

Post Polio Syndrome

Ann Tomes tells her own story about how homeopathy has affected her life



My first encounter with homeopathy was in 1980, 23 years ago following an injury to my right knee. After being told by an orthopaedic surgeon that he “would not touch it”, I felt desperate enough to try anything once. I had been in considerable pain for some two years and had been walking with the aid of two sticks. This was hard enough but I was also bringing up a young daughter and both she and my husband, Norman, have brittle bones (osteogenesis imperfecta).

At about this time I had watched a television programme about

homeopathy in which Dr RAF Jack appeared. This sparked my interest and I went to see a local homeopathic pharmacist to ask him if he could recommend a practitioner. He asked if I had seen the TV programme and said he would recommend Dr RAF Jack of Bromsgrove, warning us that visiting a homeopathic doctor would be very different and there would be lots of unusual questions.

The consultation was horrendous to start with. The first thing Dr Jack did was to ask me to sit on the floor. Placing a sandbag under my knee, he bounced another on top of the knee – Norman thought I’d never walk again! Dr Jack was checking that there wasn’t a trapped nerve. As there wasn’t he went on to the homeopathic consultation.

It took two or three visits, before he found the right remedy but once I had this, within a few days I was feeling much better. He found something that helped my body heal the injury so that I could walk unaided again. It was really remarkable.

The injury sustained prior to my visiting Dr Jack was

caused by trying to walk up a fairly steep hill. It appeared I had rubbed the soft tissue from the back of the kneecap.

But Dr Jack wasn’t only interested in the reason for this injury; he wanted to know my whole story, which goes back much further.

Childhood polio

It was during the 1947 epidemic that I contracted polio, at the age of seven years. After the initial paralysis it was obvious that my right leg was useless, my right side slightly shortened and my left foot also slightly affected.

After nine months in hospital with physiotherapy, I learned to walk again with the use of a calliper, which was dispensed with as the strength in my muscles improved. Seven years of weekly sessions of physiotherapy followed but did not restore the damage done when, while in hospital, my leg was placed in a splint with the knee bent and the foot pointing down. Of course, it was set like cement with tightened tendons and wasted muscles. Consequently, I have walked with a permanently bent knee and ➤

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Ann's increased mobility meant she was able to pursue her love of painting water colours an example of which is seen on the right

on the main metatarsal joint ever since; being unable to lower my heel to the ground.

In spite of this I had as near a normal childhood as possible. I was a very tomboyish girl and had lots of male cousins with whom I played. I climbed trees and got stuck up them and rode a bike, which I was always falling off. My parents allowed me to do what I wanted to in terms of play and didn't try to wrap me up in cotton wool. I went to school and was in the hockey and netball teams in positions where I didn't have to run about too much as I fell very easily. I couldn't dance but most of my teen years were taken up with courting Norman. We went out together for three years and got married when I was 18.

Homeopathic help

Dr Jack didn't only help my knee. On hearing my story he produced three small tablets which, he said, contained polio virus, one of which I took there and then; the remaining two being taken within the day at prescribed intervals. The following morning I was amazed to find the all-over stiffness, which had plagued me since



having polio, was gone. I could move freely. This was a real bonus.

However by 1984 the large toe joint had begun to cause me considerable pain due to the strain of weight bearing and I underwent a series of six reconstruction procedures under Dr John Polyzoides, an orthopaedic surgeon then practising in Solihull. It was so exciting when I first saw him as he could see potential in what little movement I had in my foot. This was a painful time when patience, hope and faith in him had to be maintained. Thankfully, his work, which involved lengthening all the tendons and realigning bones so that my foot was straight, was very successful. I can now put the whole foot to the ground making walking more comfortable and normal, even up not-too-steep hills.

My new-found mobility meant I was able to pursue one of my real interests – painting watercolours. Although I had had no lessons, I'd always had an artistic leaning and through the Townswomen's Guild I developed my skill and was later invited to run a workshop for the local adult

education institution. After a few more workshops I was invited to join the staff as a tutor and this opened up a whole new world for me meeting so many people and making so many new friends. I worked in adult education for about 12 years and then ran my own private groups.

