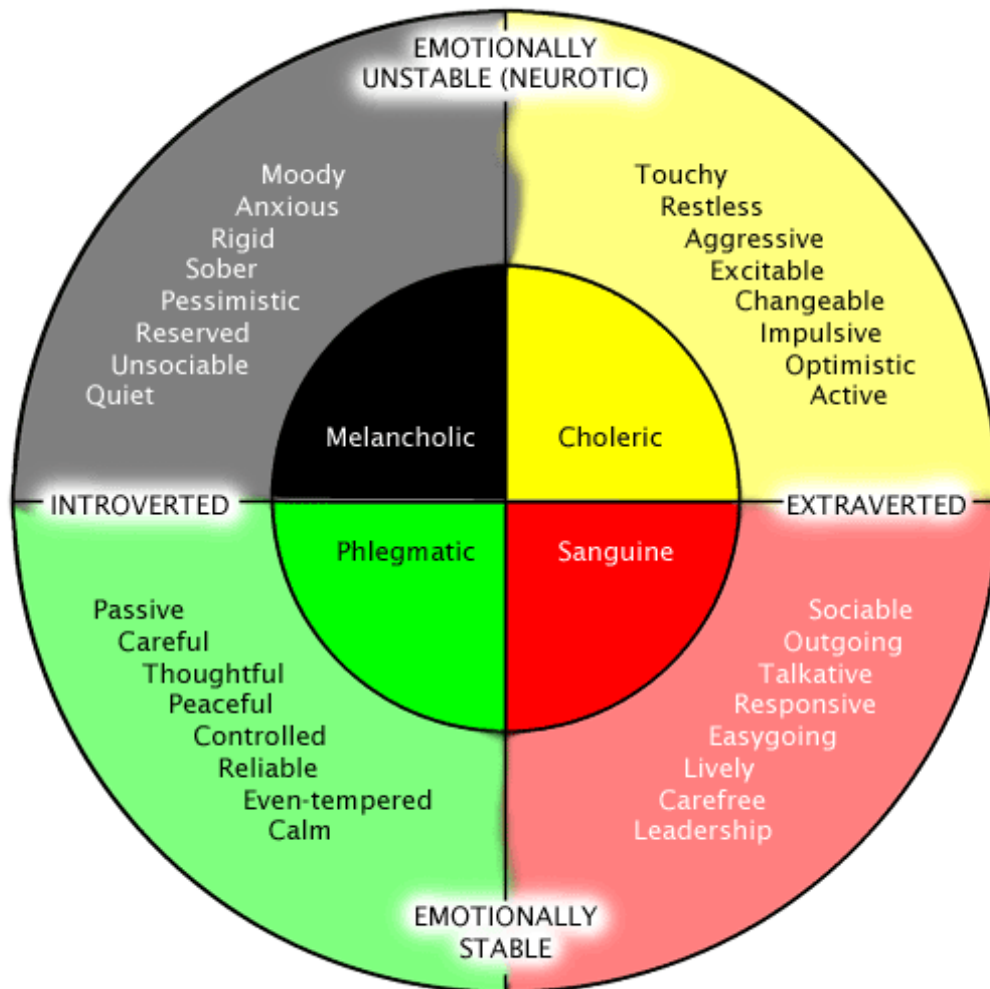
GALEN'S TEMPERAMENT- Galen (130-200AD) used the term to refer bodily dispositions, which determine a person's susceptibility to particular diseases as well as behavioral and emotional inclinations. While the Humors literally represented through fluids to circulate in the body, metaphorically each becomes associated with prevailing emotions as,

- Blood with joy, called the sanguine temperament.
- Phlegm with worry, called the choleric temperament.
- Yellow bile with anger, called the choleric temperament.
- Black bile with sadness, called the melancholic temperament.



