

Editorial for the month of October 2011

Homoeopathy and anxiety related disorder

What is anxiety? Every day we hear this word in our day to day practice. Some people consider anxiety as stress, some people consider anxiety as worry, many people come to us in our clinic with different causes of anxiety and different pattern of anxiety. People do tend to worry and become anxious over many different activities and events. Manytimes I have seen such kind of disorders very commonly running within a family so somehow I feel that there is an element of the genetic trait. Anxiety disorder is such a common thing I see it in every age and sex. But this has to do a lot with the personality of the patient because many times these anxious patient can say that they have being anxious as long as they can remember. Being anxious many times is a state where there is little or no cause to worry but they have been habituated to worry from one problem to another. The most common area of worry is family, relationships, work issues, money, health and other problems.

Sometimes the anxiety becomes so severe that its difficult for patient to control because there are many other symptoms that are associated with the anxiety like difficulty in concentration, fatigue, irritability, difficulty in falling asleep, if at all they are sleep their sleep is quite

restless and unrefreshing or in general the patients becomes quite restless and startles very easily. There may be headaches or tension headache or there may be little trembling or shakiness, sometimes one may also get nausea or loose stools.

The goal of homoeopathic treatment is to help the patient to function well in day to day basis of life. A combination of proper constitutional homoeopathic medicine is the best answer as many anxiolytic drugs can produce severe side effects. Only in an extreme case I refer my patient to psychotherapist for cognitive behavioural therapy. If the patient is already on anxiolytic drug like serotonine, nonepinephrine reuptake inhibitor, benzodiazepine such as alprazolam, then I try to immediately reduce it as early as possible.

Let me quote some interesting cases from my clinic. The first case is of a man who was 55 years old, who was diabetic for last 17 year and was on anti-diabetic drugs. He was keeping all the dietetic restriction for his diabetes. He was working in a bank on a good post. Suddenly he developed irritability, and started losing his temper quite frequently and later he developed anxiety, when this happened his blood sugar levels started to go high. He was never like that before. All these things started in the last 6 months. I tried to find out the cause but I could not. The only thing that has changed in last 6 months was his place of work,

he was transferred to a new office and in that particular office the work was quite chaotic and hence he had to spent extra energy and the staff who were working under him were not cooperative slowly he started to feel neglected and humiliated, on the other hand suddenly his wife had to go to United States to meet her sick mother so for about three and a half months he was all alone managing home and office.

His symptoms were mostly in the morning when he wakes up in the morning he develops sudden anxiety and also in the night when he goes to the bed and wants to close his eyes suddenly all the anxiety comes up. The anxiety was related to his health viz. what if something happens to him??? or if diabetes does not remain under control??? or if he develops some heart problem??? or if he develops some paralysis???, Whenever he becomes anxious he also gets eructation's with distension of the abdomen and then to divert his attention from the anxiety he goes out of his house for buying grocery or shopping or in the open space in presence of company of people.

Slowly he observeed that he cannot focus and concentrate properly in his job especially in the morning hours. This happens from 7 a.m. to almost 1 p.m. in the afternoon, he does not feel like getting up, he does not feel like eating his breakfast, doing his routine coures; otherwise

he is extremely responsible and a duty bound , conscientious person who really wanted to improve the situation at his work place.

As a child he had strict parents and hence with this fear he was obedient and performed well in school, this affected his confidence to some degree and later he would always take opinion of people around him before making any decisions. He also complained to me about acidity if he eats during the period of anxiety. Whenever he is nervous he develops little loose motion; he sleeps on sides,, he sweats all over his body whenever he exerts even slightly; he complained that he cannot have a heavy meal; his body functions very well when he takes a light meal like a soup or a salad which he enjoyed eating.

I started treating him with Lycopodium but nothing much happened excepting that his acidity and eructations were little ameliorated but rest of the symptoms were the same. He was a hot patient; he needed fan; he needed an air-condition, he wanted hot water bath even in Bombay but may be that is due to the culture because 60% people who live in Bombay are taking a hot water bath in the morning even in summer.

I was trying to figure out a remedy based on causative factor. Now I took two more additional symptoms: ailments from responsibility and ailments from rudeness of others because the staff that used to work

under him was not cooperative and this new situation required extra responsibility, I added this symptoms with his previous symptoms like: anxiety in bed, anxiety with fear; anxiety about his health; anxiety morning waking on; business incapacity for; wants company; concentration difficult morning; self-confidence want of; confusion of the mind morning; fear waking on; eructation empty; heartburn; constant nausea; nervous diarrhoea; sleeps on side; perspiration after exertion slightest; and loves soup and salad.

