

THE AMERICAN HOMEOPATH

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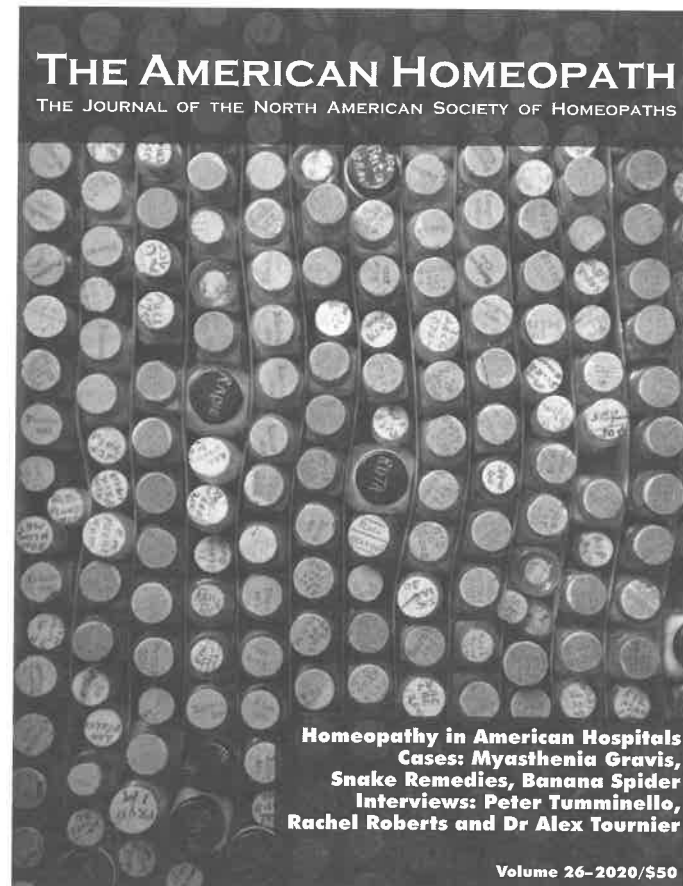
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Cover

Our cover image this year is from David Avidor, a photographer whose father-in-law was the late homeopath, Dr Robert Schore. David took this photo of a drawerful of remedies belonging to Dr Schore. It seems a great reflection of the varied topics in this issue, based on the timeless foundation of homeopathy.

THE AMERICAN HOMEOPATH

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Using the Diversity of the Animal Kingdom to Help Our Clients

By Vatsala Sperling, MS, PhD, PDHom, CCH, RSHom(NA)

Since Hahnemann's time, homeopaths have been using remedies made from minerals, plants and animals (all of which are considered sentient in the Hindu faith). Recent advances in homeopathy have opened up a vast universe of remedies. We have learned to cast a wider net in search of a simillimum, but our task of zooming in on a remedy has become harder. Many choices confront us every time we take a case and ponder over what remedy to give.

Peter Fraser¹ recommends that we pay attention to the background and the foreground of the case and pick up the emerging themes. Perhaps one theme will be more strongly emphasized than others, but the client will drop sufficient hints that constitute the background of the case. Any one or a few of these issues might be vital to the client and in that area s/he will unfailingly express dynamic energy and movement. In witnessing this dynamic energy, it is helpful to understand the life narrative of clients, their unique means of expression, their individual style of describing their symptoms, and their personal way of expressing animation. It is also very helpful to observe when and how they contradict themselves. They can become quite animated while describing certain situations and symptoms because issues in these areas restrict them in their development. In these areas the key to their growth is hidden.

Animation can be very subtle or quite pronounced. For example, an altered pitch in the voice, whole body gesture, hand gesture, small twitching in the facial muscles, eye movement, making or avoiding eye contact, smiling, laughing, smirking, scoffing, whistling, singing or humming. Or there may be a total absence of all of these when the client gets into a state of silence and does not know what to say or how to say it—but this silence is intense, and quite saturated with raw energy.

Contradictions are important too. The paths to illness and healing are the same. At an important juncture which holds the key to solving the mystery, the client may be silent, doubt themselves or actively contradict themselves.


I pay close attention to subtle expression which is above and beyond hand gestures. By combining the background and foreground of the case, we can arrive at the main features of the case that will guide us toward a remedy, subkingdom and kingdom. Take for example, snakes. Indicators for remedies made from snakes: issues of social and physical environment; power or lack of it; keen perception and clairvoyance; concern for themselves; periodicity; aggravation from tightness around the throat or abdomen; change; suspicion, mistrust, jealousy, envy; sense of disadvantage; revenge; loss of control over impulses; disguise, manipulation, charm; loquaciousness or confused speech; and paralysis of body or will-power.

As shown in the table below, snakes feature prominently in the repertory¹.

Snake Species	Number Of Rubrics	Rubrics Showing Lachesis
Lachesis	9888	9888
Crotalus horridus	2318	1368
Naja	1501	809
Elaps	1357	652
Crotalus	983	562
Cenchrus	855	441
Vipera	824	539
Dendrophis	348	158
Bungarus	222	84

Lachesis is the best known and most-represented snake remedy. Any rubric that points to snakes is highly likely to include *Lachesis*. But it is good to remember that "Everything that slithers is not *Lachesis*" (Rajan Sankaran, 1981).

Currently, over 2900 snakes are known. Snakes are classified into distinct groups. Although repertorization will probably indicate *Lachesis*, we have to fine-tune the process of choosing a snake remedy from amongst the many that are available.



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Classification of snakes:

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Reptilia

Order: Squamata

Suborder: Ophidia (snakes)

Infraorder: Alethinophidia (all snakes except blind snakes and thread snakes)

Infraorder: Scolecophidia (blind snakes and thread snakes)

Infraorder Alethenophidia (all snakes) is further divided into

Family: Colubridae (harmless, rear-fanged snakes)

Family: Boidae (constrictor boas and pythons)

Family: Elapidae (neurotoxic venom; bite repeatedly and hold)

Family: Viperidae (hemotoxic venom; stalk prey, bite and release)

Besides these four families, there are fourteen more families under Alethinophidia and three families under Scolecophidia.

