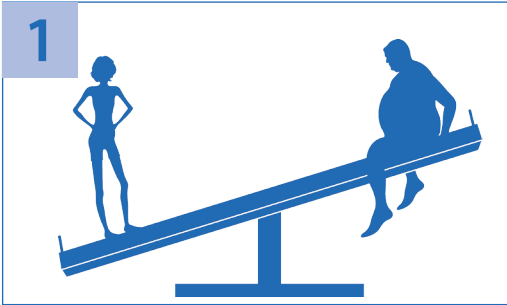




Contents

Forewords VII

Introduction 1



1 Why people become overweight or underweight 7

1.1 Feeling too light makes people overweight 8

1.2 Feeling too heavy makes people underweight 14



2 Distress und Eustress 25

2. How the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems work 26



3 Basic therapy 33

3.1 Regulating the body's acid-base balance 38

 3.1.1 Lowering your body's acid levels with rhythmic breathing 40

 3.1.2 Lowering your body's acid levels with natural sodium bicarbonate 44

3.2 Colon cleansing with "rocking" 45

3.3 Colon cleansing with enema kit 48

3.4 Colon cleansing with coffee enema 49

3.5 Skin care 53



4 Main therapy with diet 59

4.1 Go-as-you-please day 61

4.2 Diet 66

4.3 Food culture and meal composition 72

4.4 Therapeutic drinks 77

4.5 Raw juice therapy 79

 4.5.1 Raw juices for underweight people 82

 4.5.2 Raw juices for overweight people 86



Main therapy with diet

4.6 Thick juice therapy	93
4.6.1 How to make thick juices	95
4.6.2 Thick juice recipes	97



Main therapy with homeopathy 100

5.1 Bowel nosodes	102
5.2 Treating obesity with homeopathy	106
5.2.1 Calcium carbonicum	107
5.2.2 Pulsatilla	109
5.2.3 Ferrum metallicum	110
5.2.4 Graphites	111
5.2.5 Phytolacca decandra	113
5.2.6 Kali carbonicum	115
5.3 Treating cachexia and anorexia with homeopathy	118
5.3.1 Iodine	119
5.3.2 Nuphar luteum	121
5.3.3 Arsenicum album and Carcinosinum	123
5.4 Treating bulimia with homeopathy	127
5.5 Treating the early signs of obesity and excess weight loss with homeopathy	133
5.5.1 Sulphur	135
5.5.2 China	135
5.5.3 Saccharum album (raffinatum)	136
5.5.4 Hyoscyamus	136



Healing processes 138

6.1 Mrs. J. with obesity	140
6.2 Ms. G. with cachexia	142
6.3 Mr. V. with cortisone-induced obesity	145
6.4 Herta with osteomyelitis	147
6.5 Hansi with anorexia nervosa	149
6.6 Ms. B. with bulimia	154
6.7 Bertrand with obesity	158

Final thoughts 162

Appendix 164

Kinesiological balance of obesity and excess weight loss	164
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Suppliers 167

Courses 167

Bibliography 168

Biography 170

Illustrations and tables 171



Introduction

No matter how many archaic sculptures of shapeless, corpulent goddesses we admire in the museums, no matter how much we glorify patriarchal cultures, nobody wants to look like that today. Obesity and anorexia are no longer ideals of beauty. Not even the starved models in the fashion industry can convince us otherwise.

What man really wants to hold a bag of bones in his arms? What woman wants to resign herself to the fact that she can no longer hug her obese husband? What man can be happy if he can no longer see his genitalia? What woman can really believe she is beautiful if she looks out on the world with the hollow eyes of a famine victim? Apart from these two extremes – too fat, too thin – I know a lot of people who are dissatisfied with their figures. Women spend most of their lives dieting, men throw out their mirrors and scales because they can't bear to watch the "winter fat" turn into a "spring roll".