In 1994 pain began returning mainly in my back and right hip. A course of physiotherapy with ultrasound and exercise put me right. Since then the pain has recurred at about 18 months to two yearly intervals so physiotherapy sessions were repeated; the last being over ten weeks in early 2002 which, this time was ineffectual.

My physiotherapist and GP both thought arthritis was the cause so the right hip and knee were x-rayed; but no arthritis was reported. My GP thought soft tissue should be treatable; but I was not responding. I had never associated my pain with the polio I had had as a child.

It was then I read an article somewhere about post polio syndrome and realised that this was probably my problem. As most of today's GPs have never experienced dealing with polio, I didn't mention this to mine at this time.

Another consultation

It was about October 2002 that my husband and I, almost simultaneously, thought of Dr Jack. We discovered he had retired but were glad to be given details of Dr Mollie Hunton. After a consultation she also presented me with nine Polio nosode 30c tablets, three tablets taken within 24 hours to be repeated at three monthly intervals. Within ten days I was noticeably better.

The pain had left me and I was moving more freely.

Dr Hunton also prescribed Carcinosis 30c, again three tablets taken within 24 hours, but at six-weekly intervals. I had difficulty in obtaining these so didn't begin taking them until three weeks after the polio tablets. This confirmed that the Polio nosode was the reason for the improvement. However, after taking the Carcinosis I noticed a burst in my energy levels.

At my follow-up consultation with Dr Hunton she was pleased that I was "now in control of the pain and not the other way round". She recommended I follow this regime with the remedies as long as I continue to feel well and saw no

reason why I shouldn't do so for the rest of my life; obtaining my own supplies.

It is now August 2003. I have never felt better. Most mornings I still do one and a half hours' of exercises given to me by physiotherapists over the past eight or nine years, and in addition can manage a two-mile brisk walk two to three times a week. I walk on my own but Norman drives me to where I begin then overtakes me every so often so that he's waiting for me at the end of my walk and would be nearby if I needed him.

Gardening is another hobby. I felt so strong following my initial physiotherapy sessions that I planned and reconstructed

my garden single-handed, digging a pond and bog garden, and breaking up a path of paving slabs and building a dry-stone wall with the resulting blocks. Keeping all this tidy and trim helps with the exercise. On top of this I do all my own housework and enjoy cooking and baking. I am grateful for the extra boost given me by homeopathy.

When I told my GP I wished to try homeopathy, he said, "Well, if you want to you can, but I don't have any faith in it". I have since reported to him the improvement: and his comment was "I'm impressed". It seems such a pity that with something like homeopathy being available, more people don't give it a try.

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Post Polio Syndrome *Mollie Hunton writes...*

This condition has only recently been described and seems to be the long term after effects of having polio. It is not clear if the virus is still in the body, but inactive, or if the problems arise from damage to muscles, tendons and ligaments by the virus when it first affected the person. Also, over many years limbs become distorted and withered by the effects of the polio and this causes a lot of pain. Pain wears people down and affects sleep and mood making them low and despondent when they see no solution to the situation. Despite all the modern pain killing drugs and anti-inflammatories people are still in pain, mainly because these medicines do not deal with the underlying cause of the pain.

Mrs Tomes' pain responded very promptly to Polio nosode 30c, three tablets in 24 hours, so presumably this remedy helped to heal up any viral activity or residual damage. Once your pain is gone you improve mentally also and begin to get your *joie-de-vivre* back. However, in homeopathy you need to give a constitutional remedy to maintain the improvement or it will not hold. It is as if the nosode and the remedy work at different levels in the body, but together they are more effective than if only one of them is taken.

The remedy Carcinosis 30C was also taken to good effect as it produced a boost in her energy. This is a remedy, which is prescribed when there is a history of severe illness previously

(in her case, the polio), where there may have been a strict upbringing, and where the person may be a perfectionist with anticipatory anxiety. Anticipatory anxiety means that the person worries about, thinks about or plans events that are going to happen. It may stop a person getting to sleep or wake them up in the early hours. People who need Carcinosis are strong willed with very, very good senses and like things to do with nature and water. They have a fastidious nature and a strong sense of duty. Children are very sensitive to being told off.

Mollie Hunton MB BS DRCOG FFHom has been practising homeopathy for 25 years, until recently as a GP, and now in private practice.