The family Colubridae contains almost two-thirds of all snake species. Colubrids are found all over the world except the Arctic and Antarctic circles. Most Colubrids lack venom. Some Colubrids have venom-producing Duvernoy's glands that deliver very weak venom to the fangs placed in the rear of the mouth. This venom is harmless to humans. Because the fangs are placed in the back of the mouth, they have to bite their prey repeatedly to inject venom. Colubrids are non-venomous snakes, so their survival depends on appearing as though they could be dangerous. They mimic and copy the behavior of dangerous snakes but they do not possess the will, ability or strength to fight back. The entire mimicry aspect of Colubridae is geared toward their own survival and these weaker, smaller, harmless snakes survive by looking more dangerous than they actually are².

The question that arises naturally is that when clients need remedies from less dangerous snakes, will they express the snake qualities of the feared *Lachesis*? How will people express the energy of Colubrid snakes during case-taking? To answer this question, I did a retrospective analysis of cases from my practice. I found that in the background and foreground of the case, clients presented issues of the animal kingdom and of snakes in particular. However, the unfolding of their life narrative invariably pointed to weak willpower, an attitude of animals that are low in the food chain, and a display of characteristic threatening behaviors which are truly harmful. It is an assumed posture so that they can defend themselves. In essence, they appear to be dangerous but they are not.

At this point, I want to draw your attention to the fact that Scholten³ first introduced the concept of the periodic table for the organization of mineral remedies and he connected the stages of human development to the increasing complexity of the rows of the periodic table. In recent years, the Joshis⁴ have placed snakes (and other animal species) in the periodic table. This placement is based on the nature and behavior of the animals and whether they are prey or predators.

Snakes in the periodic table:

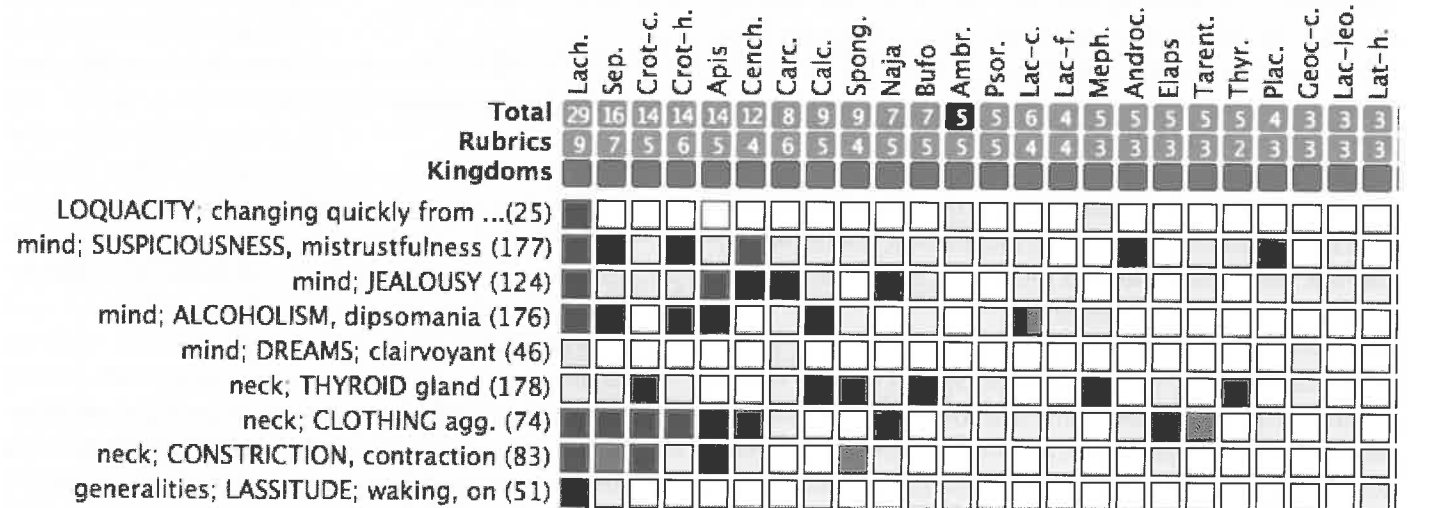
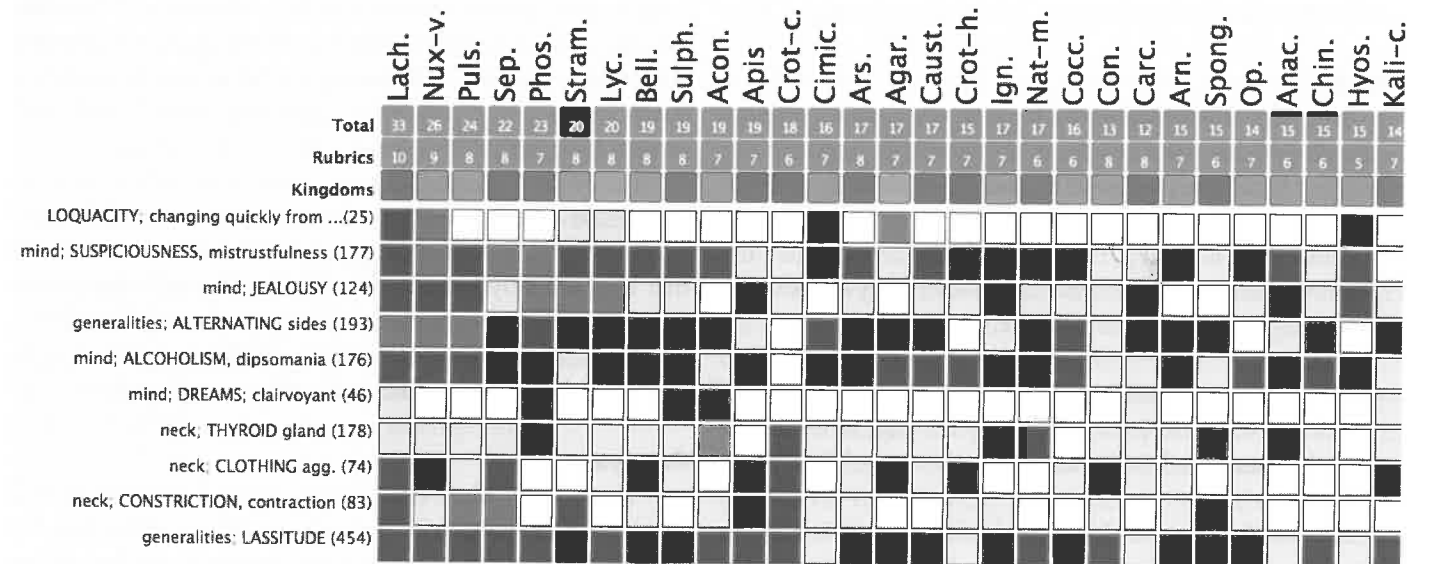
Row	Theme	Snake
1	Dilemma – exist or not	--
2	Complete dependence	--
3	Development of ego	--
4	Self-protection	Non-venomous Colubridae mimic other snakes for self-preservation
5	Creativity/ seek appreciation and attention	--
6	Responsibility, leadership, dictatorial, high self-esteem, authoritative, exude power and strength	Elapidae— Naja, Elaps, Boidae— pythons make nests, brood eggs, show responsibility
7	Malicious, insecure about losing power, destructive, malevolent	Viperids, boas, anacondas