Where do we actually get the belief that we are too fat or too thin? From our clothes? It's possible. Skirts and trousers are inflexibly cut to certain size specifications, and if we can no longer get into them, we're too fat. If our bones stick out and even a size 8 looks baggy, we are obviously too thin. Or is it the countless fashion magazines that tell us what we should look like? Once we reach the age of 40, we might just as well stop looking at them, because they only show young, completely styled men and women who are vividly reminiscent of Barbie dolls. "Fat is beautiful" – these magazines promise that you can even dress smartly if you are built like a Valkyrie or a Mr. Universe. Skinny fash-

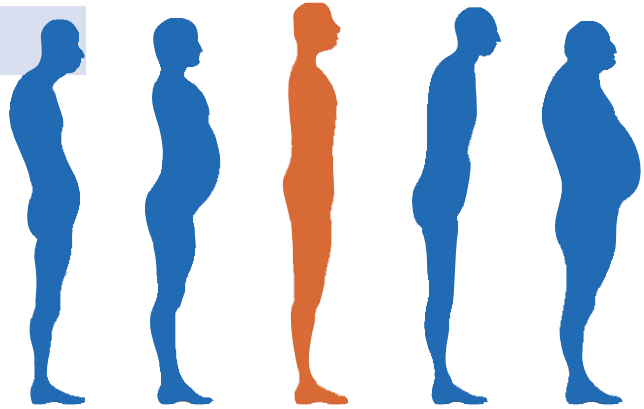


Fig. 1

ion à la Twiggy is out, because the war ended 60 years ago and it's no longer important to make a virtue of necessity. Today, anyone who wants to be thin has to starve himself or herself. Fast ways to lose a couple of pounds flood the market all year round – pills, plasters, liposuction, creams and diets. Drastic operations are absurdly referred to as "cosmetic surgery". Every spring, the women's magazines publish the ultimate new methods for losing weight in a short time. These are always diets. Slim women constantly pretend that they lost weight and got their perfect figure by following these crash diets and without changing their lifestyle. The winter fat has to go, and fast. A lot of women grit their teeth and go on the latest highly acclaimed diet. It works more or less quickly, the pounds drop off and then go back on even faster than before. This increases their frustration and self-hatred. Soon they can't even bear themselves, much less look in the mirror. Everything gets stuck, everything is too tight, they switch to wide, floating robes. But the rolls of fat bulge even under the most beautiful fabric, adding to the frustration and reinforcing the belief, "I failed again." This is followed by the fatalistic remark, "I'll never do it anyway, so I won't bother any more." Both males and females are susceptible to the martyrdom of



wanting to look as slim as the person selling the slimming diets and appetite suppressants.

The book market is also flooded with good advice and slimming guides. All of them contain a grain of truth, and it is certain that a lot of readers will avidly seize on the promise of a perfect figure and try them out. However, the people who profit the most are firstly the authors, and secondly those who don't even need to lose weight. At some point, the weight problem triggers health problems. A time comes when the chronic dieters consult a medical practitioner and hope that their treatment will be successful. Overweight people are seen much more often than underweight people. Some complain about their weight right from the start, others come because of organic complaints such as cardiovascular disorders, diabetes, arthritis or cancer. Every therapist is confronted with numerous conflicts revolving around weight issues. These involve not only the physical and mental consequences of being overweight or underweight, but also the cause, which is hidden in a jungle of associations and entanglements; cutting through these often requires Herculean effort – by patient and therapist alike. No matter how the issue is twisted and turned: healing is only possible with discipline. Unless people return to their original selves and stop being copies of someone or something else, they will remain diseased. This might sound hard, it might also smack of prohibition and denial. But becoming healed and whole requires strength and discipline to bring oneself back to one's centre, to re-establish one's rhythm of life. Healing means changing one's thoughts, feelings and actions, and nobody is ever the same once a healing process has taken place. Healing births a new self. Healing is like a good story with a beginning, a

drama and a conclusion. The patient spends most of the time in the drama stage, swapping old habits and behaviour for new. The conclusion is usually the therapist's problem, as many of us compose endless linear stories of symptom – remedy – symptom – remedy etc. ad infinitum. This is the downward path to dependence, on which both parties, the patient and therapist, increasingly lose their faith in the natural laws.

However, everything in nature and its microcosm, the human organism, is subject to rhythms and cycles. Everything is constantly being transformed and renewed. A good healing story ends with the patient's realisation, "I can do it alone now." The therapist's message is then, "You can do it alone now; you can live your life alone." No other message has such a healing effect on the patient's immune system.

In my experience, healing frequently has much more to do with letting be and letting go than with doing.

