

# Fundamentals of the Application of Potency Chords

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## Introduction

A balanced potency is a mixture of several homeopathic potencies of the same basic material. The various potency levels may be manufactured separately and blended together at the end, or they may be potentized together over the last two potentization steps. Through the course of many years of application of these preparations, the principle of potency chords has proved its worth. Consistent with Hahnemann's view of homeopathy, which he himself called 'Medicine Relying on Experience,' the clinical application of potency chords was determined empirically.

Potency chords are incorporated into pharmaceuticals manufactured by the Heel Company, specifically in the Homaccord® and in the Injeel® preparations, as well as in homeopathic drugs made by other manufacturers, including Pfluger and Schwörer.

## Development of Potency Chords

The idea of using homeopathic potency chords was first mentioned by the Spanish physician Cahis in 1913.<sup>1</sup> Cahis described the thought process which led him to make therapeutic use of potency chords as follows: "It has been difficult to use the high potencies in the right way, on the one hand, and to decide which dilution is best suited for the disease and for the patient, on the other hand. Also, to orient precisely the various dilutions joining in one potency in such a way that, virtually, all the facets become effective, certain ones in a direct and intense way, the others in a more or less indirect or feebler way, this made me think of blending different potencies of one drug."

Cahis called such mixtures accords or syntheses. For the composition of his accords, Cahis adhered to Fechner's law: Medium sensations behave in the same way as the logarithms of the quantities of the stimuli which have caused them to be; accordingly, the respective therapeutic effects of the 3rd decimal, of the 3rd centesimal, and of the 6th centesimal behave as 3:6:12.

In his report at the 80th Meeting of the Homoeopathic Central Association, Dr. Kroner called attention to the medicinal products manufactured by Cahis according to the principle of potency chords. Kröner spoke of an attempt to change the molecular structure of the drugs and considered it necessary to imitate Cahis' method. A few weeks prior, Kröner had started to conduct tests, and had found favorable results in three cases of diphtheria as well as in one case of impaired hearing in a syphilitic patient. In a case of inoperable breast cancer, the pain disappeared for several weeks. The way Kröner administered the drugs was such that the potencies were prescribed separately and mixed by the patients for every dose before ingestion. He emphasized that the effect would not be the same if the different potencies were administered one shortly after the other.<sup>2</sup>

In the course of his medical practice, H.H. Reckeweg, the founder of homotoxicology and of antihomotoxic therapy, made ample use of homeopathic preparations manufactured by the principle of potency chords. He considered potency chords highly beneficial, and often referred to the superiority of such medicinal preparations.

As early as 1977, Mukherji<sup>3</sup> reported that mixtures of different potencies were common in France.

## Conception of Potency Chords

With its three basic principles, i.e., the diagnosis, the knowledge of the healing power of the drugs, and the choice of the right drug, administered in the proper dose, Hahnemann's homeopathy was founded empirically.<sup>4</sup>

Three problems frequently arise when applying single potencies:

- The difficulty in determining the varying durations of action and the different ranges of action of the various potencies of the same drug

- The challenge of choosing the appropriate potency for the particular case
- The problem of the initial aggravation of the patient's condition

With homeopathic potency chords, Hahnemann's basic principles are taken into account. In using potency chords, the problems referred to may be simplified in part, or even eliminated entirely.

#### Duration of Action of Homeopathic Drugs

Most homeopaths agree that low dilutions produce an action which is quick, superficial, and brief, while the action produced by high dilutions is a slow, penetrating, and lasting one.

Fortier-Bernoville~ pointed out the relationship that exists between the duration of action and the reactivity of the patient: "The duration of action varies depending on whether the patient has only begun the treatment or is having a treatment for a long time. (...) Every remedy has a duration of action which may be increased in course of treatment. According to Fortier-Bernoville, the duration of action of a high dilution, if administered repeatedly, will increase after the observed regression has subsided; in case of a simultaneous rise in potency, the duration of action may be multiplied.

Concerning the experience gained by Cahis and Nehel, Fortier-Bernoville

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reported that, when mixing high and low potencies, an effect ranging between these potencies will be achieved, that the action will be quick to occur because of the low potencies, and that it will be long-lasting because of the high potency. In light of the fact that the maximum of action will vary for the different dilutions, the repetitive action of a balanced potency may be compared to a cascade of different impulses released simultaneously.