Summary of snake cases chosen for analysis: 3 males, 7 females, 14-67 years of age.

Loquacity	8/10
Worse upon waking	5/10
Substance abuse / dependence	4/10
Suspicion	7/10
Jealousy	8/10
Clairvoyance	3/10
Competition	5/10
Throat issues	1 liked pressure 9 did not like pressure
Thyroid issues	4/10

Repertorization of the most common symptoms brings up *Lachesis*. The first graph shows all remedies. The second graph shows remedies after filtering for animal remedies.

What did my clients get other than *Lachesis*?



Case	Remedy From Colubridae
1	<i>Elaphe guttata</i>
2	<i>Cyclagras gigas</i>
3	<i>Natrix natrix</i>
4	<i>Lampropeltis triangulatum</i>
5	<i>Thamnophis sirtalis</i>

Cases 1-5 are covered in this paper.

I found that during case-taking, when patients are not comfortable going to the source and sensation, it is very useful to patiently listen to their life narrative and observe how they describe their issues, concerns and life situations. This process gives a clue about their level of self-esteem, whether they convey the energy of prey or predator, how they view responsibility to self, offspring and group. This information

is used for placing animals in the periodic table and using the same information, we discover where in the periodic table our patient is located. Following this process, I have solved cases and chosen various snake remedies that match the energy, self-esteem and personality of the patients.

In the five cases presented below, the themes of the animal kingdom are present: sexuality, violence, me vs you, self-esteem, self-protection, abuse, attractiveness, competition, safety and security.

All five cases also show themes of snakes: loquacity, deception, secrecy, jealousy, suspicion, parental neglect, hiding, escape, sneakiness, dread of snakes, being at a disadvantage, being the underdog, poverty, helplessness, powerlessness, mistrust, solitude, paranoia, clairvoyance, coiled-up, being two people, feeling miserable upon waking and afraid to go

to sleep, vulnerable like a molting snake, manipulation, two conflicting sides.

Case 1

Allu, 60-year-old male with hypertension, varicose veins, hemorrhoids, irregular heartbeat and insomnia. Undergoing treatment for alcohol and pharmaceutical addiction.

Allu speaks non-stop, moving from one story to the other, without catching his breath and he looks everywhere without making any eye contact with me.

Since he is on several medications, I ask him about his expectations of homeopathy. "Just help me cope with the life crisis. My diseases will be handled by real doctors," he says.

His problem is with his wife and a former girlfriend from 40 years ago whom he met again recently. The girlfriend had ended up marrying a man who hits her daily and then masturbates. They have no relationship other than one of abuser and victim. Allu wants to save her. They have been meeting secretly. On finding out about this affair, his current wife stabbed him forty times with a kitchen knife. He had to get stitches.

"I am used to violence. Christianity preaches peace and love, but dad hit me with a belt, my older brothers hit me with a pitchfork, cane and shoes, mom hit me with a broom. Life was rather old-fashioned on a farm. Parents were told, 'Spare the rod and spoil the child.'

"I earn well. My wife spends well. She is a liar. She is jealous that I have finally found my true love. My girlfriend will not come to me anymore if I do not get a divorce. My wife does not want to divorce me because she depends on my income. My girlfriend's husband has pulled a gun on me. I can't stand him.

"As a lad, I was a sneaky, gorgeous bastard. I was into wild orgies.

"I was always targeted for attacks and I got my fair share of bloody beatings. But I am here today, alive and standing, because I knew how to escape... I could sneak out just in time when they came looking for me. I would do anything to escape, blame others, run away, lie, cheat, hide... but I did get caught once in a while and when I did, I got beatings so bad that for several days I could not walk straight.

"I am good at keeping things in. For all the beatings I got, never once did I give back. When I drink, I am loud and sharp... I could burst into sarcasm and hurt with words. That is enough to diminish and threaten the enemies. I can strangle and choke people with cruel words. My verbal aggression scares people away. They are afraid of getting caught

in the maze of my cruel words. My girlfriend and I meet secretly—her husband and my wife do not know... if they did, I will be attacked again... but I am tired, I cannot take any more physical violence. When I get caught, I get thrashed... but mostly no one can find me... give me a pinhole and I will escape through that."