Imagine you are meeting up with friends. Instead of telling each other what you've been doing, what you've finished, achieved and crossed off your list, what problems have piled up and what solution you are awaiting, tell each other what you have let be, let go and changed for the better. Try it. These insights are simply staggering. The conversation may be sporadic at first, as we are so accustomed to taking action. However, the second time everyone will have had an interesting healing experience in the course of their everyday life, and will be able to share it with the group. You have to give some thought to what has to be changed and let go. Your focus will also change in the course of your everyday life, as letting go requires much more attention and awareness than just working through a list of activities. It will also be-



come clear that consciously changing your thoughts, feelings and actions is much harder than just performing actions by rote. Letting go begins with moments of stillness, as you have to grasp exactly what you are holding on to. What am I attached to, what is attached to me? This can take a lot of (diagnostic) discussion. But telling my friends what I have let be and let go requires absolute honesty. Activism feeds on exaggeration and admiring remarks about how hard-working, ambitious and worn out we are. These days, the statement that we are working to our limit, we have reached our limit is a buzzword. Limit is the magical word and has an undertone of pride.

Letting go is a spiritual act and requires the ability to realise and recognise, to make decisions and ultimately to let go of the old and make place for the new self in which the Higher Self is restored to its rightful place.

The other entity in us doesn't like this at all: the ego.

The exercise described, telling your friends what you have let go, ultimately leads to four insights which are fundamental to my holistic method of treatment:

1. [Healing takes place at home.](#)
2. [Practice and ritual bring about change.](#)
3. [Healing processes are based on certain laws.](#)
4. [Healing is the result of discipline and \(re\) orientation.](#)

Weight problems are some of the best examples of how only the patient's body, mind and spirit can be stimulated in practice. In some cases, the healing energy which we transfer to the patient with our enthusiasm for our therapy lasts for some time. But let's make no mistake: the patient returns to his personal en-

vironment and family system, to his customary patterns of thought and behaviour. This is the environment in which he fell ill; this is the environment in which he is supposed to return to health. There are exceptional cases in which a chronically ill patient changes his entire life at one blow and is healed by radical change. But we can't make this the rule and expect that a patient will change his awareness merely on the basis of a diagnosis, a certain type of medication or a consultation, because changes in awareness are essential for healing. The normal procedure is to move forward step by step, sometimes taking a meandering route, away from the old structures and towards a new attitude to life.

Let's move on to the second point. I owe this one to my former career as a concert singer and professional musician. Practice brings about change, unfolds potential, structures one's everyday life and gives us the comfortable feeling of moving forward. Practice expands our internal and external horizons. As babies, we learnt to eat and walk through constant practice. Practicing exercises at school or while training for a job was perhaps less fun. Practice is inextricably associated with learning. We only become aware of the scope of this statement when we give up learning facts and turn our attention to learning about life.

Living takes practice. Every day, we repeat certain activities, thoughts and feelings, rehearsing them over and over again. We can practice bad habits; we can also practise good ones. The great thing about this is that we have a choice. This is by no means clear to many people suffering from disease. One of our main tasks as therapists is to make this clear to our patients. However, this is only possible if we are certain about this ourselves.



This is where we can learn a lot from artists, because they don't just practise mindlessly, but define a target: what am I practising for? What am I practising? How am I practising? When applied to the treatment of sick people, the result is three questions that I also give my patients to think about as homework:

- ▶ **What is my goal, why do I want to get well?** (I usually have my patients write down 100 reasons for wanting to be well again.)
- ▶ **What is the deeper meaning of my activities, my work, and my attitude to life?**
- ▶ **How do I behave towards myself? Am I constantly working at the limit? How do I divide my time for work and leisure?**

Anyone who answers these questions conscientiously is invariably undergoing a process of transformation and well on the way to being healed. At the beginning of a course of therapy, it seems strange to take care of one's own needs, to think about one's life. But these questions inspire the patient to try out new things, practise new ways of thinking, and make them curious about new experiences. Practice doesn't just make perfect, it IS perfect. I like to clothe the exercises in little rituals, because I have never been an advocate of the senseless repetition of movements or affirmations or actions. A ritual should have a deeper, spiritual meaning. In the same way that I had to find a meaning for everything I had researched and practised throughout my life in order to keep up my motivation, I like my patients to grasp the significance of their treatment and their own contribution to the healing process and practise accordingly. Practising has to be fun, otherwise it degenerates into boredom and routine. That is what made the patient ill; that's why we therapists have to be creative.