“Fashions have no reasons. After Galen had become the sole ruler during the downfall of the sciences, his four temperaments were generally adopted and the Arabians adorned them with their astrological nonsense. After the awful crush by Hohenheim of the worshipped system and after the arabesques of astrology had been demolished by Copernicus, the four temperaments were kept up like the four seasons, and used as very convenient boxes, around which some writers made pigeonholes. In this way the classification is kept up and highly esteemed by non-observers.” -Dr. Constantine Hering

MODERN THEORIES



Eysenck, H.J and Eysenck, M.W. *Personality and Individual Differences*. Plenum Publishing, 1958.

KEIRSEY'S THEORY



Characteristics of Temperaments-

SANGUINE

- ▢ Happy-go-lucky types
- ▢ Social Butterflies
- ▢ Optimistic, Confident, Spontaneous
- ▢ Day-dreaming
- ▢ Extrovert
- ▢ Enjoying life

WEAKNESSES

- ▢ Vanity and self-complacency
- ▢ Impulsive
- ▢ Superficiality
- ▢ Instability
- ▢ Inclination to flirtation, envy and jealousy

CHOLERIC

- ▢ World “My Way”
- ▢ To be or not To Be
- ▢ Born Leaders.
- ▢ Decisive.
- ▢ Strong Willed
- ▢ Confident
- ▢ Fastidious

WEAKNESSES

Anger prone

- ▢ Superiority complex
- ▢ cannot bear Contradiction
- ▢ Deceit, Disguise and Hypocrisy
- ▢ Lacks Sympathy
- ▢ Unemotional

MELANCHOLIC

- ▢ Weeping of the heart
- ▢ Talented, highly creative
- ▢ Sensitive, dreamers
- ▢ Reserved, thoughtful
- ▢ Self sacrificing
- ▢ Responsible, trustworthy

WEAKNESS

- ▢ Brooders, Depressive
- ▢ Under-Utilized Talent
- ▢ Lack of Assertiveness
- ▢ Unforgiving
- ▢ Oversensitive

PHLEGMATIC

- Nothing ruffles their feathers
- well balanced
- Consistent with life
- Dependable, easy going
- Composed and thoughtful
- Content, patient

WEAKNESS

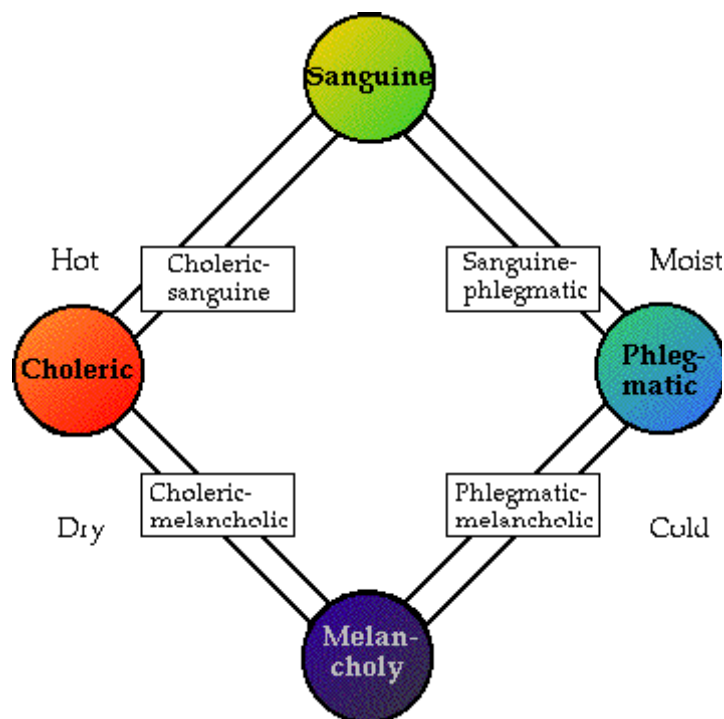
- Couch Potatoes
- Lazy, Indolent
- Neglect their Duties
- Indecisive, Procrastinator
- No Ambition: Does not Aspire
- Tend to be Observer

