

Healing the Profession

By Cynthia Chrisman, MPH, CCH and Linda Morse, MBRCP(H), CCH, RSHom(NA)

A college student applying for graduate studies in social work recently asked us what training we needed in order to practice homeopathy. We responded to her that, in the 1990s, there were no accredited homeopathic schools, so we had no choice but to attend unaccredited ones. The college student responded, “Who would want to go to a school that’s not accredited?” At that time, although the newly formed Council for Homeopathic Certification (CHC) offered a rigorous certification exam, few chose to sit for it after completing their required studies, thus leaving the majority uncredentialed. Our motivation and passion were strong enough that we took the risk of practicing in a profession that was deficient in standardized training or credentialing. Upon graduation, we discovered the challenges that awaited us in earning a fair wage. Many of our colleagues shared the same feeling of vulnerability as unlicensed homeopathic practitioners.

Why support and expand accredited homeopathic education? First, unaccredited schools continue to fold year after year as they fail to attract students. Second, accredited schools assure that students are eligible for financial aid to attend school so that they can obtain an education leading to a viable livelihood after graduation. Third, many homeopathic classmates with whom we attended school have closed their practices because they faced competition from a rapidly growing integrative health care environment that is not eager to accommodate unlicensed practitioners. This downward trend in our history does not have to continue. We believe that accreditation will ensure the survival of our profession.

In today’s growing integrative health care environment, licensed practitioners with accredited educations are poised to fill the void left by a failing health care system. To enhance our viability, leaders among us have at last seized the opportunity to validate the best practices of our profession through the certification process. This fundamental step authenticates our professional advocacy efforts.

In July 2017, the Certification in Classical Homeopathy (CCH) became the only professionally validated and accredited qualification for the practice of homeopathy in North America. The CHC aligns its exam eligibility with accredited academic standards. Starting in 2018, graduates are eligible to take the CHC exam only if their school is approved up to

Step 3 of the accreditation process, or fully accredited by the following groups that are responsible for governing the profession to ensure that the public is protected:

1. Accreditation Commission for Homeopathic Education in North America (ACHENA) for American and Canadian graduates
2. The College of Homeopaths of Ontario (CHO) for graduates in Ontario
3. A CHC-designated third party that evaluates educational programs for international graduates¹

We are indebted to these groups for their painstaking work over the years, and to the CHC specifically, for this achievement. It expands the choices and future protection of professional practice on behalf of CCH certificants and the public they serve.

We commend the CHC and ACHENA for this accomplishment. ACHENA soon hopes to have its own accreditation from the US Department of Education. More homeopathic schools are now applying to become ACHENA-approved. As is the norm in professional graduate studies, students of homeopathy will eventually have the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge through accredited education and examination. This will enhance their credibility as they enter professional practice.

The Three Branches of Homeopathic Education

In our previous article, “Educational Alliance Building” (*The American Homeopath*, Vol. 23, 2017), we introduced the U.Lab course prototype, an innovative co-creative process, to aid in the integration of homeopathic educational leadership in North America. In homeopathic education, the three equal but distinct organizations are:

¹ Applicants who received homeopathic training outside the United States or Canada must submit a copy of their transcripts in English to one of the transcript evaluation organizations such as Educational Credential Evaluators (ece.org), American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (aacrao.org) or World Educational Services (wes.org). The CHC may require additional coursework, clinical training, and/or supervision based on the evaluation received from the service.

1. ACHENA, which represents academic standards
2. The CHC, which represents practitioner certification standards
3. NASH, which represents professional homeopaths and standards

These professional bodies determine the standards of homeopathic practice and the quality of services provided by practitioners to the public. Taken together and combined with the necessary checks and balances, they provide for the self-governance of the ethical and professional activities of well-trained and qualified professional homeopaths.

However, organizations are only structures; individuals make up the leadership. We believe the survival of homeopathy as an institution depends on prioritizing a public dialogue between the leaders of the three branches that currently govern homeopathic education. An educational alliance of this kind is distinct from a political alliance. A political alliance creates the collective drive necessary to move a profession as a whole into the policy- and law-making arenas. An educational alliance formalizes the structure necessary to create and mobilize a cohesive group of professional members into active participation. The goal is a collaboration that aims for the best possible future for all involved: educators, the public and practitioners alike. We propose to focus on educational alliance-building to support the collective leadership and growth of professional homeopathic education.