One final aspect of my holistic understanding of healing permeates all the others: sensitive perception, a look at the cause and the potential to become healed and whole inherent in every patient. Obese people with large bones or anorexic, emaciated people present an external appearance that beguiles one into becoming fixated on their symptoms, even on single symptoms. They can emotionally and mentally captivate one so completely that it becomes difficult to look behind the exterior to what has remained whole and intact. I could practise this kind of perception a lot on cancer patients. If we focus solely on the tumour, we reduce the human cosmos to this one factor. Only when we ask: what kind of personality produced this tumour? Who is it that has this symptom? do whole new spaces and perspectives open up. The same applies to people who are overweight or underweight. They expect that you as the therapist will latch on to the phenomenon of obesity or anorexia. This has never interested me. What interests me is the awareness of the person in front of me, who has created this condition of being overweight or underweight by practising certain patterns of thought and behaviour. The sensitive view – provided it is practised and nurtured – never lies. One can be deceived, but this is the exception, not the rule. One's inner eyes, ears and senses can track the cause of the disease much more easily than a hundred questions. Nowadays, this is not only my experience, but also that of many colleagues who have learnt to trust their sensitive perception. This kind of perception is healing in itself, as it focuses on the patient's positive potential. It also incorporates the physical senses, making it possible to recognise any deviance from a healthy state.

Why is this so important?



Because the patient's positive potential is the source he will draw on to become healed and whole.

Every therapist who treats overweight and underweight patients is familiar with the immense problem associated with the fact that it's all about eating, eating behaviour, food culture and eating habits. We Westerners with a high standard of living can afford these diseases: overeating or developing a loathing of food, allergic reactions to anything and everything and building up an entire industry based on this. Like many other things, the problem of being overweight or underweight is a market commodity, a business in which a lot of money can be earned. You only have to broadcast two messages: "This remedy can cure cancer" or "This remedy will make you lose weight", and financially you'll be set up for life.

Far from the clamour of the markets, we therapists take care of the crowds of people who have tried all kinds of miracle cures and – I am firmly convinced of this – feel deep in their hearts that there is no fast solution, no short cut, that they need to work on themselves.

I agree with Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, who just before his early death at the age of 36, after years of incredibly hard work and brilliant results, said, "Success is 5% genius and 95% hard work – but it's worth it." If we look at this qualitatively, we are already involved in a form of healing and can understand how meaningful it is to focus on the patient's positive potential, his true self, his genius. The patient's work is to become aware of the copies of himself which he has been projecting to date and which he has to let go of. Then the diamond will glow from within. Is there anything more uplifting than when the patient leaves the practice after a while, upright, beaming, knowing "I did it myself!" after arriving there overweight or underweight and bowed with sorrow? I can't imagine anything more beautiful, and this joy in people, in being human, in the typically human is what inspires me in my profession.

Therefore I hope that my enthusiasm will infect the reader, patient, therapist and spark a flood of ideas for their own deserving work.

3.1.2 Lowering your body's acid levels with natural sodium bicarbonate

The next stage in the deacidification process is a simple cure that gently cleanses the blood, lymph and tissues. There are a lot of alkaline remedies on the market, all of which have an effect. I've tried out most of them, but always come back to sodium bicarbonate³, firstly because it's cheap, secondly because it's a purely natural product, and thirdly because it's linked with an ancient culture. Sodium bicarbonate was used as a natural remedy in ancient Egypt, where it was believed to have powers of rejuvenation. Egyptian healers had already recognised that an excessively acidic organism ages more quickly! Sodium bicarbonate also played a leading role in the mummification process, where it was used with the intention of keeping the mummy looking youthful. The viscera were removed from the corpse and placed in a "canopic chest", in which they were preserved in sodium bicarbonate. The interior of the body was also completely coated in sodium bicarbonate, which delayed the process of decay. Moreover, sodium bicarbonate was added to the herbal salves used to coat the bandages in which the mummies were wrapped.

