

Research Article

# Exploring the Nodus of Treatment, the Philosophical Status of Non-pharmacologic Treatment

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## Abstract

Non-pharmacologic treatments (NPTs) based on homeopathy is being paid more and more attention, but because of its lack of theoretical foundation, it is difficult to become the mainstream of medicine. Although homeopathy has a history of nearly 200 years and has remedied the shortcomings of current medicine, it is still questioned by many people. Homeopathy is actually an NPT, because the diluted liquid has almost no medicinal component, only the water in it and the act of shaking the medicine bottle give people a belief, many patients who have no effect with drug treatment benefit from homeopathy treatment. Supporters of homeopathy believe that the human body has a strong ability to repair itself, and the spiritual strength of people actually occupies a very important status. However, many people still question the science of homeopathy, meantime also do not clarify whether current medicine is scientific. High morbidity and mortality are indisputable realities, careful analysis of current medical research theory, the reason why cannot be a good guide to medical practice, is because cannot withstand the scrutiny of philosophical theory, deviated from the correct law of thinking. There should be a place for NPTs and needs to be supported by philosophical theories and principles. NPTs should be become in the mainstream of medicine with the support of philosophical theories.

## Keywords

Non-pharmacologic Treatments (NPTs), Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs), Homeopathy, Spiritual World, Philosophy, Science

## 1. Introduction

In people's mind, medicine is the most ideal way to cure disease. Therefore, people have been using drugs to treat diseases, and modern science and technology provide very sound drugs for the treatment of diseases, but the therapeutic effect is not satisfactory. The incidence and mortality of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including cancer, continue to rise, posing a great threat to human survival [1]. People have questioned the effectiveness of drugs; higher requirements are put forward for the health system [2]. NPTs,

mainly homeopathic, have been accepted by doctors and patients in many countries, and the use of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) has been increased in all countries surveyed [3], but non-pharmacologic treatments (NPTs) remain on the margins of the medical field compared to pharmacologic therapies, i.e. complement and substitute methods in disease therapy [4, 5]. Because medication is generally considered to be orthodox and scientific, while homeopathy and alternative therapies are unscientific, unor-

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thodox, and even yet another transformation in quackery [6]. Homeopathy cannot therefore be considered a scientific discipline [7]. It is considered to be a treatment without scientific evidence [8], and some scholars even consider homeopathy to be quackery [9]. There is no academic standing for homeopathy, such as, until now there is no any hospital that does not use any medicine, but only using mindfulness intervention as the main treatment. We know that many cancer patients, drug treatment is ineffective, they will treat NPTs as a way, i.e. "the way for there is no way out" and almost treatment is in family. What is the status of NPTs in medical treatment, we all know that clearly.

## 2. The Homeopathy of Standing and Not Falling

The emergence of homeopathy does bring a ray of light for the treatment of diseases, even if it is with a little mysterious color, but its harmlessness is accepted by many patients, because homeopathy is equivalent to NPTs. Patients are given daily ritualistic doses of therapeutic fluids. However, criticism of homeopathy continues, with the most common being that homeopathy is pseudoscientific and a placebo [10] and cannot be recommended for use in medical routine [11]. Even so, in the face of harsh attacks from critics, homeopathy is still embraced by many people, because people have their own ideas about self-life choices.

There is a history of 200 years for emergence of homeopathy. Homeopathy began in Germany in the late 18th century and was established by Dr. Samuel Hahnemann [12]. The founder of homeopathy did not know the principle of homeopathy. Just because current drugs do not bring more benefits to the treatment of diseases, through current drug treatment, many diseases are not only not effectively treated, but gradually increased. The symptoms of patients undergoing homeopathic treatment were shown to improve substantially [13].

