

The Homeopathic Treatment of Traumatized Woman

Kellner M*

Naturheilpraxis, Germany

*Corresponding author: Marion Kellner, Naturheilpraxis, Germany, Email: Kontakt@marion-kellner.de

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Abstract

After giving an overview about violence against women and the effects of sexual violence I continue talking about the homeopathic treatment of effects of acute trauma and describe Aconit and Opium as important remedies for an acute trauma. Afterwards I introduce two cases which were treated homeopathically. The first case is about a 24-years-old student who developed a posttraumatic stress disorder after being sexually abused by her father in her childhood. Besides this she suffered from a lot of other symptoms too. By giving the right constitutional remedy together with the support of a psychotherapy she could digest the trauma and becoming stabilised. In the second case I treated a 33-year-old German-Kurdish woman who was sexually abused by her aunt. She was also dealing with a posttraumatic stress disorder and several different other health problems. In this age she was still very dependant to her parents and still lived in her home, which is very unusual in Germany. She was not able to work and just passed her days by doing nothing. So she got more and more depressed and started to take antidepressants. Although this makes the homeopathic treatment much more difficult, her constitutional remedy worked well and helped her a lot in reaching a good stabilisation. She even could move out from home and started to live on her own. The drug picture of Lac humanum is explained more detailed.

Keywords: Homeopathic Treatment; Traumatized Woman; Posttraumatic Stress

Violence Against Women

According to the World Health Organization WHO around one third of all women worldwide experience physical or sexual violence. The WHO emphasizes that not only women in developing countries or in poor social classes are affected but also economically independent women or old women. The biggest European study about violence against women conducted from the European Union Agency for fundamental rights shows that one of three women experienced physical or sexual violence since their age of 15. These are 62 millions of women living in the European Union countries.... One of five women have been stalked from their ex-partners or other men. And every second woman made the experience of being molested [1].

The German Federal Ministry of Family, Senior citizens,

Women and Youth conducted 2004 a representative study about violence against women with the following results:

- 40 % of the women in Germany experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 16
- 25 % of the women in Germany experienced domestic violence from their partners or ex-partners
- 13 % of the women in Germany experienced prosecutely relevant kind of sexual violence
- 42 % of the women in Germany experienced psychological violence like intimidation, defamation, threats, psychological blackmail etc.

Effects of Sexual Violence

According to her personality every woman can react different after a rape. Most of the women feel fear, a feeling of helplessness, indignity, feeling of being contaminated, under shock. The trust in herself and in the world is distressed.

The belief in the feeling of being secure is impaired. Most of the survivors feeling ashamed and guilty. Some women react as if nothing has had happened – a very important safety mechanism of the psyche to overcome this shock. The traumatic effects of a rape are similar to those after a kidnapping or a natural catastrophe. Directly after a rape most of the women are in a state of shock. They seem to be disorientated and incapable of action. The apperception can be restricted as well as the capability of concentration and the general functionality can be reduced. Others look very calm, nearly untouched or over-controlled. Some may be irritated, angry or aggressive or anxious or in despair. A lot of women withdraw from others and want to be alone. Besides hyper-arousal, nervousness, feeling frightened, irritability, fear and emotional numbness are intrusions (frequent re-experiencing of the trauma in form of flashbacks) and avoidance typical effects of a traumatising. All effects of extremely stressing trauma experiences normal reactions to abnormal events. Nevertheless, a lot of raped women have the feeling of going mad due to the strong posttraumatic symptoms [2].

Long-term effects of sexual violence

- impaired self-confidence and an instable sense of identity
- chronic feelings of shame and guilty feelings
- fears
- depression and sometimes suicidality
- dissociative disorders
- dissociation of feelings
- psychosomatic symptoms
- a negative relation to the own body
- self-injuries
- addictions
- problems in living a sexual relationship
- relationship problems
- social withdraw/isolation
- an inimical mistrusting approach to the world and to other people
- a chronic feeling of emptiness and helplessness
- economic problems because a lot of women can't work anymore due to the posttraumatic symptoms, must change their home or pay a lot of therapy costs

Homeopathic Treatment of Effects of Acute Trauma

In the acute phase of a shock there is disorientation and reduction of attention. An additional stimulus can't be digested. The affected person is restless or like frozen inside. Very typical is the so-called "speechless terror": the incapability to talk about the traumatic experience. Besides this there is an excessive vegetative reaction with tachycardia, sweating, a red or pale face, nausea. A lot of

people experience changing of moods and a rapid change between grief, anger and apathy and withdraw from their social environment. Later the posttraumatic processing of the stress leads to intrusions like flashbacks or nightmares which are accompanied from emotional reactions and fear. The affected persons show a general hyper-arousal with inner tension and a hyper-attention for external stimuli, feeling of being frightened, irritability, sleeping disorders. Further there can be a fear of persons, places, things or situations which remind on the traumatic experience. For this reason these triggers are mostly avoided.