The Interviews

We interviewed the three stakeholders of the above-mentioned organizations because they hold the promise to lead homeopathic education into the future. We appreciate the interviewees' willingness to participate and share their views on this subject. We asked each of them the same questions.

I. Alastair Gray, President, ACHENA

1. Does the "triad model" outlined in the "The Whole House" by Cynthia Chrisman published in *The American Homeopath*, 2016, make sense to you?

The triad model identifies the three leading and equal branches of peer regulation and standards of professional homeopathic education in North America:

1. ACHENA represents academic standards
2. CHC represents practitioner certification standards
3. NASH represents professional standards

Yes, the triad model makes sense. The interview is timely, and I am pleased to have the opportunity to respond. I'm a big fan of clarifying the role of each branch. ACHENA promotes the health of homeopathic education to protect the student, the CHC represents professional certification to protect the

public and NASH works to protect its members who are professional practitioners.

ACHENA is promoting the maturation of homeopathic education through accreditation with the Department of Education. The Department of Education outsources to those who, like ACHENA, know their profession and can assess the health of existing schools and institutions through accreditation.

A community-wide conversation is needed. Accreditation is a crucial pillar in the maturation process. I believe it needs to be acknowledged that the needs and attributes of the modern homeopath are different than they were previously. As well as that, homeopathic education used to be dominated by charismatic teachers. All students love the classroom. In addition, curriculum is important. But those features of homeopathic schools do not necessarily align with knowing an institution's health. This is understood through other metrics such as in assessing educational outcomes, competencies, course completions, graduation rates, a governance cycle of checks and balances and student attrition rates.

As I work to complete my PhD, I'm constantly researching the relationship between complementary and integrative medicine, homeopathic education and how learning technologies interact with them, and how these changes impact schools.

2. As President, what immediate organizational outcomes do you foresee accomplishing?

Primarily, I want to address the future, the growth and also the survival of homeopathic education in North America among the stakeholders of the profession. The closing of schools shouldn't happen.

I also want to discuss messaging about accreditation, how to protect and support students and how to meet community-wide educational standards. I want to communicate that accreditation is not a "scary police" law, but a community-wide collaboration where standards are upheld by measuring or showing that we do what we claim. When I went through this process ten years ago in New Zealand and Australia, we gladly jumped at the opportunity because it made us better homeopathic educators in the end. And it also humbled me, as I realized that great charismatic teaching does not a great school make.

For approval by ACHENA, any school—whether from the US, Canada or overseas—needs to focus on a number of requirements, including:

1. Present their School Mission Statement

2. Demonstrate how their curriculum, and all their activities reflect their school mission
3. Provide evidence for how their curriculum evaluates student learning and show, with data driven evidence, how quality measures are implemented and that policies and good processes exist. There are others, but that is essentially the crux of it.

3. How do your organization's mission statement^{II} and policies currently impact the cooperation and professional alliance of this triad as a whole? Which issues or obstacles do you think are preventing a formal alliance between these three main branches of homeopathic education?

ACHENA provides a necessary system of checks and balances for the profession. Without strategic communication and planning between ACHENA and the CHC going forward, we will see the survival of homeopathy threatened as the numbers of students and practitioners dwindle even further. We conduct parallel activities that aim to uphold educational standards among accredited schools and accredited practitioners. It is critical that we make a strategic plan to coordinate better communication while respecting appropriate “firewalls” between us. For instance, the eligibility standards for international students taking the CHC exam and the criteria for continuing education require our immediate attention to strategize positive future outcomes.

I am mystified by the seemingly pervasive fear—or the lack of interest or motivation, if not resistance—to accreditation among teachers and practitioners. We need a platform among the triad to work together to build and maintain educational standards in homeopathy on behalf of the survival of the schools and the profession.