While talking about food cravings (steak and lobster) he mentions his disgust for creepy crawlies, and volunteers that he absolutely hates snakes. "I dread being locked up in dungeon with squiggly snakes slithering on me." He shows a whole-body movement to indicate shuddering, shivering in disgust and vocalizes sounds indicating utter disgust.

Analysis

Themes of Colubridae: He was hunted down as a child and even now, people come after him seeking vengeance. He does not hit back but controls his reactions. He has an exceptional ability to escape, speaks loudly, using sarcasm for self-defense (row four). He mimics a rattle snake, creating fear with the use of sound.

Among Colubridae, corn snakes are reluctant to bite, and can escape via the smallest of outlets.

Remedy

Corn snake *Elaphe guttata* 200c.

Because of his spontaneous admission that he could escape from the smallest available outlets!

Elaphe guttata mimics boa constrictors in its feeding style. It mimics rattlesnakes in making a buzzing sound by vibrating its tail, and it also mimics copperheads in its strikingly attractive and beautiful coloration, but actually it is a simple, harmless, non-venomous, timid, docile and fearful Colubrid and its best defense mechanism is escaping from an enclosure. It is reluctant to bite.

Telephone follow up six months later

His alcohol consumption is way down. Going to AA. He does not feel the need for alcohol anymore. He is sleeping better even though he is taking the same amount of sleeping pills as before the remedy. "Even on maximum dosage, I was never able to get a good night's sleep but somehow, now, I am sleeping better. My hemorrhoids have not appeared even once in the past six months, previously I used to have them hanging out and bleeding many times every month. Doctors were recommending surgery. My varicose veins are still bad when I stand too much. My girlfriend has divorced her husband. I have separated from my wife. I do feel there is hope for a good future when my girlfriend and I can get married eventually.

"My life feels balanced, peaceful, and for once, I do not have to use cruel words... my girlfriend is kind to me, she

understands me. We get along well. She does not push my buttons. I do not hide and escape from her. She has encouraged me to manage my blood pressure with diet, exercise and relaxation. My numbers are improving."

He wanted to discontinue because it was hard for him to do telephone sessions since he could not hear well. He said he had no idea what I gave him or if homeopathy worked, but he felt that the remedy had helped him in ways that he could neither describe nor understand.

"I have never felt this good in all my life. Though doctors have piled up medication after medication on me, nothing gave me hope for my life like your sweet pills did."

Case 2

Nisa, 67-year-old-male with grief, addiction and anger.

An older man with a slender build and a full head of salt-and-pepper hair, he has a long history of many surgeries for spine and back complaints. During the session, he froths at the corners of his mouth, spit flying everywhere; he raises his voice, stares at me intently, strikes power-poses, and tries to flirt with me.

He has a history of abuse from his bipolar mother and his older brother who had a cleft lip. He had to show respect for this brother just so he could survive in the house. His father—who had money and status—left the sick mother and the two boys to fend for themselves. Nisa could have died of starvation, parental neglect and physical abuse from his brother. They lived without food and heat in a crumbling house.

He is an artist and a poet, but he claims to be extremely poor because the 1% have grabbed all the wealth and left people like him on the fringe. He uses very foul language to describe privileged people, politicians, republicans, and Donald Trump. "That snake should be squished before he poisons the whole country and casts his dark spell on the whole world," he says of the President. "He could revive the Nazi era in the USA and round up all the immigrants, Jews, Muslims, gays and lesbians, women, and all Democrats. You are a brown immigrant, I think you vote Democrat, you are married to a rich Jew. You have a son. All your wealth could be taken away in an instant. All of you could end up in a concentration camp designed, created and managed by Trump Inc. Ready for some

adventure, Doctor Sperling?" He spits out these highly paranoid, negative words without stopping to take a breath.

"America is built upon the corpses of slaves, native Americans, immigrants, and poor working-class people. Democracy is a façade here...the country is controlled by the 1%. Oh, how I hate them. They are the ones who should end up in concentration camps."

He says he is an angry person, but not physically violent. He gets suicidal ideas. But he does not have the courage to act on his dark impulses. He feels negative about most people. He lives in a very poor neighborhood. He caught a neighbor in the act of sexually molesting his own four-year-old daughter. He blew his top in anger, like a boiling kettle burst open (his words). He rushed to the neighbor, yelling and screaming in rage. Afraid, the neighbor stopped the act. The child was saved and then he called the social services. The child is now with a foster family. "I am very, very angry and I project an angry image to scare people away. I present a deceptively frightening

image. I look larger than life, more powerful than I actually am, so I can push people away and relish my solitude. I feel safe being alone. With my mom and older brother, I used all my wits just to survive and protect myself. I felt utterly lonely, helpless, powerless, could not do anything, just had to protect myself.

"When my brother abused me, I was full of fear. I could not trust anyone. I avoided people. I could sense their motives and intentions and I would move away.

"As a teenager and then an adult, if I sensed that someone wanted to hurt me, I would raise my voice to a high pitched, loud and angry tone, with an angry look, bulging bloodshot eyes, hands trembling in rage and going for their neck (he gives a demonstration of his anger), my whole body shows intense anger. I could hurt them physically, but I know that my anger is just a display, a tactic I use for self-defense. I chase away the troublemakers, they are stunned; I feel safe.

"I would rather leave than engage, but if I have to, I use anger effectively. My enemies are stunned. They cannot match my angry tone and appearance; they leave me alone.

