

Editorial for the month of May 2008

My experiences with drug addictions and homoeopathy

Drug addiction is a pathological state; the disorder involves the progression of acute drug use to the development of drug seeking behavior. The diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders, 4th edition, categorized three stages of drug addictions - preoccupation, anticipation, binge intoxication and withdrawal or negative effect. These stages are characterized respectively by constant craving and preoccupation with obtaining the substance, using more of the substance and experience the necessary intoxicating effects and experiencing tolerance withdrawal symptoms and decrease motivation of normal life activities.

Drugs that caused addiction as seen in my patients are:

1. Stimulants: I have seen caffeine, cocaine and nicotine as a most common stimulant that my patients have abused in their life.
2. Sedatives and hypnotics: alcohol and barbiturates are the two common things which are seen in my practice.
3. Opiate and opioid analgesics: I have seen morphine and codeine, two naturally appearing opiates as the common cause of the addiction but in the last few years I have seen lot of addiction in young generation who has started abusing anabolic steroids.

The addictive potency of the drug varies from substance to substance and individual to individual. Drug such as codeine and alcohol typically require many more exposure to addict the users, then drug such as heroine and cocaine likewise the person who is psychologically and genetically predisposed to addiction is much more likely to suffer from it.

If I have to really cool down two addictions that I have seen in my practice then they are alcohol and nicotine in the form of tobacco especially cigarettes.

I would like to give justice to my article by explaining the homoeopathic approach for deaddiction of the above substances.

My first case is of chronic alcoholism accompanied by recurrent acute alcoholic episodes. It is now more than 6 years that I am practicing in the

city of Pune in Ruby Hall Hospital, there I saw a patient who was highly learned man in his 50's who comes to me for recurrent bronchitis, on further case taking I found out that he was practically addicted to alcohol and cigarettes smoking. What was the person like? highly educated, highly intellectual, only child in the Maharashtrian family who was born in a house which was known to the society for their dramatic performances, Marathi literature and the parents were extremely famous personalities in Maharashtrian community especially in the field of Marathi movies and dramas. Both father and mother respectively very busy in their professional life and hence the child basically was neglected in his early childhood, this invited a poor self confidence and timid personality and ultimately by the age of twelve the child was unable to bear the peer pressure, the pressure from the parents, the pressure from the society to perform because the parents were very famous, rich and popular and so he started taking the help of tobacco smoking and then alcohol.

This went up to so much that it started affecting his studies, his progress in life; he was B.A., M.A., B.Ed and was doing PhD since last many-many year but he could not finished his PhD because every time he will have a quarrel with his guide, he will do a research and keep the research incomplete because he has an argument and quarrels, so to support his lavish life style he started translating languages which he was good at e.g. from English to Marathi, from Hindi to Marathi but here also he will never finish the translation work given to him, as a result the publishers got angry on him and he lost many opportunities in life, slowly he started neglecting himself physically and emotionally. There was no stable job in his life, because of his alcoholic habit, frequent absenteeism from the job, a time came when he became practically dependent on alcohol and tobacco. With no money around he was dependent on his parents who were now getting old and he was practically living on the money of his parents. Unfortunately for him his parents also really never enjoyed the close bonding among themselves as they both had an ego issue. Later Father expired because of heart attack and now only mother was alive.

He was extremely fond of animals but he was not allowed to bring any animals in the house because the mother was allergic to the animals. Then one fine day he brought a road side dog in the house and the mother could not bear this disobedience from the son as a result the patient was kicked out from the house. And then he started living with his friends turn by turn, But with friends also he would quarrels and arguments.

Now what makes him angry??? Contradiction, and the anger will be quite sudden and then in the anger it will be physical also, he may become destructive also he can become violent also. He was very dirty, he never used to take bath, he used to neglect his physical body but he was highly intellectual. He was highly intuitive but very impulsive, he will be very impatient, he was very confident about himself but he will be a victim of his sudden morbid impulses.

From the very beginning as a child he had a strong fear of water, he loved alcohol, he loved to smoke cigarettes but he had a strong aggravation when he ate potatoes and sugar.

My first prescription was Mercurius solubilis. I took the most constitutional symptoms of him of his quarrelsome nature, this type of upbringing where the parents had a discord among each other and then he also have discords with his friends, his anger, the violence, the alcoholic habit, neglecting his physical body.

Too much into one direction that is too much into thinking process, too much into theories, too much into big talks but doing nothing for his life. All these were some of the strongest indications of Mercurius solubilis.

With Mercurius solubilis slowly his recurrent bronchitis in the next three months was much better; he has lost 10 kilos weight in last 6 months which he slowly started to gain.

But what I saw in him under the influence of homoeopathic drugs, his acute episodes of alcoholism was much reduced he slowly reduced his alcohol intake, his recurrent bronchitis was much better.