4. What two things do you think are needed to create and implement a triad model that would be of value to your organization and that would address the survival of homeopathy?

1) Support each other, communicate clearly and remove the perceived “firewalls” between our organizations, while at the same time retaining the necessary checks and balances. In that way, the three organizations are more permeable to our leadership and communication process. This also applies to

II The mission of ACHENA is to promote excellence in the education of professional homeopaths by:

1. Establishing standards for the education of professional homeopathic practitioners
2. Accrediting institutions and programs that prepare professional homeopathic practitioners
3. Certifying continuing education for professional homeopaths
4. Serving as a resource center that provides information about accreditation of homeopathy training programs
5. Supporting administrators, educators and students in understanding the accreditation process

our other stakeholders. For example, in the wake of becoming President of ACHENA, I have been invited to address the Homeopathic Nurses Association and the American Institute of Homeopathy about the accreditation of schools.

2) Create a “platform” of opportunities to address communication about the educational standards of ACHENA and the educational standards of the CHC. Some examples might be:

- Present abstracts of research at conferences
- Attend and utilize the Homeopathic Action Alliance's monthly meet
- Create an Association of ACHENA Accredited Schools

5. What might be the first practical step you would like to see in the leadership and the alliance of the three organizations going forward? How can our article contribute to that awareness?

Communicate openly and listen without bias to the needs of the whole profession that is greater than the sum of its parts. Your article can serve to educate teachers and practitioners about the benefits of accreditation.

II. Samantha Conboy, President, CHC

1. Does the “triad model” outlined make sense to you?

I think it makes a lot of sense. We all want to advance the profession of homeopathy. I like the visual of the three-legged stool.

2. As President, what immediate organizational outcomes do you foresee accomplishing?

The CHC has a long list. We want to work in collaboration with the efforts of the other two organizations. For example, we all came together as an entire community and worked successfully as one voice for the recent FDA ruling.

We have plans for better communication with our certifiants and stakeholders. We have implemented new requirements for the CHC exam that were set in motion four years ago. These can be found on our website. At present, applicants must go through ACHENA or the College of Homeopaths of Ontario (CHO), an approved and/or accredited program or, for international students, through a third party that evaluates the educational programs.

3. How do your organization's mission statement^{III} and policies currently impact the cooperation and professional alliance of this triad as a whole?

III The mission of the CHC is to advance the homeopathic profession by certifying individuals who meet and maintain a recognized standard of

Which issues or obstacles do you think are preventing a formal alliance between these three main branches of homeopathic education?

These are great questions. Our piece is being clear on what we do and letting the other branches do what they do. Sometimes the lack of clarity—of which organization does what, the vagueness of the roles between the CHC and NASH—can be an obstacle. The main goal is how we can serve the community with our strengths and bridge the gaps between us. We need to meet in the middle and collaborate instead of keeping to our corners. At present one of our board members has reached out to Tanya Kell, the current president of NASH, to talk about ways we can work together for the advancement of homeopathy. We talk to ACHENA on an ongoing basis.

With accreditation, our certification is now professionally validated. It measures what it takes to be a competent, entry-level homeopath. We need to continue to work with ACHENA so students are well prepared when they take the exam. NASH provides an organization where certificants can go after accreditation to be part of the homeopathic community and break the isolation of working alone.

4. What two things do you think are needed to create and implement a triad model that would be of value to your organization and that would address the survival of homeopathy?

The two things would be time and resources; we are all volunteers and have many different roles in other areas of our life to fulfill. We need more fund raising and advocating skills, and more resources to go around. If there was enough money for paid positions it might be easier to accomplish our goals. Nonetheless a lot is being accomplished.

5. What might be the first practical step you would like to see in the leadership and the alliance of the three organizations going forward? How can our article contribute to that awareness?

Improving communication between all three branches. We want what is best for us as organizations and as a community. We need to have a regular dialogue between all three organizations. That way we can write a new story for homeopathy in the USA.

The publication of this article will help as well, as people who are enthusiastic and passionate about homeopathy can become involved in one of the three organizations. My underlying sentiment is one of enthusiasm and hope for the future, and I want to encourage people who are excited and passionate about homeopathy to volunteer their time and resources.

professional and ethical competence in classical homeopathy and to assist the general public in choosing appropriately qualified homeopaths.