Women with an acute traumatic reaction need mostly Aconite in order to come in balance again and to digest the traumatic experience. Aconite helps good against the panic and the nightmares. Women who feel themselves like frozen inside and who are apathic and withdraw from social life response very good to Opium. They show the symptoms of a hypo- arousal and physical anaesthesia.

Aconite as a Trauma Remedy

- most important remedy for an acute trauma
- stormy influences from outside s a causal factor
- tension on a mental, emotional and physical plane
- effects of terror, shock and anger
- extreme tremor with strong restlessness which is not better by changing the position
- agonising fear of death
- phobias after shock
- anxiety states
- sleeplessness with anxiety and restlessness
- nightmares with dyspnoea
- symptoms of Aconite match the symptoms of the traumatic hyperarousal

Opium as a Trauma Remedy

- emotional numbness after a traumatic experience
- dissociation as a psychological protective mechanism of the psyche: the pain is not felt in order to survive
- in acute trauma when there are symptoms of avoidance, hypoarousal and intrusions
- effects of terror, fear, anger, shame
- sweat as a concomitant
- fearfulness and nervousness
- dreams and fantasies
- terrifying fantasies
- insensitiveness
- numbness and apathy
- withdrawal, aversion to company and other people
- a sensation of a wall between themselves and others
- avoidance of feelings and memories
- memories which comes up in nightmares
- irritability and changing of moods

- Women with a posttraumatic stress disorder mostly come with different emotional, mental and physical symptoms to the homeopathic treatment. In this condition we have to find the right constitutional remedy in order to heal these women.
- Below I introduce two cases of sexual traumatised women.

Case of a 24 Years Old Student

The case-taking was in January 2015. In her childhood she was sexual abused from her father for several years. 2014 she was raped. She developed a posttraumatic stress disorder with the typical symptoms. Since the age of 18 she is suffering from migraine with flickering of the left eye during

the aura and numbness of the tongue. The migraine is worse before menses. She feels tension in the whole body, which is most worse in the cervical region. Her posture is like "a shell with pulled-up shoulders". She is depressive with a lacking in motivation and has a low self-confidence. She thinks that she is never good enough. She has always the fear to fail so that she feels often blocked in her studies. She has a feeling of powerlessness and can't handle the dominating behaviour of others. She has a very helping nature and feels too much responsible for others. She often has a guilty conscience. She feels often worried about her future and broods if she can finish her study. She has a strong fear of loss and thinks that nobody can love her because she is not worth for it. She has a lot of nightmares (Figure 1).