Even though homeopathy is for a long history, there is indeed a healing effect. However, there is not theoretical system for homeopathy, and it is difficult to compete with current treatment. The explanation of homeopathy has always been superficial, that is, a diluted bottle with very little medicine has been shaken numerous times, and it is impossible to verify what physical effects have been produced. The suggestion that water memory plays a role [14, 15] is also untenable. The other argument is that the core concept of homeopathy is called the "healing system", relying on systematic principles of health and disease, the assumption of a vital force (in other traditions, an anima or qi) [16]. Proponents of homeopathy believe that the human body has a powerful ability to heal itself. In other words, the "rehabilitation system" is a functional regulatory system for the self-repair of human tissues, and the successful treatment through complementary medical methods is self-healing [17]. They believe that the recovery system is universal in all tissues of the human body and has an

amazing ability to self-repair. In this huge system, there is a certain connection between self-rehabilitation and external cause treatment, related to psychological factors, and this traction plays a role in homeopathic guidance and homeopathic promotion. Regulate the body with a certain amount of strength, so that the circulatory system and nervous system function smoothly, and achieve natural recovery [18, 19]. The most common explanations for homeopathy are safety and self-healing [20, 21]. Some researchers are investigating the correlation between the conceptions of health and illness and the principles of homeopathy [22].

Compared with current medical theories, almost there is no academic status for homeopathy. There are no unified steps on how to teach students, how to guide the spread of this treatment method, and how to guide patients to use this method reasonably, which is very fragile and cannot withstand scrutiny.

Even with homeopathy and alternative medicine in this situation, there are still many doctors and patients who believe in its effectiveness, and homeopathy has been spread worldwide and been accepted by many consumers and practitioners around the world [23], The World Health Organization (WHO) is also advocating the use of NPTs based on homeopathy [24].

What is the reason why homeopathy stands and does not fall? It is not its method and theory, but the ineffectiveness of allopathic treatment. Current drug treatment does not complete the treatment of the disease, but aggravates and worsens the condition. Patients have the right to choose the treatment that is right for them. Therefore, it is urgent to establish a solid theory for NPTs, including homeopathy. It seems that there is a spiritual force supporting NPTs.

## 3. There Is Infinite Energy in Spiritual World

There are many NPTs, besides homeopathy and alternative therapies, yoga, meditation, meditation, tai chi and Qigong all play A role in the treatment of diseases [25-27]. The most primitive NPTs is prayer, and the role of witch doctors cannot be ignored. The reason why people believe in religion is that religion gives people spiritual support, increases their courage to overcome difficulties, and never retreat in the face of illness. Spiritual belief affects physical health [28].

Religion and health are a very important topic that has been studied by many scholars, while research on the relationship between religion and spirituality (R/S) and mental health has been ongoing [29]. There is a long history for emergence of religion, probably since the advent of human being. Primitive tribes still exist today, and their collective rituals reflected how primitive humans formed a unified belief, people around the campfire, dancing a unified dance, singing a unified song, and having a unified image in their hearts. The earliest humans probably took the sun or moon as a unified image, and later this image was humanized as God, heaven, Buddha, and

so on. This relationship between science and religion, one might accept that the explanation is a mystery [30].

Some scholars believe that more than 80% of people in the world believe in religion, and believe in religion is to use a spiritual power to unify people's thoughts. Religion is a belief, a spiritual sustenance, and the longer this sustenance lasts, the better it will be for your health. Only those who adhere to the faith can continuously gain, and those who do not have faith will continuously lose, lose spiritual wealth, and even life. Religion is to pray before God, and the spiritual sustenance of people under the rising flag is also a kind of prayer for nation. The essence of faith is to give us a kind of spiritual power, some kind of power [31], a relative lasting power.

Religion is the pursuit of unity, the unification of the minds of a group of people into one tall image. People in life in the pursuit of self, human nature is self, life will have different degrees of friction because of high self. The unity of this high self and religion is contradictory, and this high self is closely related to the production of disease. The contradictions in the family are related to each other's selves, and the contradictions in the social group are also related to each other's selves. Human beings are highly emotional organisms, and emotional changes will affect the biological functions of the individual body [32] is an abnormal mental energy that destroys tissues and organs and shortens life.

At present, many scholars are studying religion and health because it is believed that there is some kind of positive energy in religion, a spiritual force that encourages people to overcome any difficulties, including illness. There are scholars studying the role of religion during the pandemic [33, 34]; Some scholars have studied supporting the mental health of black men with the nurturing and support of black churches [35]; There are scholars who have studied the correlation between religious beliefs and health care systems, realizing that the intersectionality of a person's religious and spiritual belief system with their mental and physical health is slowly increasing in Western health care systems [36]. There are also many examples of recovery from illness to health through prayer [37]. The trauma of the soul can only be solved through the comfort of the soul [38].