III. Tanya Kell, President, NASH

1. Does the “triad model” outlined make sense to you?

Yes, the triad makes sense. NASH believes that the CHC written exam is a piece that is important to have as a professional homeopath. NASH is currently working on a model to expand on the CHC exam and the subsequent vetting process. Once it has been completed, this model will be available to all homeopaths in North America.

2. As President, what immediate organizational outcomes do you foresee accomplishing?

I definitely want to see our professional organization grow with homeopaths practicing less in isolation and more in community. I want to see wider public recognition of our members and their skills.

3. How do your organization’s mission statement^{IV} and policies currently impact the cooperation and professional alliance of this triad as a whole?

Which issues or obstacles do you think are preventing a formal alliance between these three main branches of homeopathic education?

We do not have many obstacles.

NASH’s mission is the right to practice and to engage a homeopath as a professional who upholds the highest standards of professional and ethical practice. My perception of the CHC and ACHENA is that their job is to create competent graduates and it is NASH’s job to vet and mold them into well-rounded professionals.

Among the goals we laid out last year for NASH are to:

- Legitimize homeopathy through a strong political voice that supports state associations and state legislative bills promoting health freedom.
- Develop professional support programs for registered homeopaths that contribute to the public healthcare system.

4. What two things do you think are needed to create and implement a triad model that would be of value to your organization and that would address the survival of homeopathy?

Practicing homeopaths and CHC holders have not grasped the importance of what NASH does. We are what

IV NASH is dedicated to promoting, representing, and serving as the voice of all PROFESSIONAL homeopaths in North America. NASH aims to develop and uphold the highest level of excellence in homeopathic practice while enhancing the role of the homeopathic profession as an integral part of health care delivery.

holds the profession together. Professional homeopaths have created a positive reputation for homeopathy. We lobby politically and uphold ethical standards. NASH talks to everybody: consumer action groups that love homeopathy, political groups, educators, etc. We field ethics complaints as well. We get calls from all over the country about homeopaths. We cannot mediate and there is nothing we can do if the homeopaths are not NASH members. The public is starting to see us as the professional go-to organization.

Most graduates get their CCH certification and do not understand what we do. We would like the schools and the CHC to make it clear that the CHC exam is one step and that NASH is the next step. We hope to start working more closely with the CHC and ACHENA in the near future.

We also need to work with ACHENA and the CHC on CEUs. NASH's role is the upkeep of CEUs to maintain your professional development. The CHC accepts CEUs in professions other than homeopathy. NASH only accepts CEUs in homeopathy.

5. *What might be the first practical step you would like to see in the leadership and the alliance of the three organizations going forward?*

How can our article contribute to that awareness?

I would like to see a summit between NASH, ACHENA and the CHC, where we can share our vision statements and proceed from there. The goal of the summit would be to incorporate any goals the other two branches see as necessary for the strength and sustainability of our profession, as well as map out a strategic plan to move toward those goals.

U.Lab: A Paradigm to Align Leadership

The common thread running through the interviews is a desire to coordinate and improve communication between the three branches of homeopathic education for the betterment of homeopathy. The maturation and longevity of a profession—distinct from the personal growth of the professional—depends on alliances between the leadership of the organizations involved. “Co-creative” communication, a non-hierarchical framework for leadership and systems development, offers a dynamic and innovative way to create a

