



# HEYMISCHER HOMEOPATHY

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The Schmendrick's Guide to  
Remedying Yiddish Kvetches

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## INTRODUCTION

### I. INTRODUCTION HOMEOPATHY AND KVETHCHING

#### *Got shikt di refueh far der makeh*

#### **God sends the remedy for the disease**

In the Old Testament, Exodus 33, the Lord kvetches that the Israelites are a stiff-necked people whom he has half a mind to destroy. Later, when atoning for His grouchiness *Got shikt di refueh far der makeh* (God sends the remedy for the disease). Actually, He sends two (see the **Sheygets necked** entry in Chapter Three).

The first remedy treats tension not just of the neck, but of the entire body. A **nebbish** (poor soul) who qualifies for this particular remedy may even have visions of death. Foreseeing future need, the Lord sends a second and less dire remedy. Along with stiffness of the neck, the second medicine addresses a certain restlessness: “Gangway, gotta hustle my *toches* (posterior) into exile.” Spoiler alert: the remedy is made from the poison ivy botanical, which also cures itching as in: “Oy, am I itching to get the hell out of here!”

#### **We Are All Kvetchers**

An equal-opportunity pastime, kvetching makes us human. More than just complaining, kvetching’s domain extends to lamenting, griping, cursing, noisily grieving or woefully wondering.

A persistent kvetch, one that you cannot let go of, issues from the soul. It cries, “My dignity is undercut!” “My confidence is undermined!” or, “Oy, my personality has been warped!” A kvetch that says it all is “I am going **meshugeh** (crazy)!”

We should consider these gripes to be the tip of the iceberg of kvetches, icebergs below whose waterline *rizik* (gargantuan) existential lamentations lie in a solidly frozen state. Heymischer Homeopathy focuses on and introduces homeopathic remedies for these frozen-in-place gripes.

## **Kvetching and Chronic Illness**

Over time, a frozen-in-place gripe proves ruinous to health. We can say that it *constitutes* the reason for an underlying chronic illness. Since undoing an entrenched gripe offers the most promising route to a cure, homeopathy directed to such ends is known as *constitutional care*.

## **Why Yiddish Kvetches?**

Yiddish kvetches are poignant. Yiddish metaphors are colorful. The Yiddish language evinces a **heymisch** (earthy, authentic and down-home) feeling. The English language craves the Yiddish touch.

Let's compare English and Yiddish words beginning with "sh." So many English "sh" words are harsh. They convey limitation (shackle, shear, shush, shutter, shy); danger (shank, shark, sheer); discard (shuck); explosiveness (shout, shatter); suppression (shut, shut up); dishonor (shirk); smallness (shack, shrimp, shrink); falseness (sham, shinola); fear, shame and filth (shriek, shame, shit).

Yiddish "sh" words tell a different story. Shlep, shlemiel, shmatta, shmeggege, shmendrick, shnorrer, shpinkle, and shtup are endearing. What's more, they tickle our funny bone. This comic contrast calls for infiltration into the English language.

The quiriness of Yiddish renders it famously resistant to translation (does "carry" or "pull" convey the poignancy of "shlep?") In similar fashion, a homeopathic "remedy-picture" resists summarization of its core essence in any number of words. Yet, homeopathy stakes its effectiveness on a precise correlation of a core kvetch and a "remedy-picture."

The advantage of Yiddish for homeopathy's match lies in its expressiveness, especially with regard to kvetches that provide indelible remedy signposts. Yiddishizing homeopathy makes it easier to understand and also more fun to study or to teach.

## Homeopathic Law of Similars

The principle underlying homeopathic practice is known as the Law of Similars: “Use like to cure like.” It can be summarized as follows:

**“In the appropriate situation, symptoms of illness or disease are effectively addressed by administering a substance whose normal toxic effect induces equivalent symptoms.”**

Here is an application of this principle: To keep fear of horseback riding from becoming engrained, one is often advised, “Get back on the horse that threw you.” In homeopathy, however, one gets back on a *similar* horse—that is, a horse, but a tamer version of the original, unruly animal. Or, for example, to get over a morning hangover you sip a teaspoon of the same alcoholic beverage you abused the night before. The beverage is *similar*, but not the quantity.

from CHAPTER ONE  
Meshugass “Craziness” Kvetches



## **Apikores** Heretic, skeptic or unbeliever

Within the orthodox community it is feared is that college education will corrupt traditional values, causing a devout *chassid* to become an *apikores*. The word's usage also connotes a heretical, pleasure-seeking ethic such as espoused by the Greek philosopher Epicurus whose name sounds so much like *apikores*.



*Nah, college didn't make me an apikores. I was like that long before*

*Chelidonium*

*Dulcamara*

Chelidonium people are not easily impressed. This reflects their compensating for having earlier been victimized. Stomach and eye problems they may have and cheese they crave.

Eschew discussion with unconvinced Dulcamara people. This is especially true in the springtime when they are at their worst. It always feels like you are in an argument. Yet for some *verkackte* (cock-eyed) reason the Dulcamara person will deny feeling angry. Forgive him because he may be indirectly kvetching that *zayn mogn iz in a pekl* ("his stomach is in a knot").

## **Farshtinkiner**

Also, **Paskudnyak**. Someone with ugly opinions, a bigot  
*Migulgl zol er vern in a henglayhter, by tog zol er hengen, un bay nakht zol er brenen* He should be transformed into a chandelier, to hang by day and to burn by night



*Call me farshtinkiner. But you, you're the cause of everything that's going wrong around here!*

*Granitum*

*Nitric Acidum*

The technology transforming a *farshtinker* into a chandelier is not yet available. Therefore we give a remedy.

That might be Granitum, for an arrogant, pugnacious loner. Instability seen in such a personality reflects the fact that the particular kind of Irish granite used in this remedy is radioactive.

Nitric Acidum applies for someone fault finding, pessimistic and grudge holding. The remedy has an affinity for rectal symptoms such as hemorrhoids. This explains why, when encountering a *farshtinkiner* you are tempted to utter the “You are an asshole!” curse. In kindness take a deep breath and say instead, “You have very negative opinions!”