Obviously we're not interested in mummifying you here – quite the opposite, we want to make you feel rejuvenated by realigning your acid-base balance! First, it is important that you set a standard against which you can measure the progress of your body's deacidification. Don't let yourself be terrorised by those paper strips. After, humankind has been able to determine its acid levels precisely for 5000 years with-

³ Sodium bicarbonate has always been quarried naturally. These days, America is the only country which still has rich supplies of this mineral.

out having to urinate on a strip of paper every morning. It's better to pay close attention to the bodily signs; these will immediately show you how things are improving. For this you will need a mirror, which you should look into every day to check the following:

- ▶ Reddened sclera (the whites of the eyes)
- ▶ Reddened skin, particularly on the cheeks and chin
- ▶ Enlarged pores on the cheeks and nose
- ▶ Swollen eyelids
- ▶ Red patches which appear as soon as you get excited (stress spots)
- ▶ Marbled skin on your upper arms

Other "test markers" include:

- ▶ A sour taste in your mouth
- ▶ Bad breath
- ▶ Acid reflux after meals
- ▶ Indigestion (signal that the liver metabolism is flagging)
- ▶ Stinking urine
- ▶ Stinking faeces

The most important sign of healing is of course your general well-being. The extent to which you feel better in your skin, in your bodily temple, shows how your acid-base balance is being restored. Now to the cure. First you should remember two things:

1. The alkali should always be taken before meals, never afterwards, because this can severely disrupt your digestion.
2. A deacidification cure must be short so that the body can quickly start regulating itself again.

Both of these points are often ignored, which leads to frustration and even higher acid lev-



els. Frustration makes you feel “sour”, pleasure makes you feel great!

For the sodium bicarbonate cure, you will need:

- ▶ Natural sodium bicarbonate
- ▶ Organic lemon
- ▶ Agar-agar (alga)
- ▶ Mineral oil (petrolatum)
- ▶ Healing earth (e.g. Luvos)

How to take the cure:

- ▶ Every morning, stir half a teaspoon of natural sodium bicarbonate into cold water, add hot water and stir again. Drink as hot as possible on an empty stomach.
- ▶ A few minutes later, drink 1 glass of cool water with 6-12 drops of freshly squeezed lemon juice.
- ▶ Approx. 15 min. after drinking the lemon juice, chew on 4-5 strips of agar-agar using plenty of saliva (gets rid of all toxins).
- ▶ Wait another 15 minutes before having breakfast.
- ▶ Take half a teaspoon of healing earth between meals.
- ▶ Take 1 dessertspoon of mineral oil (petrolatum) in the evening.

If you read this attentively, you will notice that the alkaline drink is followed by citric acid. There is good reason for this. If you only drink the sodium bicarbonate, the stomach juices will immediately be neutralised. However, the stomach needs hydrochloric acid for the digestive process, and so the parietal cells in the stomach will quickly resume hydrochloric acid production. Drinking a glass of diluted lemon juice will stop this happening, as the citric acid will be converted into a base.

This cure should be taken for 10 days. Take a week’s break, then repeat the cure for another 10 days. Healing earth (e.g. Luvos) is a traditional remedy and is well tolerated by even the most sensitive digestive systems.

3.2 Colon cleansing with “rocking”

There are also plenty of options available on the market for bowel cleansing, but they all work on the principle of swallowing something in the hope that the pills or capsules will somehow work. Bowel cleansing and healing begins in the conscious mind. You should be quite clear about three things:

- ▶ Your intestine houses your enteric nervous system or “abdominal brain”. This is the body’s oldest and most important entity and tells you what is good for you and what isn’t. Without your abdominal brain, you wouldn’t gain or lose a single ounce in weight.
- ▶ Your intestine has to move rhythmically, otherwise you will suffer from constipation or diarrhoea.
- ▶ Your intestine works best in its own time.

Let’s begin with the last point. Start by taking a look at the body clock (fig. 14).

As you can see, “intestine” is a general term. In reality, the intestine is made up of two totally different sections. I would even refer to them as two “intestinal personalities”, as they reflect certain aspects of our character very accurately. The small intestine (red arrow) is governed by the fire element and functions at its best between 12 noon and 2 pm. Why? Because nature expects us to eat at midday and