

The Vital Approach



Anne Vervarcke



The White Room

The White Room, 2010
136 pages, Paperback

The Vital Approach

By Anne Vervarcke

Anne Vervarcke has impressive credentials and has been a teacher and practitioner for 15 years, during the course of which she has developed her own style of practice, which she calls the Vital Approach.

This book is apparently a response to a plea from her students for a place where they could 'find a book with (her) teachings'. Her initial reply to this plea was to assert that she had nothing original to say, but was merely combining the basics of homeopathy and the insights of the contemporary leading homeopaths with her own clinical experience. Evidently she changed her mind and this book is the fruit of that mental turnaround.

She is convinced that the Vital Approach is the route to finding the simillimum, and acknowledges the importance of the leaders in this field but warns that conceptual schemas need to be considered in practical contexts otherwise she fears that their use is liable to lead to many errors in practice

Vervarcke offers a five level diagram as a working model by which to perceive the subtle bodies of a living being. This is reminiscent of but not identical to Sankaran's seven levels of experience. Like Sankaran, she sees the 'vital sensation' as being the common link between the mind/body experience.

Vervarcke makes a valuable distinction between the Energetic, her level 2 and the Vital, her level 5 (Sankaran's sensation level). It is at this level, she claims, that the uniqueness of the patient is expressed. She then proceeds to distinguish between the five levels in terms of concept and treatment. In doing this she points out that there can

be a lot of confusion around the concept of energy, asserting that '*Homeopathy is not an energy medicine as such*'. She points out that we all feel we somehow know to what this concept refers but this is where the problem lies. Vervarcke's distinction encourages us to be more precise in our definitions, her view being that a concept that is self evident or somehow 'obvious' is a useless generalisation for practical purposes.

One caveat to my general approval of the book is that the author does make some statements that are unexamined. For example, she states that the basic axiom, '*you are what you eat*', is quite contrary to the understanding offered from the homeopathic viewpoint. This axiom holds that '*the health stores will provide all that is necessary for a strong and healthy body... and believe that all the other levels will benefit, while the homeopath treats level five knowing that all other levels will benefit*'. While I acknowledge the supreme importance of the sensation level or level five in Vervarcke's schema, as a trained nutritional therapist and a homeopath, and having heard Jeremy Sherr on his activities in Africa relating that giving a well indicated remedy to a hungry person removed symptoms but did not make the person well, I think that adequate nutrition has to be considered seriously as an obstacle to cure or a maintaining cause.

That said the book is very readable and suitable for novices and experienced homeopaths alike. A minor caveat is that some of the grammar and language use is idiosyncratic, but I shall certainly be returning to this book to give more consideration at leisure to the insights she provides.

**Reviewed by
Margot Maidment RSHom**

Margot Maidment works as a lecturer at The Contemporary College of Homeopathy, Bristol and is External Examiner for Centre for Homeopathic Education. She is also a nutritional therapist and a Wellness Educator.