People live in a very complex society, a lot of information in life will be disorder in the mind, religious beliefs will help you sort out this information, there is an impact with religion and spirituality on mental health [39], person can be helped by yoga, meditation, tai chi and qigong to sort out this information, Improving people's ability to take care of themselves [40], clearing out information that affects your biological function, is an important factor in enhancing health and eliminating disease.

It should be worth investigating why people who adhere to religion still get sick, why people who practice yoga, tai chi, meditation and qigong every day still get sick. It is because these people do not use this spiritual power in life, they are very pious in church, and they are very calm in yoga and tai chi practice, but they still fall into disputes over interests when

they return to life, because this spiritual bailment has been lasted too short a time, and they have lost the meaning of religious belief and practicing yoga. Friction between people is the most sensitive and difficult problem to face, for example, sexual abuse [41]. The complex information received every day is constantly interfering with their own body, which cannot be corrected by only a short spiritual sustenance.

The spiritual power is extremely powerful, not only in promoting health, but also in constantly producing disease. Non-medicinal means of exorcising disease, based on religion, should be considered reasonable and should not be ignored in terms of health assurance [42]. To cast off the mantle of God, the spiritual power is not from God, but a re-integration of one's own spiritual psychology, and the patient needs the support of this spiritual power [43].

#### 4. Where Dose Spiritual Support Come from

Human beings encounter all kinds of difficulties in the process of survival. What we need to overcome these difficulties is mutual cooperation and encouragement, and we need a kind of spiritual strength to support. Human beings suffer from disease because of a weakness of the inner world, and depression and anxiety are the weakness of the spiritual world. Physical disability can be led by this weakness of the inner world, that is, the formation of disease. This weakness of the inner world can be regulated and corrected by external factors, by the assistance of other members in the family and in the social group. In the long-term practice of survival, human beings often encounter great difficulties or diseases, and in many cases are helpless, and a very tall image has been gradually formed in people's minds, and God, Heaven, Buddha, etc., is this image, asking God for help, this is the power of religion.

The benefits have been brought with development of modern science and technology to human health, especially the development of medicine, people believe that relying on drugs the pain of diseases can be relieved. However, people often overlook the point that the emergence of disease is often a weakness of the spiritual world. We should not only ask, can modern science and technology solve the weakness of the spiritual world, the answer is that, no. Symptoms can be temporarily relieved with drugs developed by modern science and technology, but the weakness of the inner world cannot be fundamentally removed.

Although homeopathy is considered to be unscientific, its non-drug nature does no harm to the human body, and its placebo effect encourages people to overcome the disease. Most people think of drug treatment as scientific, with pharmacological research and some medical hypothesis research, but very little research on causes.

The human race is always wandering around the question of health and disease, not knowing what is scientific and what

is pseudoscientific. Many diseases are caused by mental and psychological damage, which requires the support of mental strength. What kind of science can be used for bring remedies to the weakness of inner world is a major issue worthy of our deep thought.

A good example that demonstrates the relationship between function and context can be found in the heated debate on the WHO definition from 1948 that defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being” [44]. The core of health is mental health, and an unhealthy mind leads to disease. Disease occurs because of the lack of energetic support in the psychic psyche world, which comes from the spiritual world. Can modern science and technology provide this kind of spiritual power? Many scholars are discussing the science of disease treatment, or pseudoscience. The treatment of diseases is always full of uncertainty [38], indicating the limitations of using science to explain the disease.

## 5. What Is Science and What Is Pseudoscience

Scientific research is about having evidence, having evidence that can be said to convince people. Human beings have made great progress in the fields of science other than biology. It seems to be that progress has been made in the research of biology and life science; however, the high incidence of diseases and the high mortality rate indicate that there are problems in the research of life science that need to be solved urgently. The most disappointing is evidence-based medicine, which has been pioneered for more than half a century [45]. Sufficient evidence should be found in medical research and medical practice to provide good advice for the direction of medicine [46]. But so far, there is not any valuable evidence by evidence-based medicine provided. Some scholars believe that homeopathy and alternative therapy are unsupported treatment methods without evidence, but is there evidence for current medicine, is the ineffectiveness of drug and the increase in mortality for the evidence?