"I feel stuck, trapped in a rut, no movement up or down, no movement sideways. I feel wounded, unable to defend myself from the 1%. I feel marginalized by the 1%. Trapped,

ANY RUBRIC THAT POINTS TO SNAKES IS HIGHLY LIKELY TO INCLUDE LACHESIS. BUT IT IS GOOD TO REMEMBER THAT "EVERYTHING THAT SLITHERS IS NOT LACHESIS" (RAJAN SANKARAN, 1981)

unappreciated, paranoid, angry, suicidal, jobless, poor, that is me. But I would love to be in a fluid place, be free to move, swim, dive, float, move away if I wanted to, do a dead man's float if I wanted to... what is life without freedom?" [He is fully animated. His hands and legs are moving; his eyes are moving as he shows how a free man is able to go with the flow.]

Analysis

Themes of Colubridae: Powerless but uses a strong display of anger to scare people away, looks more frightening than he is. When confronted, he would leave, not engage; frightened of injury, wants to protect himself. He comes alive while acting as a free man able to go with the flow... this makes me look toward colubrids that live in or near water.

He uses a water theme to describe his desire for freedom from being in a rut where he cannot move. He looks more dangerous than he really is as he mimics someone dangerous and powerful so people will leave him alone. Colubridae plus a water theme leads to the false water cobra.

Remedy

Cyclagras gigas 1M. False water cobra.

Cyclagras gigas strangles its prey and eats the stunned prey while it is partially alive. It mimics the cobra's ability to spread its hood and alarm a predator and it resembles boas in strangling prey.

Follow up after three months

Nisa is quiet and mellow: he does not mention or bad-mouth the 1%, Trump, and the Republicans. He does not refer to his suicidal thoughts. He is drinking much less, and his partner says he is much better these days, not as angry as he used to be.

Follow up after six months

No fights with anyone. He is creating art and selling some of his work to the 1%. "They can afford to buy my pricey shit... I cannot be angry at them." He has reduced alcohol to one bottle of liquor per month. Earlier he used to drink one every other day and when he came for the first appointment, I could smell alcohol on him. He wants to live. He and his partner are moving to a house near a lake with room for an open studio. He says he loves water. "If a piece does not sell, I can drown it in the lake," he says while running his hand through his hair, winking at me like a flirt and laughing. With his anger gone and alcohol intake reduced to a minimum, he is able to laugh and joke about his situation in life. This lightness and the ability to laugh at his own situation was missing in the case-taking interview. He had said nothing about his love of being near water. But during the case-taking, I paid minute attention to his animation when he described his being stuck in a rut and how he would like to be someone who could

move with the flow. Since the rest of his narrative pointed to a snake remedy, this particular observation led me to select *Cyclagras gigas* or false water cobra.

Case 3

Anma, petite, 50-year-old Hispanic, a highly successful businesswoman. She complains of business stress, sugar addiction, memory issues, hip pain from a fall and hypothyroidism. She is afraid to travel to South America, "Trump will not allow me to come back here." (Even though she is a legal resident.)

"I do not like to be in a group, do not like to hurt anyone. Stress paralyzes me, it always has. I am two people: one in the business world, and one in the private world." I notice she described the effect of stress on her as "paralyzes me."

"Negotiating with an intimidating big dog in my business. I can show my personality but it is stressful. I get filled with self-doubt. I get squished and he is larger than life. He is an open book. I get paralyzed reading him. I get suspicious of him and his motives and I get paralyzed. I do not know how to deal with him. Shall I be myself [insecure, high-strung and coiled up] or put on a cheery, powerful persona [deceit, misdirecting] and outdo him? I do not feel confident that I can do that. I feel unequal, unprepared to deal with this big guy.

"Hostile situations paralyze me, put me on the spot, make me uncomfortable, make me afraid and I become paralyzed.

"At three years of age, me and my four older sisters were sent away to foster homes. [Spontaneously narrates her childhood, "uncompensated state."] Mom committed suicide. Foster homes were hell on earth. Exploitation, humiliation, neglect, cruelty, gang rape, torture, other kids choking me, I felt paralyzed, unable to move, unable to resist an attack, lying still and defenseless on a cold floor.

"Paralyzed means my chest is constricted, I can't breathe, can't move, eyes half closed, dissociated, weak, drained, vulnerable, powerless, unclean, insecure." [She gives a demonstration of being paralyzed.]

"I would rather hide, not in the house, but outdoors, in between rocks, undergrowth, hide from abuse, anger, hostility. I do not want to attack. I would walk away rather than confront. I would rather be paralyzed and escape a moment of torture than confront and give back.

"Hiding is not living, fear of being discovered, squashed in a narrow spot, no voice, being in a box, walls touching all of your body, tight, small spot, I can get comfy in a very small space, it is a comforting feeling. Mom died, my sisters died. I could not help them. Lots of grief. Mom never spoke with me. She blamed us for her bad life. She told us her dirty se-

crets. Tending to kids was not her strength. Between eight and 14 years of age, after mom's death and when we girls lived in foster homes, I learned how dirty the world can be. I was dragged around in orgies. I ran out of the system when I was just 15. I never looked back. Now I have no family. I do not know and do not care to know what happened to my sisters. I want to feel safe. I am hyper-attentive, vigilant, quick, read people's intentions before they can speak, read their thoughts, see their motives, and I do not like to be taken by surprise.

"If someone expects something from me, I feel trapped and paralyzed [Highly animated whole-body gesture of lying flat on her back, belly up, limbs far apart, eyes rolled up, not moving, tongue hanging out, uses the expression, "paralyzed" spontaneously and repeatedly in various circumstances.] I always wear turtlenecks, scarves, I love them. Spring and winter are difficult times for me. I feel okay in the fall."

Analysis

Colubridae themes: Harmless, does not resist, attack, or invoke fear when confronted, instead feels paralyzed. Hides from and evades the attacker. Fear of injury, feels squished, afraid. *Natrix* uses paralysis for self-preservation. It plays dead so that the attacker will leave it alone. When paralyzed, she feels choking in throat and constriction in chest.