THEORY U: a JOURNEY

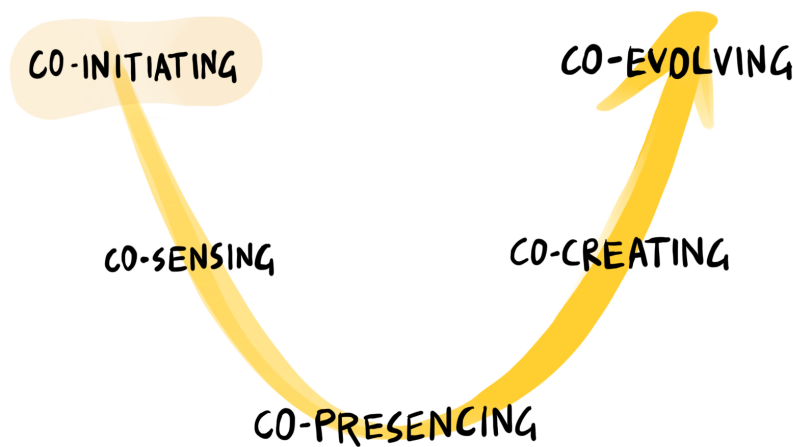
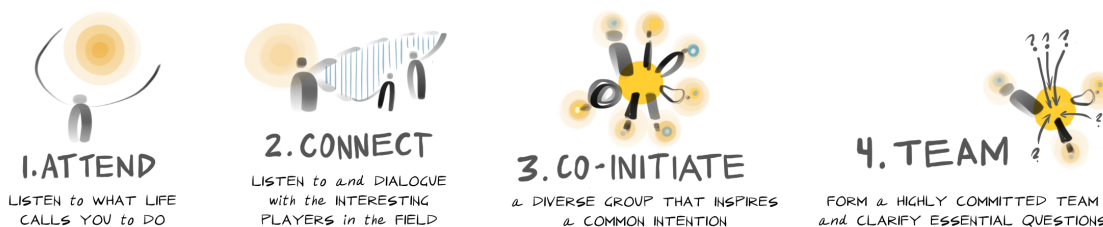


Figure 1: Stimulating effective leadership and change through co-creative presencing

mutually supportive communication structure between leaders today.

I. Consider using this communication tool

In our previous article, we presented “U.Lab” as a communication technique that holds tremendous potential to assist leaders in homeopathic educational alliance building efforts. U.Lab is a free, international edX course offered by MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), based on Otto Scharmer’s and Katrin Kaufer’s ground-breaking book, *Lead-*

ing From The Emerging Future: From Ego-system To Eco-system Economies. It teaches “co-creative” communication to leaders of governments, institutions, businesses and individuals. To honor the sum total of connections that human beings enact in any given system, U.Lab offers practical training in collective self-awareness and attention in order to maximize growth. In U.Lab, this skill is the primary pathway that activates change and reshapes communication that can impede or divide institutions, organizations and individuals. Along with other homeopathic colleagues who have also taken U.Lab

