

Fear and Homoeopathy

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A great allayer of fear

In the matter of allaying fear homoeopathy is of signal value; it possesses remedies capable of replacing panic by calm and apprehension by confidence.

Fear of Death may be prominent symptom in sickness. The remedies which can alleviate here are in the main violent poisons in the crude state which, therefore, hold the threat of death in the symptoms they induce.

Aconitum, Monk's Hood, known as the "most poisonous plant in Britain", is of special value when the fear is sheer panic, accompanied by extreme impatience and frantic restlessness.

Arnica exhibits a horror of imminent death in association with unbearable pain and a great fear of being touched or even approached.

Arsenicum Album, formerly the most popular weapon of the homicidal poisoner, is so sure he is going to die that he refuses both medicine and food, despite his feeling of utter exhaustion. Withal he is thirsty for sips of warm or hot water and incorrigibly restless in both mind and body.

Argentum Nitricum is a hurried, worried, apprehensive person who, when ill, adds the fear of death to his usual repertoire of fears and apprehensions; so that he may actually predict the hour or even minute of his impending demise.

Gelsemium subjects when sick become so utterly low in mind and weak in body that the fear of death readily obtrudes. Muscular weakness may be almost paretic and tremulousness so acute as to provoke a request to be held firmly or even to be sat on to control the shaking.

Phosphorus, naturally artistic, fearful, intensely imaginative almost inevitably becomes afraid of dying when ill.

Secale, the rye-fungus ergot, a virulent neuro-muscular poison, includes anxiety and fear of death in its alarming syndrome of burnings, haemorrhages, parasthesias and tendency to gangrene (St. Anthony's Fire).

Fear of the dark

Fear of the Dark is essentially fear of the unknown. It is frequently inculcated in sensitive children by a nurse or some other person who ought to know better. To the imaginative child this world of blank darkness becomes peopled with all manner of horrific and malignant

denizens, from whom the only escape is into light and the company of friendly folk.

Calcarea Carbonica children are desirous of company, extremely jumpy and easily startled; noises heard in the dark acquire all sorts of sinister connotations.

Cannabis Indica subjects with all their perceptions, sensations and emotions magnified to the 10th degree quite naturally exhibit a horror of darkness.

Camphora patients showing anxiety and restlessness almost to the point of frenzy are terrified and particularly scared of everything nearby in the dark.

Lycopodium types like to know just where they are and what is going on here; they shrink from what is new, unaccustomed and unknown. Hence they too fear the dark with all its vagueness and uncertain possibilities.

Medorrhinum amid a plethora of fears, tendency to start at the slightest sound, a sense of unreality, hypersensitivity to touch, has also acute fear of the dark.

Phosphorus, over excitable, highly imaginative could be expected to fear the dark.

Pulsatilla so dependent on the company of other people is naturally afraid when alone in a dark room.

Stramonium, the poisonous rank-smelling week Thorn-apple, deserves mention in this connection. There is intense fear in the dark and a desire for a dim light in the bedroom at night. Oddly enough there is also a dread of glistening objects. There is also a liability to stumble if moving in the dark or even if attempting to walk with the eyes closed.

Fear to Cross the Road or Fear of Going Out of the House. This peculiar disability is not uncommon. It may be associate with attacks of panic in which the sufferer suddenly trembles violently, may be unable to remain standing, sweats, weeps, has a rapid pulse and feels extreme unreasoning fear.

In an article in the Lancet referring to this condition it is stated, "the impression remains that there was no adequate treatment for these housebound women".

This seems an unnecessarily gloomy attitude when a remedy, **Aconitum**, with just this Materia Medica picture is available. Some patients indeed refer to their supply of Aconitum as their "panic powders" or "pills" as the case may be. This invaluable remedy is not only a painreliever, it is also a fear-allayer.

Lack of self-confidence

Fear of Failure. This tormenting emotion or mental attitude does not denote any lack of ability; rather does it derive from a basal lack of self-confidence. Three remedies call for

special mention in this connection.

Anacardium, the Marking-Nut, is characterised by sudden loss of memory, irresolution - unable to come to a definite decision about anything - complete lack of self-confidence. A feature of this remedy is a feeling of improved well-being while eating.

Lycopodium, the Club Moss, over conscientious, perfectionist, fearful of a new role lest he fail to succeed, lacks self-confidence but generally does quite well when actually at grips with the situation.

Pulsatilla, mild, amenable, anxious to please, is scared lest se fail to do so.

A Plethora of Fears. Some unfortunates are fearful on several scores, may perhaps be afraid of "they don't really know what". The rubric "full of fears" is found under quite a number of remedies, notably Arsenicum Album, Calcareo Carbonica, Causticum, Graphites, Lac Caninum, Medorrhinum, Phosphorus, Tuberculinum.

In a recent number of the Journal of the American Institute of Homoeopathy, Dr. F.K. Bellokossy mentions a Medorrhinum patient who "has most all the fears in the repertory; fear of disease, fire, pain, insanity, high places, flying, strangers, spiders, snakes, spending money foolishly, trifles, appearing on the stage." An extreme case, but Medorrhinum is a remedy of extremes.

Fear of Feathers, or anything which flutters and flaps may be met with. It may be associated with a fear of cats or dogs, which would suggest Tuberculinum.

Fear of Someone Behind, like the snake lurking in the grass, impels the victim to seek the back seat on the bus or get back to the wall at a party. The remedy is **Lachesis**.

Fear of Knives. This fortunately is not often encountered. It is a horrible fear lest seeing a knife or other weapon lying handy it be picked up to inflict hurt on someone, perhaps even one's child.

Remedies suggested to counter this fear are Arsenicum Album, the "worried to distraction" remedy, and Nux vomica, capable of outbreaks of sudden violence when exasperated beyond measure. In one case, however, the remedy proved to be Coffea, chosen because aggravation occurred quite irrationally when she was amongst others and everybody seemed gay and

happy.

Fear which Persists. When fear initiated by some terrifying experience continues to haunt and cause distress the remedy of choice is ***Opium***.

It is, of course, essential to track down and uncover the cause of the fear in each individual case. If the threat is real then it must be faced with courage and common sense.

If, as is often the case, the threat is imaginary, lacking substance and actuality, it must be hauled into the daylight and seen for what it is or, rather, for what it is not. The indicated remedy will give invaluable help.