Remedy

Natrix natrix 1M.

Natrix natrix are grass snakes or water snakes and play dead as a defense against predators. When threatened, this non-venomous snake puffs up its body and hisses loudly in an attempt to frighten the predator. If it cannot escape, it ejects an intensely foul-smelling fluid from its anal glands. Next, it imitates death by rolling over on its back and becomes completely limp. It remains absolutely still with its mouth open, eyes rolled up, tongue hanging out for up to 15 minutes or until the attacker loses interest and gives it up for dead. Sometimes they fake attacks and strike without actually biting. They rarely bite in self-defense.

In a nutshell, the grass snake behaves like something it is not—hissing and puffing the body up to look big, striking fiercely but not biting and playing dead. The only purpose for all these displays is self-defense, a Row Four theme. Among Colubridae, *Natrix* (grass snake/water snake) is the only species that plays dead as a defense mechanism against predators.

Follow up

It has been eight months since she took the remedy and she has not needed a repetition.

"My hip pain is history. Doing great. Very happy; smooth, comfortable feeling. People have noticed and commented that I look more relaxed. Better able to deal with

stress. The Big Guy? Oh, he does not put me into paralyzed mode. I deal with him as an equal. I do not let him take over the stage. I stand my ground. I feel connected with my inner being. A complete spiritual transformation on the remedy. Not doubting and second-guessing myself. I feel braver, more self-assured, positive and full of potential. I never believed I could ever feel as comfy as I am feeling now. The grief from my life experience does not weigh me down. I am overwhelmed with appreciation for homeopathy and the remedy. I have a lot of energy, not fatigued as before. I feel comfy being in the world, doing my business. Eating natural foods, not craving the comfort of sugar. I do not need it. I feel 100% confident that I am doing my best. A miraculous transformation."

Case 4

Sush, a 45-year-old, tall and well-built woman with flowing hair down to her hips, has a glint of excitement and curiosity in her eyes. She stares at me without blinking much.

She was in a serious automobile accident at age 3 and again at age 33. She feels unsafe, surprised that she is alive. Very emotional. After the second accident, she began having flaky skin and a puffy face; she could barely step out of the house because everyone who saw her behaved as if they had seen a ghost with flaking skin. She suffers from recurrent boils with red, infected, angry points and oozing, smelly pus. She is tired of antibiotics. In the morning, her eyes are glued shut from sticky stuff. She feels miserable on waking and is afraid to go to sleep. She constantly remembers her accident. She is on medication for her thyroid issues.

When her skin is flaking, she wants to hide from everyone and remain unseen. She feels vulnerable, like a molting snake, sub-dermis exposed, epidermis not formed yet...yuk. (Her words.) She uses alcohol to numb her feelings. Desperate, despondent, possibly even suicidal. Hopeless, angry, feels, "Oh poor me, no one suffers as I do."

"Even as a little girl, I was fearful, hid behind curtains, under tables, in the closets, in the basement. I want to shrink away, escape, not be seen. Lying down and going to sleep is a torture.

"Feel all alone, stuck at the bottom of a dark hole, nowhere to go, and if I come out, I am exposed, steroids do not help.

"As a person, I am bossy, loud, opinionated and manipulative. I scare people away. I tell my husband what to do. He is terrified of me. I am smart, organized, good with language, more educated than him. He is sloppy, fat, dirty, untidy and he does not use classy language, as I do. I come off as someone different—powerful, impressive, scary—than I truly am. Inside, I am scared as hell, but I come off as scary.

**THE QUESTION THAT ARISES
NATURALLY IS THAT WHEN
CLIENTS NEED REMEDIES
FROM LESS DANGEROUS
SNAKES, WILL THEY EXPRESS
THE SNAKE QUALITIES OF
THE FEARED LACHESIS?**

“I am subtle sometimes, not in your face. I hide my insecurity by being bossy. I run a business—that helps me feel confident and hide my insecurity. He is a smart business man. I feel inferior to him and feel lower than accomplished people. You for example... look at all your diplomas on the wall. You are young and beautiful, smart and rich... but somehow, I feel okay with you. I can sense you have a good, kind heart, you are gentle and loving. I feel safe in your presence, you will not squash me and make me feel small. You will not hurt or harm even a fly. I do not have to put up a face for you to impress you. But when I see people who make me feel insecure, I use my business and flashy language to show them I am strong and better than them. I have two sides in me—these are always in conflict with each other. One says, it is enough, the other says, I want more.

“Mom and Dad, good people, but made our choices for us. The privilege of making our own choices and learning from our mistakes was taken away from us. They decided everything—what school we would go to, what music we will learn, what man we will marry...and that was done totally mechanically—without a shred of love and warmth...they had to preserve their wealth and pass it down to us but for that we had to do what they asked us to. My opinion did not matter.

“I love being outside. I am curious. I love all animals. The other day, I saw an adder snake in the field. [Now she is fully animated, smiling, her eyes are dancing, body is moving to match the words.] I saw the snake and got so excited. This snake got killed under the tractor [now, out of nowhere, she begins to cry loudly and dramatically] why can't people leave snakes alone?

“If a cobra left me alone, I would not kill it. I saw coral snakes in Florida. An adder looks just like a coral snake, scary, but it does not have the venom. Cool to see them slither. If I saw a rattle snake, I would run in the opposite direction. I do not feel mean-spirited thinking about snakes. They have every right to be here. In fact, we have taken over the world that belonged to animals. We are annihilating them.”