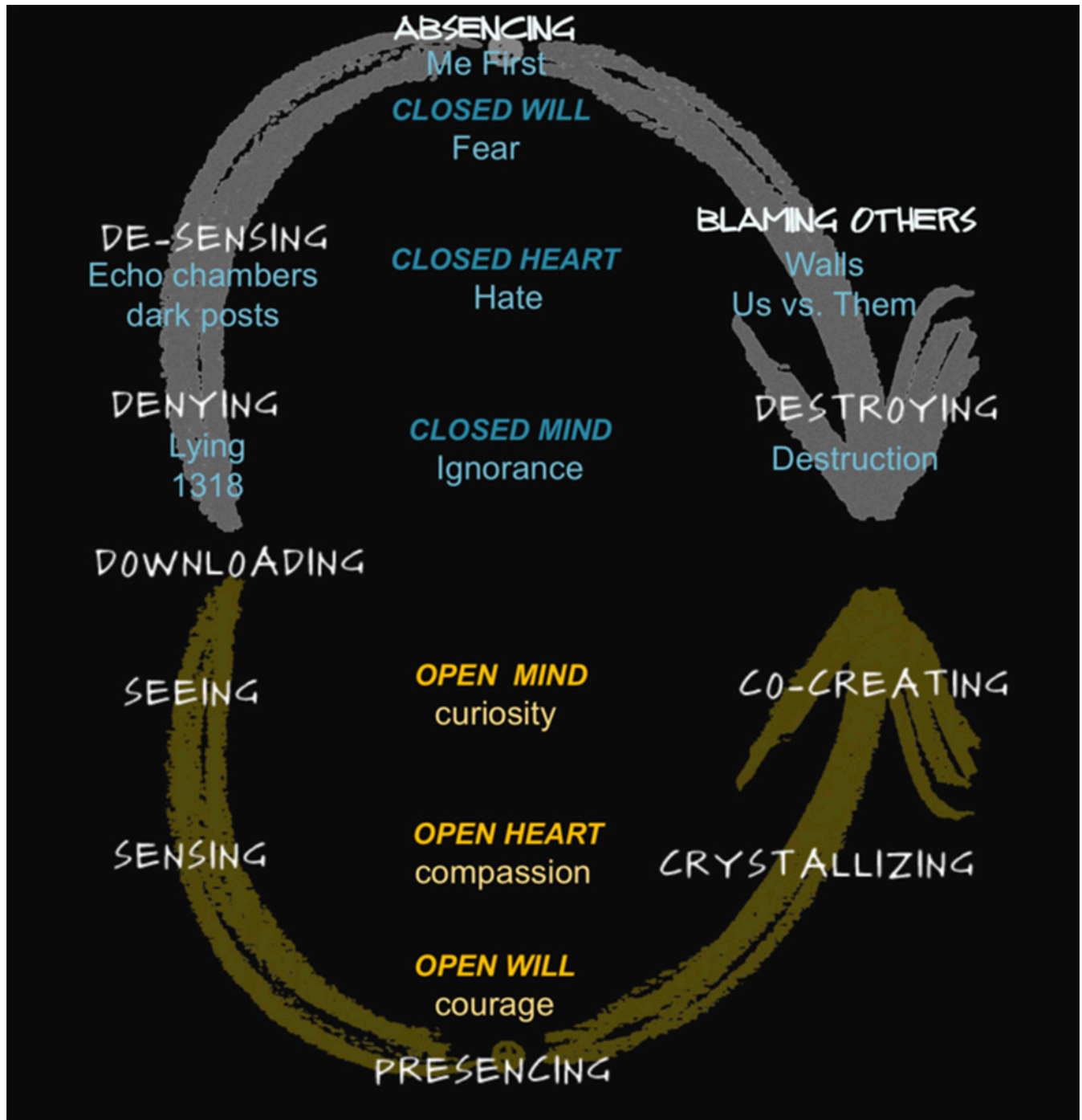


Figure 2: Three Responses to Disruption: Muddling through (downloading), Moving backward (closing the mind, heart and will), Moving forward (opening the mind, heart and will).

OS	HEALTH	LEARNING	FARM/FOOD	FINANCE	GOVERNANCE
1.0: INPUT AND AUTHORITY- CENTRIC	TRADITIONAL DOCTOR- CENTRIC MEDICINE	TRADITIONAL TEACHER- CENTRIC	TRADITIONAL FARMER- CENTRIC	TRADITIONAL FINANCIAL CAPITAL	HIERARCHY
2.0: OUTPUT AND EFFICIENCY- CENTRIC	EVIDENCE- BASED MEDICINE	TESTING- CENTRIC	INDUSTRIAL MONO- CULTURES	EXTRACTIVE CAPITAL: WALL STREET	COMPETITION
3.0: STAKEHOLDER AND CUSTOMER- CENTRIC	PATIENT- CENTRIC MEDICINE	LEARNER- CENTRIC	ORGANIC: ECO-CENTRIC	RESPONSIBLE CAPITAL: IMPACT INVESTING	STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUES
4.0: GENERATIVE ECO-SYSTEM- CENTRIC	SALUTOGENESIS: STRENGTHENING SOURCES OF WELL-BEING	CO-CREATIVE: ACTIVATE DEEPER SOURCES OF LEARNING	CULTIVATING SOURCES OF ECO-SOCIAL RENEWAL	GENERATIVE CAPITAL: SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION	ABC: AWARENESS-BASED COLLECTIVE ACTION

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Figure 3: Four Evolutionary Stages: From 1.0 to 4.0 (Source: O. Scharmer, The Essentials of Theory U)