When applying homeopathic potency chords, a faster and broader response of the organism is to be expected. Functional organotropic portions of a pathologic process will be reached by the quick-acting low potencies, whereas, at the same time, constitutional and mental portions of a pathologic process will be reached by the slow-acting high potencies.

H.H. Reckeweg described this multiple action as follows:<sup>6</sup> "For the principle of the balanced potency, the leading idea is that different potencies will reach different defense systems."

Reckeweg developed the potency chords~ Further resulting in the so-called Homaccords®, i.e., a mixture of two or more homeopathic components in potency chords.

According to Reckeweg, the Homaccords® are particularly suited to the treatment of chronic diseases as both the low potencies and the high potencies of the related basic materials are included in the same medicinal solution, resulting in a balanced potency, amplifying and intensifying the therapeutic effect, and making it a long-lasting one.

#### The Discovery of the Right Potency

Kent put the problem of the right potency in concrete terms: "We have never claimed that every potency fits every patient. The potency must be in accordance with the patient's condition, and be intended to act on a level identical to that of the disease whenever possible"<sup>7</sup>

Consistent with Cahis' method of mixing high and low potencies, Fortier-Bernoville regarded this process as a 'remarkable method' aimed at the disease rather than at the patient. At the same time, Fortier-Bernoville pointed out that, when treating patients apparently suffering from purely organic diseases, (i.e., when treating with low potencies), 'highly subtle symptoms,' in other words, psychosomatic correlations, should be taken into consideration and treated with high potencies.

Therefore, mixtures made by blending various grades of dilution provide great advantages:

Balanced potencies allow immediate treatment of a functional disorder and of the constitutional situation, hence they provide a longer-lasting effect than a series of single potencies.

The therapeutic application of potency chords is similarly supported by Eichsteller~: "There is a way of bridging over the difficulty of potency selection. If, in a specific case, you feel any doubt about which potency might be the right one, just mix

three different potencies of one and the same basic material to manufacture a remedy, e.g., 6X, 15X, 30X, and you may be quite sure that the right potency is among them.” So to Eichsteller, too, potency chords are an empirically discovered solution to the question regarding the appropriate level of dilution.

An important consideration with regard to the potency chords was whether, if mixed, the various potencies of a substance might not mutually interfere with each other’s action. In this context, Cahis stated he was sure that it was possible to dissolve in a glass of water, which included a few milligrams of sodium chloride, the 30th centesimal of muriatic sodium, without the former impairing the therapeutic effect of the latter.

Regarding the question as to whether potency chords will actually achieve in practice what is expected theoretically; Cahis expressed the following opinion:

“I think so. One may be sure that the action is a milder one, the individual doses may be repeated more frequently, and, if it is necessary, as it often happens, they may be given over a prolonged period of time.” Among other cases, Cahis gave an account of one cyst and three carcinomas being cured with his remedies.

Julian~, too, reported on the application of mixtures of various potencies of one and the same homeopathic remedy, specifically the nosodes. He quoted in support his forerunners, such as Cahis, Castueil, Barishac, Fortier-Bernoville, and others, that the action of the potency chords is “faster, of greater intensity, longer-lasting, and less connected with adverse drug reactions.” Fortier Bernoville, too, emphasized that the mixture acts in a fast, intensive, and long-lasting way.

#### The Problem of Initial Aggravation of the Patient’s Condition

In homeopathy, initial deterioration in the patient’s condition is a reaction of the patient to the appropriate remedy (simile). This aggravation is usually either a ‘drug-induced, iatrogenic disease taking possession of the organism’ or a ‘clearing out taking place in the organism.’ While the symptoms change for the worse, the patient’s general state of health improves. There is one notable exception. According to Kent, “Where no alteration of tissue, hence no final results of a disease, must be found, healing may be expected to take place without any serious deterioration in the patient’s condition.

Hence the physician has to distinguish between acute and chronic diseases or phases of a disease. A violent change of symptoms for the worse is indicative of the end stages of a serious disease, late sequelae of long-lasting development. So the initial deterioration in the patient’s condition is valuable from the diagnostic point of view while it is undesired from the therapeutic point of view, as it may force discontinuance of the treatment with the appropriate remedy.