Then one fine day his mother phones me very fanatically that he has locked himself in a room and he is gulping alcohol from bottles one after another like a crazy man. He is not answering anybody, not talking to anybody when you ask him a question, he is refusing to answer. He does not want to talk to anybody as he has locked himself. And then after sometime when he opened the room his mother observed that his face was looking very angry and then he started shouting and shrieking very loudly. Also this stae was alternating with loud absurd singing. I understood this as a alcoholic mania where the patient is singing in delirium, refusing to answer absolutely and then becomes violent, also he could not recognize his own mother when she

entered the room. His body was trembling and he asked his mother frequently to get out of the house and leave him alone.

I immediately opened a book and from Hering guiding symptoms I saw the following statement under the remedy Agaricus. *Answering refusing to, answering aversion to, company aversion to, delirium with shrieking, delirium with singing, delirium recognizing no one, rage during drunkenness, physical strength increase with the violence of the rage.*

I put him on Agaricus 10M , I asked his mother to put 10 drops of medicine in a glass of 100 ml water and then mix the whole solution it in the bottle of alcohol. The patient finished about 300 ml. of alcohol bottle that night (which contained also Agaricus1M), by next day he was quite sober, calm. So now I asked the mother to continue this for few days without telling him that there is homoeopathic medicine inside. She followed my instruction to the dot and slowly everything calmed down, next month when I visited Pune again, I continued Mercurius, I went up to 10M for some months gradually the patient became more sober and responsible ,some months later patient got a good offer in Banaras Hindu University, there he took up a job for translation. Since last one year he is staying in Varanasi, he has practically given up his alcohol, he hardly drinks and smokes socially, he used to smoke about 30-40 cigarettes a day which is now only 5 per day which he has now promised me that he is going to completely stop it by the end of this year.

This is one case where I have given two homoeopathic medicine in different phase one was in acute alcoholic mania and another in chronic phase of alcoholism with extremely successful results.

There is another case which I remember of a very famous bollywood music director who consulted me for high cholesterol,hypertension and angina pectoris, diabetes mellitus and early renal failure. He was advised not to smoke, not to drink alcohol, not to take any drugs but he had a very bad habit of having 'Bhang' that is Cannabis indica, he also used to take opium, alcohol and smoke lots and lot of cigarettes. He had a strong sexual desire, he was too much into womanizing, he was extremely adulterous and he used to have lot of sexual fantasies.

Born and brought in typical Bollywood industry where a father was a very famous director and a producer, was always very busy, could not discipline

the child, mother was very mild and timid. He was extremely talented child, he used to play lot of musical instruments by the time he was 20 to 25, but along with this creativity he needed alcohol, cigarettes and woman. He was a very abusive person, he will use foul languages and also abuse and insult people around him, and he will abuse and insult his wife and children also. Under the influence of alcohol he may become violent. There was a time when he had little work in film industry for him ,this made him very sad and depressed, it was at that time his alcohol consumption becomes much more higher but whenever he has work his consumption will be less.

He could not get sleep and hence he needed alcohol a lot to allow him to go to sleep. He had two big dogs in his house, as he always said that dogs are more faithful then human being.

There are phases in his life when he work, works and works for hours together and then there is a time when he does not feel like working. His wife told me that he is very cunning, and he was highly egoistic individual. He had a strong fear of diseases like brain hemorrhage, renal failure, death, death due to major illnesses like heart attack etc. including cancer.

As a child he had a strong fear of robbers and water, nowadays his memory also became little forgetful. He used to have headaches many times, which will start from the occiput and will go all the way to the nose or it may go from the occiput to forehead. Many times he will get up from the sleep with an occipital headache. He had retinal hemorrhages in both the eyes which were treated with laser in the past.

Food wise he had a strong craving for sour fruits, meat, pickles and pungent food. He was a very hot patient, he would sleep on his abdomen and many times in his dreams he will have severe nightmares or he will see the dreams which were extremely joyous.

With these symptoms my prescription was Lachesis, I put him on Lachesis for next 6 months, I brought his diabetes under control, and I brought his renal panel under control, I brought his lipid profile under control and slowly his addiction towards alcohol and smoking started reducing. Though he was a little careless for his diet and though he was not a very sincere patient because he will take the medicine very irregularly but then when the reports became bad he used to immediately come and take treatment for 6 months very regularly and he will start showing the progress.

I treated him for a period of 6-7 years and only to see that his reports were getting better and better and by the end of 2000 he could give up his alcohol completely under the influence of homoeopathic medicine, he does smoke, now he only smokes few cigarettes in a year.

Well friends with the effect of right homoeopathic medicine over a period of long term with dietetic restriction, with little psychotherapy, with kindness and love addictions like alcohol, tobacco smoking which are so common in everybody's practice can definitely come under much control.

Thank you so much.