RECOGNITION TRIOS-

- SANGUINE: Extrovert, Optimistic, Talker
- CHOLERIC: Extrovert, Optimistic, Doer
- MELANCHOLIC: Introvert, Pessimist, Thinker
- PHLEGMATIC: Introvert, Pessimist, and Watcher

Each temperament has its own Strengths and Weaknesses. With the prescription of the Similimum the weaknesses can be diminished. Temperament is the Inner Core of the Man which helps to understand the Man as a Whole.

TEMPERAMENT BLENDS



ADDITIONAL TYPES OF TEMPERAMENTS

NERVOUS

- ▯ Excitable, Apprehensive
- ▯ Studious, Inventive, Subtle
- ▯ Great Susceptibility of Mental Impressions
- ▯ Bipolar Moods
- ▯ Jittery, Starts easily

LYMPHATIC

- ▯ Characterized by Sluggishness in vital processes and functions
- ▯ Sluggish and Phlegmatic
- ▯ Used by Hippocrates in “*On Air, Water and Places*”.
- ▯ Used for Bapt-tinc

BILIOUS

- ▯ Bitter, Ill-Humored
- ▯ Resentful
- ▯ Discontented
- ▯ Pertaining to Bile, or Disorders arising from excess of Bile
- ▯ Used to describe temperament of Nux vomica.

TEMPERAMENT & PERSONALITY

The temperament is the “REAL ME”, given to us at conception and remaining constant throughout our life, whereas Personality is something which can be changed, developed or enhanced. It is the aspect of Personality concerned with emotional dispositions and Reactions.

TEMPERAMENT AND HOMOEOPATHY

The dynamic view of Mind/Body constitution has its roots in *Pythagoras*, its trunk in *Hippocrates*, its branches in *Paracelsus*, and its fruit in *Hahnemann*. *Hahnemann* integrated the Hippocratic temperaments and humors into the Classical Materia Medica because it helps us to understand ‘Who’ we are treating, as well as ‘What’ they suffer from. This is true to such an extent, that the state of patient’s Mind and Temperament is often of most decisive importance in the Homoeopathic selection of a remedy, since it is a sign possessing a distinct peculiarity, that should least of all escape the accurate observation of the physician.

Importance of Temperaments -

A) DEVELOPMENT OF DISEASE

- ▯ Dr. H. Roberts: Temperaments are to a very large extent physiological but besides the stature of the patient the matter of temperaments implies at the same time mental and emotional tendencies in reaction to environment and circumstance.
- ▯ Dr. J. H. Allen: As we study temperament closely we see that peculiar temperament is predisposed to certain forms of disease. In this we see a fixed law or principle involved.
- ▯ SANGUINE: (Liver) Febrile inflammations, Diarrhea, Tachycardia, Lassitude.
- ▯ CHOLERIC: (Gall bladder) Insomnia, Burning at cardiac, Hyper-esthetic.
- ▯ MELANCHOLIC: (Spleen) Insomnia, Depressive
- ▯ PHLEGMATIC: (Brain/Lungs) Rheumatism, Constipation, Sleepiness, and Anesthetic

B) MEDICINAL PORTRAITS

- ▮ SANGUINE: *Phosphorus, Platina etc*
- ▮ CHOLERIC: *Lachesis, Bryonia etc*
- ▮ MELANCHOLIC: *Murex, etc*
- ▮ PHLEGMATIC: *Pulsatilla, Capsicum etc*
- ▮ NERVOUS: *Ignatia, Nux-mosc etc*
- ▮ BILIOUS: *Nux-vom, Podo etc*
- ▮ LYMPHATIC: *Baptisia, Hepar, etc*

C) CONSTRUCTING TOTALITY

▮ Boenninghausen's Quis: As a matter of course the personality, the individuality of the patient must stand at the head of the image of the disease, for the natural disposition rests on it. To this belong first of all the sex and the age; then the bodily constitution and the temperament.