Now she is totally soft-voiced, tender and gentle in her expressions, “This adder—he saw me before I saw him. He smelled me by flicking out his tongue [she makes a gesture of flicking out her tongue]. It was hiding in plain sight in a freshly cut field. The tractor man had finished the day's work and was driving the tractor to the shed when he ran over the snake. He did not even see it or feel it getting squished. I saw it. [Now she sobs again, very loudly, sniffles, gets very agitated.] Seeing him getting squished, my body just went limp, slumped over itself, I felt I was getting squished. I feel the same way when I get nervous, when I feel I am with someone who is dominating me, but just to survive, I assume a posture of confidence and loud words. Poor adder, he did not get to live even though he looked like a coral snake. I make loud words, look confident even if I do not feel confident, and I am living.”

Analysis

Colubridae themes: Scare people away, scarier than I truly am. Very animated while talking about adder snake. She feels squished, nervous, assumes a loud, scary, confident posture to survive (row four) but feels afraid and insecure inside.

Remedy

Lampropeltis triangulatum 200c

Adders and milk snakes are brightly colored with alternating bands of red, black and yellow. Some can also have white, black and red bands. This pattern of alternating bands of bright colors mimics poisonous and dangerous coral snakes. Being non-venomous, when they are discovered in their hiding spot they thrash around violently to scare away the intruder with a display of their bright colors. They can bite and discharge a foul fluid from their cloaca.

The main defense mechanism of the adder is to appear as something that it is not. It mimics the poisonous coral snake but is actually harmless.

Follow up after two months

“No boils on skin. Flaking is better, almost gone, I do not notice it as much. No desire for alcohol...doing very well with AA, attending very regularly. My husband is happy, he says, he is feeling more relaxed around me, I don't bother him. Able to open eyes in the morning; no sticky discharges. Sleeping better and looking forward to good rest at night, I know that I will wake up feeling better. Not thinking about my near-death accidents.”

Follow up after eight months

Still doing better.

Case 5

Lis, a 55-year-old, exceptionally tall woman, battling addictions to shopping and alcohol and suffering from depression. She asks for an appointment in the evening, after 7 p.m. “I do not want to be seen. People will get suspicious about why I am coming to you, what is wrong with me. Actually, I want relief from my addictive behavior.”

She begins talking in the reception area and carries on even without any questions from me. Her husband supports his drug-addict son and gives him money for his habit. She tells him to choose between his son or her. Her husband and his son gang up on her. She wants her husband to support her. He does not and that makes her turn green with envy.

“I like to shop. I come out of the store with twenty bags hanging on my arms ... behind the bags, people do not see me, the cashier does not see me. I am not rich, I run huge credit card debts, but when I shop, I look rich.

“I get very angry very fast and cool off very fast. I can say mean and hurtful things, but I do not say, ‘What is the point?’ It does not get me anything. I'm afraid of confrontation and arguments. I will not win, I know. Better to go away from the scene. I do. My husband and stepson want to hurt me with their words. But I just disappear into the shopping malls. That is my turf. I blend in like a green snake in green grass.” [She gives a loud and bawdy laugh, winks at me, looks smug, happy and satisfied at having made this statement. Highly animated.]

“If I answer back, they get angrier. So, I just go away and hide. In my childhood, if I talked back, mom punished me and washed my mouth with soap... it stung, I vomited but she did not care. I did not want to be like her, so I never had kids. [Lack of parental nurturing.]

“Confrontation makes me uncomfortable. I like to hide like a green snake in green grass [repeats the analogy]. It is so clever, no one can see it. Think of a shopping mall. There I am with ten, may be twenty shopping bags, I am buried in stuff, no one can see the real me. I am hiding in plain sight. I do not matter. But when my husband and stepson corner me, I try not to express any anger. I keep it all in. It is painful for me. I will drop a hint just to shock them a bit, got to do it to get my way. It is just enough to divert their attention so they will leave me alone. I will say something nasty, raise a stink, but I do not retaliate with viciousness. I am not vicious. I do not retaliate because I know for sure I cannot win. My show of slight displeasure is sure to make them want to leave me alone. That is all I want... a moment of peace.

“I wish I had chosen another man for my husband. I had a horde of suitors all coming after me, clawing over me after I turned 15 and I began to look like a woman. [Makes whole

**THE MAIN DEFENSE
MECHANISM OF THE
ADDER IS TO APPEAR AS
SOMETHING IT IS NOT**

body gestures, movements, becomes very animated, and begins to claw over herself.] I had a great figure. I dated many men at the same time, ah, those were good days. Men were under my spell. I was young, beautiful and very charming. It was a wild, highly erotic time of my life (1960s) I was in demand. I could get any man I wanted. But my husband overpowered my natural urge and shooed away all other suitors. He won me over, he was so charming. He never told me he had a son (now my stepson) from another woman. He lied to me. He cheated on me when we were young. I could not leave him... I did not know what I would do with myself. So, I remained with this man and now his drug addict son is the bane of my life. I wish he would just OD and die. I would find some peace in my own home.”

Analysis

Colubridae themes: Appear richer and angrier than she is, quick to anger and cool off, afraid of confrontation, just wants to survive (row four), her stepson and husband gang up on her—low self-esteem, non-aggressive, knows she will not win, gives a quick hint of intense anger to survive and to be left alone. Her description of her current husband winning her from other suitors sounds quite like the mating ball of garden snakes—many males try, and one wins the female. This feature is also seen in anacondas.

Remedy

Thamnophis sirtalis 1M

Follow up after four months

“I did spring cleaning in the house and realized I had shopping bags that I had not even opened to see what I had purchased. I was drowning in shopping bags. The clutter made me vomit. I just shoved all the unopened shopping bags into a few 33-gallon black plastic bags and donated these to the church. Some needy persons could use these—all brand-new stuff.

“Maybe it is the weather, but I have not felt like going shopping. My husband is saying I have not shopped on the internet either. It is raining so much, I am just holed up in my house till the sun comes out. My husband and I are wearing nicotine patches. I know I feel very depressed in the spring till the mud season is over. Now we are quite in the middle of mud season, but I do not know if it is the remedy or whatever, I am not feeling as low as before. Can the remedy change my

disposition? Can I get off my antidepressant? Will the doctor be okay with that?"