He predicts how the next wave of institutional innovation in health, learning, farming, food, finance and leadership will be highly interrelated and sourced from a shared co-creative communication style (see 4.0 territory in Figure 3 below). Note the 4.0 evolutionary stage of health operation strives for salutogenesis (as opposed to pathogenesis) an approach focusing on broad factors that support human health and wellbeing, rather than on limited factors that cause disease.

training, we experienced first-hand how Otto Scharmer and his colleagues at the Presencing Institute (www.presencing.com) teach “presencing” as a vital part of the U.Lab paradigm of co-creative communication. How do we learn, in the face of disruption, to stimulate the capacity to sense and actualize our highest future possibility as a homeopathic community? (See Figure 1)

As continuing students of U.Lab, we discovered how deeply U.Lab mirrors our work as homeopaths while engaging the vital force during the homeopathic healing process. Because each president of the three organizations focused in their interviews on cultivating communication between them, we believe U.Lab offers a viable and easily accessible communication tool that may help to harmonize the diverse yet interrelated functions of the separate organizations.

2. Participate in a virtual coaching circle

The technique of presencing ultimately works through a collective opening of the mind, the heart and the will in the face of diverging opinions. U.Lab celebrates diversity while teaching leadership principles to counteract stagnation and the fixed idea that an institution has one truth, one agenda or one identity. Through virtual “coaching circles,” small group presencing offers distinctly fresh possibilities for those who are looking to replace outdated and limited modes of group communication. This is the difference between “absencing” and “presencing,” according to the U.Lab model. (See Figure 2)

3. Generate co-creative communication

Because no single organization can advance an institution alone, Scharmer advocates for creating cross-sectional infrastructures that support these initiatives on that journey. He asserts that the old-school “silo structure” of organizational communication is obsolete and no longer viable in the 21st century. Top-down centralized organizing hinders a genera-

“These gaps and divides are amplified by the silo structure of our key institutions and the mindset of the decision makers that operate inside them. To address these issues at their root requires two things: new platforms for cross-sector co-creation and an upgrade in the operating system that people use to collaborate—practices that facilitate a shift from ego-system to eco-system awareness.”
 ~ - Otto Scharmer

Conclusion

In conclusion, we believe that accreditation offers the most promising path for the survival of our profession. Our interviewees have outlined the ways each organization sees its mission and their vision for the future of homeopathy. All of them agree that collaboration is key. Since interviewing the three representatives, they have met as a group to discuss the future of homeopathic education and have pledged to maintain contact. U.Lab has proven itself to be an effective tool, used worldwide to improve communication and facilitate dialogue among diverse interests. Our extensive involvement with the U.Lab process leads us to believe that it could provide a tool for the three organizations to facilitate increased collaboration in our community going forward.

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We invite the reader to investigate the U.Lab online community website at www.presencing.com. Or, if interested in the free U.Lab course, enroll at www.edx.org/course/u-lab-leading-emerging-future-mitx-15-671-1x-0.

Cynthia Chrisman, MPH, CCH, recently served on the CHC board of directors and maintains a full-time homeopathic family practice in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Previous articles for the American Homeopath include “The Crowning Jewel of Homeopathy” (2014), “Putting the House in Order” (2015), “The Whole House – Advancing the Profession” (2016) and “Educational Alliance Building” (2017). Since completing the interviews and writing for this article in early 2018, Cynthia accepted the nomination to serve as a commissioner with ACHENA beginning in May, 2018. Contact Cynthia at www.homeopathicprovider.com.

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NORTH AMERICAN
NASHTM
SOCIETY OF HOMEOPATHS

A New Benefit Just for Students!

NASH has just recently organized a closed Student Facebook Group.

The NASH Student Group was formed to assist each student in their growth as a Homeopath and facilitate your educational experience. In this group we hope to cover those burning questions that may come up after a webinar, help you to successfully search for information about your homeopathic inquiries, inform you of NASH resources, share tips about establishing your practice and help you to learn the best way to write up case submissions. Here’s how to join:



1. Become a NASH Student Member
2. Go to Facebook. Search for NASH Student Group
3. Answer the qualifying questions
4. Request to join

This group is moderated by the Student Liaison Coordinators Myra Nissen, CCH, RSHom(NA) and Aaron Wolfe-Payton.