In fact, Cochran, the founder of evidence-based medicine, had a good idea in the early days, when he worked as a health care doctor in a POW camp, there was an epidemic of diphtheria, hundreds of people were infected, and because there was no medicine, everyone was given vitamins, and only three people died (two of them with severe gunshot wounds), the rest recovered. He concluded that the natural healing capacity of man was so great that Dr. Cochran questioned the effectiveness of medical treatment. Cochran's international reputation is based not on his achievements as an epidemiologist, but on his 1971 monograph *Effectiveness and Efficiency. Random Rethinking of Medical Care*, a sharp scientific critique of medical practice [47]. But the controlled drug trials he used did the opposite. That is to say, since we believe in the human body's biological self-repair ability and doubt the effectiveness of drugs, we should no longer use drugs to

conduct clinical trials, but should do controlled trials of human self-repair. It is also possible that his experiment was intended to prove that the human body has a strong ability to self-repair, but this method of drug control trials was eventually used to evaluate the effectiveness of drugs, and some scholars think that it did not play a good role [48]. Moreover, drug-controlled trials of evidence-based medicine completely ignore the existence of psychiatric and psychological factors, the sufficiency of science has been completely lost.

For decades, the practice of evidence-based medicine is almost all in drug control trials, not to evaluate and confirm the ineffectiveness of drugs, but to confirm the effectiveness of drugs, and there is no researcher to observe the self-healing ability of human biological functions, no one is studying the effects of mental psychology on health. This out-of-touch controlled clinical trial is not only pseudoscientific, it is strictly unscientific.

Proponents of homeopathy believe that the human body has a powerful ability to heal itself [17]. In the case of mental or psychology without external interference, the functional regulation system of human tissue self-repair, through the successful treatment of auxiliary medical methods is self-repair. They believe that the recovery system is universal in all tissues of the human body and human body has an amazing ability to self-repair. However, there are not conducted controlled trials of self-healing for proponents of homeopathy to adequately confirm the issue and scientific of NPTs.

There is a lot of uncertainty in medical research at the moment, for example, the introduction of immune theory into the study of NCDs. The core of immunity should be pathogen invasion [49], in other words, there is no immunity without pathogen invasion of the organism. The reason why some diseases are called NCDs is because there is no pathogen involved and there is no infectivity. But studies of NCDs, including cancer, self-immunity and immunodeficiency both have been mentioned. It is not only the error of scientific concept, but also the error of logical reasoning that causes the onset and persistence of systemic and tissue-specific autoimmune diseases to be complex and has been in trouble [50]. In the study of acute infectious diseases, because immunity can be generated, human can be vaccinated to prevent the re-invasion of pathogens. However, it is absurd that some scholars have proposed the use of vaccination to prevent NCDs [51]. Medical science may well be so defiled that it has been lost its science.

Moreover, people can feel that diseases can be appeared all around us at any time. The onset of disease is likely to occur in an instant, some symptoms can be immediately produced by acute anxiety, such as headaches, abdominal pain, tachycardia, mouth sores and throat swelling. The reason why the bad information in the brain is quickly reflected in the tissues and organs is that the biological body has a rapid transmission of information channels. Researchers have found that this fast channel is not nerve, but called neuroendocrine channel, or sympathetic and parasympathetic channel [52], the researcher

of Chinese medicine called it meridian [53], many researchers call it brain-body communication and brain-gut communication [54, 55]. At present, a role can be played through this channel such as yoga, meditation, Qigong and other operations. Since adverse effects can be quickly produced by anxiety, benign effects can be also produced by mindfulness intervention [56]. The door has been opened by brain-body communication, the neuroendocrine hypothesis and meridian hypothesis for us to study human information, but whether these hypotheses are scientific or not needs further research.