For this follow up appointment, she came in the middle of the day and did not mention her concern about anyone seeing her entering my office and wondering what is wrong with her.

This case had one more follow up, and then the family moved away. In the second follow up, she was still not shopping. She started acupuncture and the nicotine patch together and continued on the remedy and is not smoking any more. She has made a routine of going shopping once a month, but she sets herself a budget: "I have to let out my desire. If I bottle it all up, it feels as if I will explode. I feel better letting things out. I have hope. I might get over my addictions. And whatever it is that you are giving me, the doctor does not believe in it, but he is suggesting that I can reduce the dose of my depression meds—he feels I am doing better all-around and the dosage can be reduced."

Summary

All Colubridae are placed in Row Four because they are concerned mainly with protecting themselves. In the periodic table the main concern of the fourth row is acquiring sustenance and protecting oneself from external threats to survival.

Being snakes, they use deception, camouflage and deceit but their entire focus is in trying to look like other more fearsome snakes so they can survive. Predators might leave them alone thinking that they are threatening, poisonous and more dangerous than they really are, but in truth, they are not. For example, Colubrids can conceal themselves and melt into the scenery, hiding in full view. They can escape, burrow and hide in very small spaces. When cornered, they may show aggression, puff up their body, and release foul smelling fluids. They can mimic the bright colors of poisonous snakes. Some can flare a hood. Some can inflict dry bites. They can hiss loudly and adopt a striking position. They may rattle their tail and make a buzzing sound. They can play dead. They can misdirect the attacker by hiding their head. All of these tactics are meant only for self-preservation and self-defense because their poison is very weak and their bite is non-lethal to predators.

Most of humanity resides in rows three and four and is focused on issues of nurturing, defense, work, relationships, competition for mates, resources and procreation. This is why most of our remedy recommendations also come from minerals of row three and four of the periodic table. After Bhawisha and Sachindra Joshi worked to place animals in the periodic table, it has become easier to understand the life narrative of patients and locate their strengths and weakness in the periodic table for animals.

In this retrospective analysis, all five of the cases are located in Row Four of the periodic table and their main focus is self-defense. They show characteristics and features of snakes. However, their energy and words do not necessarily point to *Lachesis* or other grand and frightening venomous snakes. They are asking for harmless, nonvenomous Colubrids and their main focus in life is how to deflect danger, preserve themselves in adverse situations and survive. This is where the amazing diversity of the animal kingdom comes to our aid. We can fine-tune our analysis and find remedies from a diverse array of snakes that are less threatening, less powerful and non-venomous—the Colubrids.

In solving these cases, I have paid particular attention to the words and gestures used in the foreground-background of these cases. If I had simply taken into consideration the most obvious presenting complaint and worked only with the repertory, I could have given *Lachesis* to all five cases. But an inquiry into the life narrative,^{3,4} witnessing the client's expressions,⁵ and paying attention to animation^{1,2} helped me arrive at remedies that tap into the diversity of the animal kingdom and helped my clients to live their lives to the full.

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Psychoactive and Psychedelic Substances in Homeopathy: A Review

By Jason-Aeric Huenecke CCH, RSHom(NA)

More and more of our patients are using psychoactive and psychedelic substances as they become more commonplace in our society. Authors like Michael Pollan have promoted the use of these substances to address PTSD and addiction, and a majority of Americans now approve of legalizing cannabis.^{1,2,3} Our clients may be using them out of a desire for healing at a deeper level; as a reaction against our overly technological society; in response to the polarized political atmosphere; and from a true desire for mystical or spiritual experiences as religions are on the wane.

A psychoactive or psychotropic substance is "a chemical substance that acts primarily upon the central nervous system where it alters brain function, resulting in temporary changes in perception, mood, consciousness and behavior."⁴ These can include:

- Substances used to deeply alter the perception of reality: to induce a spiritual experience or even cause hallucinations
- Substances used as medications (narcotics, antipsychotics)
- Common consciousness-altering substances as everyday as tea, coffee, tobacco, and alcohol.

This article will primarily focus on the first group. There are several hundred psychoactive plants known to humankind. Here are some examples, all of which are hallucinogens and have been made into homeopathic remedies:

- *Amanita muscaria* (fly agaric, the magic mushroom of the Siberian shamans and source of the remedy *Agaricus*)
- *Anhalonium lewinii* (peyote, traditionally used by the Navajo)

- *Ayahuasca* (*Banisteriopsis caapi*, used by Amazonian shamans)
- *Psilocybin* (also known as magic mushrooms, shrooms, boomers, or little smoke, used in ancient religious ceremonies)
- *Salvia divinorum* (also known as diviner's sage, Maria Pastora, Sally-D, or magic mint; used by indigenous Mexicans)
- *Stramonium* (*Datura stramonium*, "jimson weed," a hallucinogen used by many indigenous cultures worldwide)

There are also psychedelic and hallucinogenic substances that include:

- *DMT* (Dimethyltryptamine, found in ayahuasca)
- *LSD* (d-lysergic acid diethylamide—also known as acid, blotter, doses, hits, microdots, sugar cubes, trips, or windowpanes—one of the most potent mood- and perception-altering hallucinogens)
- *MDMA* (3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine, also known as Ecstasy or Molly)

There are also dissociative substances, psychedelic drugs that cause a sense of detachment or disconnection from reality. These include:

- *DXM* (Dextromethorphan, also known as Robo and Purple Drank, a cough suppressant and expectorant ingredient in some over-the-counter cold and cough medications)
- *Ketamine* (also known as K, Special K, or cat valium)
- *PCP* (Phencyclidine, also known as "embalming fluid," ozone, rocket fuel, or superweed)