Now I selected Magnesium muriaticum 30C it was given every day one dose for three weeks. After three weeks he reported to me that he felt much better. I continued the same medicine for three more weeks where I see a definite improvement in his anxiety levels even though his bank doctors had advised him allopathic drugs; he never took it because in his family there was a strong faith in homoeopathy. After one and a half months his anxiety came down almost 70% and this is the time when I gave him placebo and I said that look now you have to change your life style, you have to accept people's handicaps, you have to accept things as it is. I gave him little session on psychotherapy, asked him to take a morning walk, asked him to listen to the music and less dependent on homoeopathic medicines.

After one and a half months he reported that he rarely gets an anxiety attack, I gave him Magnesium muriaticum 1M 1 dose and then asked him to be on placebo for a long period. After 4 months there was no trace of anxiety, he happily accepts his new job all the problem related to stress, physical problem emotional problem were much better, he could sleep nicely and enjoyed his life.

The second case was of a 37 years old male teacher working as a mathematics teacher in a secondary school, he developed sudden anxiety, weakness of memory. He considered this quite normal but when it become troublesome it started affecting work and now students started making comments on his mistakes, he was forced by his wife to see a general practitioner who gave him some tranquilizers but the drugs did not suit him, one of his relative who was my patient recommended homoeopathy. He came to me with severe anxiety in the morning as soon as he wakes up, he does not want to go to school, he does not want go for work, he has a strong fear that he won't be able to perform, he daily forces and drags himself to the school to teach.

He was quite discouraged and negative when he came to me thinking that he won't be ever able to teach mathematics because when he wants to talk in the class and teach he suddenly forgets; he forgets equations; he forgets calculations; he makes mistakes; he forgets the

things which he had kept. He is quite sad and depressed in the morning because of his anxiety because that is hindering his routine life and that is also hindering his job giving him fear of financial insecurity in future.

Basically he is quite timid individual, not much ambitious, always wanted to do simple job, earn money for his family, never had big dreams. He was suffering from male pattern baldness this gave him some complex. As a student he suffered from migraine and so he always thought it is better not to do lot of education and strain his brain. His migraines were always worse in a warm congested room and better in a cold open air. He was thirsty and constipated, in the morning he has to visit toilet 2-3 times to clear the bowel, His hands were always cold and rough because of cracks. He sleeps on right side; he does not like to eat vegetables he prefers eating legumes, rice and meat.

I asked him why this anxiety started? He replied this is slow ongoing process since last one year but it became worse in the last three months, he said that ever since one of his colleagues died because of a road accident two years back. He observed that his health deteriorated since then, he kept on thinking what if something happens to my health? This affected also his mind very strongly, other than this there was no other cause.

He was mild, He mentioned that in the night it became difficult for him to go to bed and sleep because it takes lot of time for him to go to sleep deeply also his sleep is quite interrupted and restless, he wakes up at 2 o'clock or 3 o'clock in the morning , in the morning it becomes difficult for him to wake up, after waking he does not like to go to the school.

I basically also thought that he was teaching in a class of 65 students which is big number, keeping that in to consideration I started first Kali-phos 30C and later Kali-phos 200C. My main indication for that remedy was anxiety in the morning, confusion in the morning, fear of work, making mistakes, sadness in the morning, headache better in the open air, and coldness of the hand. He was not better so I increased the potency to 200 and then 1M but nothing happened. The symptoms remaining the same, the totality remaining the same, I discovered that he had a yellow discoloration of his tongue, It was dirty yellow then I thought about a remedy which has extreme degree of thirst with yellow discoloration of the tongue who is hot patient with anxiety in the morning especially after waking up, fear of work, fear of death, memory problems especially for what he was about to say or what was about to do, with constipation for soft stool, these were the leading indications of the remedy Kali-sulphuricum.

I immediately changed my prescription to Kali-sulphuricum 30C one dose every day for next 15 days. The response was dramatic. The first

thing to improve was his sleep, he could sleep comfortably the remedy did not help him in his anxiety, so I repeated Kali-sulph 30C for one more month, now his memory improved, his mistakes were less often and he became more confident which was a good sign. After three months his anxiety became better by more than 60%. I asked him now that are you tormented or think about the incident of your colleague who died in a road accident?? he said no, I now never think of it, I am not now much concerned about what happens to me, I have left everything in the hands of God, I just do not realize why I was so anxious being an intelligent educated!!!! why did I take so many things on my mind and destroyed my happiness, the self realization came with Kali-sulph which is a very good sign.

Kali-sulph as you know is a remedy which does not have a big mental picture but we can use this remedy manytimes by knowing the common traits of Kali and Sulphuricum. The only difference that I see with other Kali is that Kali-sulph are basically mild people, they are not obstinate and headstrong like other Kali's like Kali-carb or Kali-iodide. Manytimes I see the element of self pity in Kali-sulph, they are quite warm blooded and thirsty. They have a yellow coating of the tongue; their hands are cold to touch; and they have cracked and dry skin.