D) IN REPERTORISING

- ▮ Dr. Allen in his Keynotes under the title "Adapted to" included rubrics of temperaments, miasmatic tendencies, dietetics constitutions and symptoms. These are all constitutional general rubrics.
 - ▮ Dr. C.M. Boger considered that assessment of temperaments is of highest priority in the choice of similimum.
 - ▮ Dr. Jahr did the pioneering work of including references of temperament in his *Comparative Materia Medica*. He included the lymphatic, phlegmatic, choleric, sanguine, nervous and melancholic temperaments.
 - ▮ Dr. Constantine Hering in his *Analytical Repertory of Mind* gave a separate section of temperaments. The choice of rubrics was confusing, mixed form of temperaments (sanguine-choleric, melancholic-nervous) was used and the number of medicines for each rubric was limited.
 - ▮ Dr. Calvin Knerr in his repertory, *The Repertory to Hering's Guiding Symptoms* gave the Rubric *Temperament* wherein he increased the number of medicines and the choice of rubrics was precise.
 - ▮ Rubrics related to temperament are found throughout the mental sections of most homoeopathic repertories but they could not provide due recognition to the subject.
 - ▮ Lippe's Repertory, *Chapter Mind and Disposition*
 - ▮ Clinical Repertory by Clarke, *Chapter Repertory of Temperaments*
 - ▮ Murphy's Repertory, *Chapter Constitution*
 - ▮ Complete Repertory *Chapter (Mind)-*
- The Complete Repertory by *Roger van Zandvoort* includes the rubric "Temperaments" under the Mind section. It gives the sub rubrics for 7 distinct temperaments, including those mentioned in ancient literatures along with their medicines. It includes the sub rubrics, Bilious - 27 drugs, Choleric - 24 drugs, Melancholic (Hypochondriasis) - 136 drugs, Mild (mildness) - 85 drugs, Phlegmatic (with leucophlegmatic as sub-rubric) - 72 drugs and Sanguine-20 drugs.
- It is the only recent repertory which contains a detailed reference to the rubric "Temperament".

E) PRESCRIBING ON TEMPERAMENT

▮ *The morbid influences that are attracted to temperamental tendencies are amenable to treatment and can be removed by the homoeopathic remedy*

□ *Prescribing on types of temperaments is a best slack method of using the blessings of homeopathy. It is really key-note prescribing and then not on any morbidic symptoms but on a general stature that is present from birth. -Dr. H. Roberts*

F) POTENCY SELECTION

□ *The Higher potencies are best adapted to sensitive persons of the Nervous, Sanguine or Choleric temperament; to intelligent, intellectual persons, quick to act and react; to zealous and impulsive persons.*

□ *Lower potencies and larger and more frequent doses correspond better to torpid and Phlegmatic individuals, dull of comprehension and slow to act; to coarse fibered, sluggish individuals of gross habits. - Dr. Stuart Close*

MEDICINE RESPONSE

□ Sanguine: Quick, Short lived.

□ Choleric: Quick, Short but Sustained.

□ Melancholic: Long and Sustained.

□ Phlegmatic: Delayed and short lived

OPPOSITON

“Temperaments are not caused by proving and are not changed in any manner by our remedies, however well indicated by symptoms found in persons of marked temperamental makeup.”

-Dr. J. T. Kent

Yet, the unanimous belief was that being the chief Characteristic of an individual, assessment of Temperaments is of highest priority in the choice of Similimum. It is this concept which helps in forming the totality of individual, henceforth helping in establishing complete Cure.

The Homoeopath is expected to be Phlegmatic in receiving the case, Sanguine in his approach to the patient, Melancholic in analyzing it, Choleric in the final prescription and at no stage is he expected to be Nervous. -Dr. P. Humranwala

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