Cancer is the most concerning and Cancer is one of the most serious types of NCDs, NCDs can be occurred in more than one part of the body, and cancer also. However, the most fashionable term is cancer metastasis, and most people believe that it is spread through the blood and lymphatic system. However, there is no laboratory data on how cancer cells metastasize. Cancer tissue has the ability to invade, but how cancer cells break off from cancer tissue and free into the blood or lymph fluid has not been reported. It is very likely that cancer cells will not escape from the cancer tissue, and even if they do, they will be recognized and eliminated by the defense system [57], because cancer cells are heterogeneous [58], moreover, cancer tissue has a protective layer [59]. No scholars have studied how cancer cells break away from the protective layer, and cannot be engulfed when in blood. Therefore, cancer metastasis is only a guess, and the theory of cancer metastasis is not scientific. In the treatment of cancer, researchers have invented targeted therapy, cancer cells can be targeted to attack by drugs. There are a few specific studies on how anti-cancer drugs reach the site of cancer tissue through the blood system. In addition, many researchers have found that cancer cells are immortal cells [60], even if normal cells are killed, cancer cells are not killed. Many researchers have found that the greatest impact of anti-cancer treatment is on the central nervous system and the decline of cognitive function [61, 62], indicating that anti-cancer drugs enter the brain circulation most, and the theory of targeted therapy is untenable.

It is precisely because of the existence of these unscientific hypotheses and theories that affect the progress of medicine, but also interfere with and hinder the research progress of NPTs. All medical theory is tried at treating diseases with intervention, rather than how to fully mobilize the abilities of the organism itself. In the research of medical science, what is scientific, whether it fully reflects and plays the nature of biological functions, or replaces biological characteristics with human subjectivity, should be the touchstone to measure what is the most scientific. Proponents of homeopathy believe that organisms have the ability to repair themselves, it's about embodying biological nature; the researchers of drug therapy are trying to replace biological functions with modern technology, which is not scientific, so the biological nature is suppressed, and the disease cannot be controlled.

The reason why NPTs, including homeopathy, there is no place that they are still in the exploration stage and lack the-

oretical support [63]. The organism has a strong ability of self-repair, and this theory lacks a large amount of laboratory data to support it. Although homeopathy has been popularized in a certain scale around the world, it cannot be promoted from the academic and teaching perspective, so it cannot become the main line of medical research and practice. It is believed that with the further study of human biological functions, this situation will definitely change. Drug treatment is supported by all the existing medical theories, but from the above analysis, there are too many doubts in medical theories to justify themselves. Moreover, the result of disease treatment is that the more to treat, the more is serious. It does not meet the requirements of modern science and society.

## 6. Do You Believe in “Science”, or Do You Believe in Philosophy

The great benefits have been indeed brought with high development of human society to human beings, and human beings are also using high technology to increase human life span and reduce diseases. From the primitive society to today, the average life expectancy of human beings has been gradually extended [64], which is indeed the embodiment of social progress, however, the increase of diseases and the high mortality rate are also threatening people. Exactly what causes this to happen, people have been wondering. The progress of society and science and technology is undeniable. With such progress in medical science, why are diseases still increasing and mortality still increasing? How to evaluate today's medical science? Some scholars have suggested that it is necessary to centralize leadership and development of effective and appropriate responses [65]. What kind of response measures should be formulated is a matter of concern to us.

In fact, to explain the problem, it is not only by the medical science, but the philosophy. Up to now the philosophical problem is not clear in medical study, and so far, no exact philosophical definition can be found in philosophy books. Philosophy should be the most essential analysis of things, the study of thinking laws, and the method of logical thinking. If science loses the guidance of the correct way of thinking, science will also lose its direction. The main content of the laws of thinking is induction and deduction, and logical reasoning, and causality is one of the commonly used logical reasoning.

In medical research, causality is the most important philosophical issue. What is the most essential analysis and research of medical science, etiology is the most essential research. Why human beings have been so hesitant about health and disease, and have taken many detours. In history, human beings have been plaguing in acute infectious diseases, and the whole human being can almost be destroyed in large epidemics. Medicine has been changed by discovery of vaccines, which is called the golden age of medicine [66], because the invasion of pathogens on human body can be blocked. If

pathogen have invaded the human body, the way to save it is very limited, even if antibiotics are used, they will not save more lives, and viral infections cannot be combated with drugs [67].