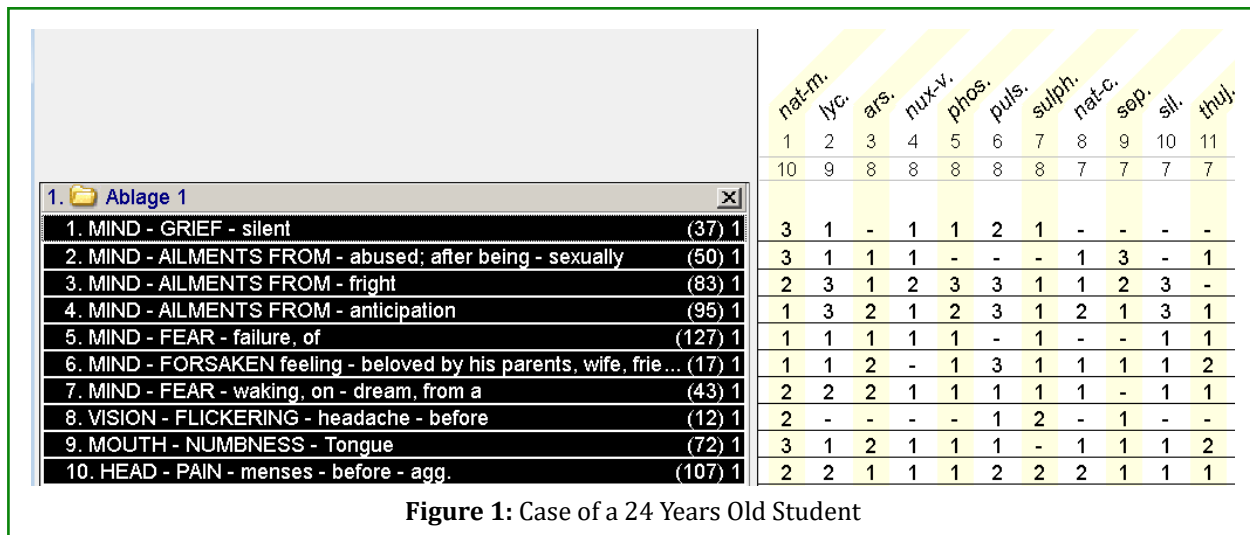


Figure 1: Case of a 24 Years Old Student

After taking *Natrium muriaticum* C 30 she got much better in general but also on the emotional level. Before taking the remedy she had at least 1-2 times a week a severe migraine. Now migraine came very seldom and was ameliorated immediately after a dose of *Natrium muriaticum*. In the course of treatment old symptoms like vaginal fungal infections and cystitis occurs but was healed with a dose of Natrium. In April 2015 she underwent an intense grieving process with a lot of weeping. Since many years she was not able to cry before that. After taking Natrium she faced up with family and confronted the family members for the first time with the sexual abuse of the father. Her psychotherapist supports her in this healing process.

In June 2015 she developed severe anxiety states after a female friend of her was hugging her too tight so that she felt fixed in her arms. A lot of flashbacks occurred after this incident. After taking one more dose of *Natrium muriaticum* C 30 the anxiety and the flashbacks disappeared and she found back her emotional balance. After some time again

old symptoms occurred: itching of the scalp and red, itching, painful unbearable neurodermatitis on the neck accompanied by negative emotions.

She had neurodermatitis in her childhood and now also she is feeling like a child: "I am a child again and my mother is angry with me because I have neurodermatitis. In her eyes I was a stressful child because she couldn't control the neurodermatitis and had to go to doctor with me very often. I was feeling forsaken, disoriented and alone. Properly I was feeling not well but I couldn't tell it to my mother because she was so angry with me. Actually I wanted her to take me in her arms and to comfort me but with all the rash on my body I felt myself not beautiful and not loveable." After another dose of Natrium the Neurodermatitis was much better and vanished totally after some days. Shortly before finishing her bachelor thesis she got again very depressive thoughts. The healing weeping was finished and she got again a numb feeling that something is very bad... She has fear of failure in her studies, a feeling of mental overload, difficulties of falling

asleep and lack of motivation. Natrium stabilised her again. Additionally, she worked with her therapist on the fact that she is afraid to finish her studies successfully because she is worried about to be in competition with her mother. This fact she just realised now. Natrium in different potencies stabilised her very much. The course of the healing process you could see easily in occurring of suppressed old symptoms which vanished easily with Natrium. The processing of the experience of sexual violence and other bad experiences in her childhood was initiate with *Natrium muriaticum* and accompanied with psychotherapy. The post traumatic symptoms were also healed with this constitutional remedy.

A case of a 33 Years Old German-Kurdish Woman

Case taking on the 22th of December 2014

As a child she was sexually abused by her aunt. Since that time she couldn't experience any sexual relationship. She is extremely mistrusting anyone. She is a very controlled person who never show her feelings openly. Her biggest fear is that someone could see her fear.

Since summer 2014 she feels extremely tired and sleepy. She sleeps many hours in the afternoon too. Because of her depression she takes since 3 months an antidepressant which didn't bring any relief until now. She has the strong sensation that she never reached on this earth. She feels ashamed and criticises herself because she sees herself as a traumatized victim. She thinks that actually she didn't suffer enough to claim this label for herself. Until one year ago she never evaluated the sexual abuse as violence and as a crime. Only since 1 year she see this totally different. On the other hand, she is very angry that nobody sees her suffering. She wants that her family recognized what she had gone through... But everybody just sees her as a power woman. But this is only one side of her.

When she was 16 years old she left her parent's home. 5 years ago she went back and lives again with her parents. She feels very ashamed because she wants to live independent but is not able to. She has a strong forsaken feeling which is one of the effects of the sexual violence. She felt abandoned emotionally from her mother in very early years. That is why she felt she never reached the earth... And that made it difficult for her to be in real contact with other people. She calls it symbiosis trauma, contact trauma, relationship trauma. Her mother used her as a partner substitute on the emotional plane. She still feels emotionally abused by her mother until nowadays. She never felt accepted by anyone with her feelings. That is why she suppresses her feelings. She is very afraid to be at the mercy of someone or that the other person could utilize her.

