

50 years since liberation: a case by Francis Treuherz MA RSHom FSHom

January 1995: I decided that I cannot let the 50th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi death camps go without being mentioned. There have been some moving scenes on television and in our communities as the remembrance takes place.

Two weeks ago I drew number 1 out of a hat for the first case presentation of this year, at the weekly clinical meeting at the National Health Service general practice where I work. I decided to present the case a Jewish woman of 84 who survived some horrors in Europe, came to England as a refugee and was then deported to Australia as an enemy alien. This was revealed when I asked her when did her problem begin? She said 50 years ago. Where were you 50 years ago? In Australia. How did you get there I asked noting her Central European accent? I was deported she said and gave me an account of her life. She returned to the UK soon after and remained here ever since. She is married happily. She looks frail. She has a foot deformity but manages well with special shoes. I saw her in June 1994. She presented as a closed rather taciturn individual who did not smile.

She was referred for true vertigo. Her GP confirmed in his letter that she had had it for 50 years.

I ascertained the following:

VERTIGO; CLOSING eyes; amel.
VERTIGO; FALL, tendency to; sideways
VERTIGO; LYING; while
VERTIGO; OBJECTS seem; turn in a circle, to
VERTIGO; RISING; on
VERTIGO; TURNING; circle; in, as if
MIND; SLOWNESS; old people, of
GENERALITIES; AIR; open; amel
EXTREMITIES; COLDNESS; Foot

She told me after some conversation that she had become hard. She used to be able to show affection but now she could not. See just what wise Roger Morrison says about this in his *Desktop Guide*.

The mental pathology occurs from a type of slowly advancing 'induration' of the mind. The patient develops an emotional flatness or hardness which eventually leads to indifference and depression. On the mental level we see fixed ideas and superstitions. Eventually we can see progressive mental deterioration and senility.

I prescribed *Conium* 6c bd, to stop if better or if unwanted reaction, to repeat if relapse, to call if in doubt, and to return after 4 weeks.

4 week follow up. The vertigo ceased quite soon, and after one week she stopped the *Conium*. No prescription. Repeat if relapse, return in 4 weeks.

In another 4 weeks she returned again. No more vertigo.

She reported disturbed sleep, exhaustion, the day's events on her mind, feeling generally exhausted. When did this begin I asked? In Vienna in 1938 she replied. I listened and pondered. I did not want to undo the work of the *Conium*, but this was not the required remedy. I prescribed *Kali phosphoricum* 6x available at every corner pharmacy as a so called tissue salt.

After a week she sent a brief note that not only had her sleep been restored for 6 out of 7 nights in the first week, but her energy and her spirits had lifted. She felt well being again! The note is in the file. She returned for evaluation after 4 weeks, she actually looked happy, and smiled a little, and was discharged with encouragement to return if there was any relapse. Her GP says she continues well when she came for a new pair of special shoes recently.

I have often discussed these tortured histories with colleagues, and prescribed all sorts of remedies like *China*, *Belladonna*, *Aurum*, *Natrum muriaticum*. I never managed it so well and with such low potencies before. I offered the group some explanation in the form of a handout about *Conium*, a summary of *Kali phosphoricum*, and read a brief account of the suffering of Socrates. One of the doctors at the clinical meeting suggested that it was because of my origins and empathy that she recovered, and that I was the placebo! Her colleagues rounded on her and disagreed.

We Jews have no monopoly of suffering, but homeopathy, given to the world by the Almighty as Hahnemann said, may have a monopoly of healing.

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