Not only acute infectious diseases are threatening human beings, but NCDs, including cancer, have brought great disasters to human beings. Research on NCDs should also consider the etiology, so as to fundamentally prevent the development and spread of diseases. However, in the minds of medical researchers, it is generally believed that there is no cause in many strange diseases. Philosophical researcher does not believe it, because everything happens for a reason [68]. The cause of acute infectious diseases is the invasion of pathogens into the human body. NCDs are also for a reason, that is, the complex society is constantly affecting everyone's brain, constantly affecting everyone's mood change. Many researchers have confirmed that major depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide, the harms of major depression must be addressed. The World Health Organization's plan to achieve universal health coverage by 2030 [69] is a dream without addressing the etiology.

Although NPTs including homeopathy has not analyzed the rationality of homeopathy from a philosophical point of view, it has been found that the organism has the ability to repair itself [70]. How to exert self-repair ability is the continuation of homeopathic theory research. NCDs are caused by bad mentality, and correcting and adjusting bad mentality is the key to treating diseases, which is to solve the problem from the etiology.

In fact, human beings have already understood diseases from the perspective of philosophy, and it is generally believed that preventive medicine is crucial [71] and is the most important causal relationship to solve the problem of diseases [72], but this philosophical concept is forgotten and ignored in the research of medical science. Many diseases are man-made, but the contradiction is pushed to the human body's immune system, and even some scholars advocate the use of vaccination in order to prevent NCDs, and so on. These are completely contrary to philosophical principles, not only in the continuous producing pseudoscience, more serious harm to human health and survival. From the perspective of causal concern, current medicine is too far from causality, and non-pharmacological treatments such as homeopathy are very close to causation, but proponents of NPTs are not clear about their philosophical status. At present, there is a high incidence of NCDs and refractory diseases, and these diseases are caused by reason, and there are no things in the world that these are caused by no reason. The problem we face is: is the existing medicine addressing the causality, or is NPTs addressing the causality, and rightly the medical study that addresses the cause should become the mainstream of medicine. The placebo effect of homeopathy acts as a harmless emotional stabilizing effect and is a treatment of the etiology.

It is not easy for NPTs to become the mainstream of

medicine, because how to get rid of the huge and fearful economic interest relationship has become the focus, people have accustomed to the need to use the cost for treating diseases, and doctors also need to obtain benefits to survive, which is the biggest challenge for human beings in facing diseases.

## 7. Conclusion

NPTs such as homeopathic has been paid more and more attention, but NPTs is still in the marginal area in medical research and practice. With the high incidence and high mortality of NCDs, people have woken up to the fact that current medicine is problematic, and many diseases cannot be treated with drugs, so they have to try to use NPTs. Although NPTs is effective, there is no theoretical basis to confirm its scientific and effectiveness. What the test standard of whether science is correct is by philosophy, the most critical research in medical science should be the study of etiology, is in line with the thinking laws of philosophical causal relationship, if separated from the causal relationship, it is unscientific, even contrary to science. The philosophical status of NPTs needs more theoretical research to support, NPTs should be occupy the dominant position of medicine. In fact, since a role has been played in the late stage of the disease with NPTs, meaning a greater role also can be played in the early stage of the diseases, and a decisive role can be played for the prevention of disease, many people believe in and use CAM to address health issues or prevent diseases, but this issue remains controversial [73].

## Abbreviations

NPTs	Non-pharmacologic Treatments
NCDs	Noncommunicable Diseases
CAM	Complementary and Alternative Medicine
WHO	World Health Organization
R/S	Religion and Spirituality

## Ethical Approval

This article does not contain any animal studies conducted by any of the authors.

## Informed Consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants in the study, and there were three authors of the paper who had no interest relationship with each other.

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## Author Contributions

Chi Zhao is the sole author. The author read and approved the final manuscript.

## Data Availability Statement

Much of the evidence by searching in this paper comes from the research results of clinical investigators, and the content and information in this paper need not be confidential and can be shared.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships. This study did not receive any corporate sponsorship, no funding.

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