She doesn't feel secure in her parent's home. She is very afraid of her father when he comes next to her although he never sexually abused her. But from the rest of the world she is much more afraid. She feels ashamed that she needs her parents in her age. She wants to create her own space, she wants to go into the world to make her experiences and want to be seen but she is not able to do the first steps in this direction.

She has difficulties to fall asleep and her sleep-wake cycle is disturbed. The inner restlessness is especially in evening and night very high. In the night she is awake and in daytime she is sleeping. She distracts herself until she falls asleep. Even already as a baby she had difficulties to fall asleep and was crying very much. She is suffering from existential fear and is afraid to be poor. She started on the 21st January 2015 with Lac humanum LM 6.

Philip Bailey Described Lac Humanum In The Following Way:

- lack of maternal caring
- unsatisfactory connection with the mother
- forsaken feeling
- unable to accept the love which is given by others
- struggle for survival as a subject
- never feels secure, every challenge feels to be life-threatening
- mistrust: "Nobody is trust-worthy, nobody helps me. If I want to survive I only can trust myself."
- feeling totally alone in a foreign world, feeling of alienation
- feels herself abandoned by friends and family
- want of independence
- emotionally intense, needy, dominant, oversensitive against rejection
- perfectionist
- co-dependance
- difficult relationship to the mother
- often a cold unreachable mother
- efforts to gain the love of the mother
- A needy and dominant mother teaches the child to feel responsible for the feelings of others. In g for her or emotionally abused her
- The father doesn't play a big role in her life. Very often men are seen as useless, insensitive, immature or threatening. such families the child learns that it is cruel if it doesn't fulfil the needs for attention of the mother. The child learns that she has to deny its own needs and has to take care for the needs and emotions of others. Otherwise the child will be rejected by the mother.
- The tendency for rebellion is close connected with the awareness of being a victim.
- She can't bear injustice.
- She revolts against male authorities. A clearly feminist

attitude.

- over reactive against the smallest lack of sensitivity
- resentment against the mother because she was not caring
- she hides a lot of grief behind her smile
- She sees herself as a victim and is insulting family members, especially the mother, because they betrayed her.
- If a new-born can't get a connection to the mother, then it feels to be like in a no-man's-land. This feeling of a gap and separation leads to the feeling of being abandoned, of not belonging to this world.
- Ambivalence is a keynote of this remedy.
- She doesn't feel a ground under her feet. Sometimes she feels disconnected from her body too.
- tendency to not finish her tasks
- doesn't trust her own perception
- a good remedy for deep depression. The dissociation of her heart which helps her to avoid the pain leads to a feeling of being dead alive. A no-man's-land where nothing really counts.
- Lac humanum-women looks often very hard but also weakened from the lack of support in their lives.

Follow up on the 26th of March 2015

She found an own flat and will shift there soon... Her fears reduced very much. Just now they become more again because she will take a big step to live alone.

Last night she had a dream: "I was dreaming that I was about to deliver a child. There was no pregnancy before so I felt very unprepared for the birth. During the process of delivery I suddenly got some small pieces of glass into my eyes so that my eyes started bleeding. There were nurses around me who were caring for me. Suddenly someone told me that I am in a process of divorce. I was not married but someone would divorce from me now. The pain was extreme: The delivery, the bleeding eyes, becoming abandoned from whoever... After this I was crawling on my hands and knees to my previous kindergarten. I wanted to go to my mother who was supposed to be there. But only my father was there.

As I asked him where my mother was he said that she is not there. I was turning around, didn't listen to his further explanations. I was deeply disappointed and disillusioned." Because Lac humanum worked so well I told her to continue with Lac humanum 12.

Follow up on the 26th of May

Meanwhile she shifted in her own flat. The remedy helped her in removing her blockage to move out from her parent's home and her fears became much less. Her parents wanted to finance her apartment. First she thought to agree to please them but then she took all her courage and refused it so that she can be independent. She gets the money for the rent and the money for the livelihood from the jobcentre. She feels so very much happy to be independent from her parents and stay in her own apartment. After taking the remedy she started crying and to express her long hidden grief. She could grief for everything she never had and what she lost. She found a psychotherapist to work on her past experiences. Depression became less so that she now wants the when off the antidepressant with the support of her psychiatrist.

Her addiction for sugar and cigarettes could be reduced very much. Nowadays a lot of different feelings comes up and she tries to handle this together with the psychotherapist instead of suppressing her feelings. After a dietary change she lost 10 kg weight. She started doing sports. She came out of the stagnation and feeling alive. But sometimes she also feels restless. Until now she took Lac humanum in different LM potencies. She is quite stabilised now and really stopped taking the antidepressants. Right now she feels stable enough to search for a job.

References

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