Meager<sup>6</sup> made the following observation regarding sulphur: “With high potencies, too, one may experience an initial deterioration in the patient’s condition.” According to Kent, an explanation of this is the presence of alterations of tissue occurring in case of chronic diseases.

Elsewhere, Meager, however, considered essential and necessary the application of high potencies: “Being stimulants of reactions, high potencies are always to be preferred in individual doses.” He even went so far as to warn that, “giving too many’ doses of low potencies, one may spoil a course of treatment.

Reckeweg was also aware of this risk when he pointed out with regard to the mixing of low and high potencies that, “through the simultaneous administration of high potencies, any adverse drug reactions that might be produced by low potencies will, at the same time, be slightly mitigated or decreased through the reversal effect of the high potencies.” The term ‘reversal effect’ covers the idea of the interference of similar vibrational waves. Jacobi~ mentioned a large number of additional methods of furnishing proof of the action and efficacy of high potencies.

Notwithstanding theoretical considerations, practical clinical experience confirmed what Hahnemann observed:<sup>7</sup>

“However, if we leave aside the crude medicinal substances and have a look at the potencies around 30C, we observe that the latter produce a milder effect, but a more intensive healing action. The smaller the dose of the homeopathic drug, the slighter is the deterioration in the patient’s condition, and the briefer the duration of such deterioration.”

Reckeweg’s experience regarding the calming or preventing of excessive healing reactions by adding high potencies to the potency chords was gained in the course of his clinical activity as a general practitioner and constitutes the further development of the findings of Hahnemann which are quoted above.

Reckeweg repeatedly referred to the calming effect potency chords had with regard to a possible initial deterioration in the patient’s condition. “Owing to the high and maximum potencies included in the remedial mixture, any possible initial deterioration in the patient’s condition is calmed. Therefore, after applying the Homaccord~, practically no initial deterioration is observed in the patient’s condition, or, if observed at all, it occurs very rarely~”

Reckeweg” particularly emphasized the role the high potencies play in the range of action of potency chords: “Moreover, it appears that, adding high potencies to the ampule preparations, Injeels®, etc., a calming of excessive healing reactions will be achieved.” Reckeweg defined this as follows:<sup>2</sup> “For the principle of potency chords, the leading idea is that different potencies will reach different defense systems and that, through the simultaneous administration of high potencies, any adverse drug reactions that might be produced by low potencies will, at the same time, be slightly mitigated or decreased through the reversal effect of the high potencies.”

In addition to their beneficial effects produced on excessive healing reactions and on the prolongation or intensification of the desired action, there are other reasons which favor of the use of potency chords.

#### **Scientific Proof of Action**

Junker reported on the effect extremely diluted substances produce on paramecia and on the effect extreme levels of potentiation have on organisms,<sup>3,4</sup> summarizing as follows: “If one continues diluting a substance (atropine, caffeine, orange juice, lemon juice) over and over again, uses those different strongly diluted solutions to grow paramecia, and closely controls the paramecia’s reproduction, one will not, with a given dilution, reach the limit of the efficacy of that substance, as might be expected *a priori*. On the contrary, in certain concentrations (e.g., around 1:1012 up to an inhibited reproduction, in comparison with the control dilutions, will occur, whereas the intervening dilutions will show an increase in reproduction. So, if one represents the findings graphically, one will have a curve which, in fact, does not drop down to an indifference point or rise in a defined way. On the contrary, the result is a curve which, in its entire course, shows minima and maxima which alternate at defined spots.” Of particular interest, too, are Junker’s tests with potency chords, in which the effects of two series accumulated in a way as if two sound waves or light waves were summed up to the following result: minimum + minimum = great minimum, or minimum + maximum = 0. The result obtained was the same as if one had displaced by a defined distance between one potency and another the curves of two series produced independently from each other, and added them together, so to speak.

A particularly impressive proof of the superior efficacy of homeopathic potency chords of phosphorus, as compared to that of the respective single potencies, was furnished by Gomez.<sup>5</sup> In an experimental study, he verified the effects that may be produced in mice in which a liver intoxication had, been previously induced with tetrachloromethane through the administration of homeopathic dilutions of phosphorus. The action tested was as that of the doses 10X, 30X, 200X, and 1000X of phosphorus, as well as that of the balanced potency one obtains by mixing equal