

# Hurry, hurry, hurry...

A young man's impatience and a cluster of diverse symptoms led *Keith Souter* to prescribe Sulphuric acid

People choose homeopathic treatment for different reasons. Some are brought up on homeopathy and would rarely consider any other approach in the first instance. Some are converts to the method after witnessing a friend or relative's recovery, or after experiencing a dramatic improvement in their own health after taking some remedy or other. Yet others approach it with cynicism, having perhaps been down several therapeutic avenues in search of a solution to their problem.

When Tom came to see me he belonged, by his own admission, to the last group. Indeed, his opening salvo was a direct challenge: "I'm not sure that I believe in homeopathy. I can't see the logic in it. I expect my problems will be too difficult to sort out, because no one has managed to help before. I really don't want to waste your time."

As it happened, Tom had been seen by several medical professionals, including his GP, his dentist, a physician, a neurologist, an immunologist, and several other complementary practitioners. The range of practitioners

involved reflected the diversity of his complaints, the most pressing of which were: mouth ulceration, migrainous headaches, general anxiety and continual fatigue.

## *The consultation*

After the initial pleasantries I explained a little about my perception of homeopathy and the way that homeopathy might be able to help him. But already, before we had really started on the problem, Tom was giving me clues about himself. He talked in a curious staccato fashion. It was as if the words tumbled out in a rapid burst once he had taken time to think out what he was to say, rather than immediately translating thoughts into words.

And he clearly felt that time was important. Although he said he did not wish to waste my time, what he really meant was that he did not want to waste his own time. This had been emphasised by him arriving early for his appointment, then pacing fairly noisily up and down in the hall outside my consulting room until the appointed time. He was clearly a young man in a hurry.

Tom was a tall, fair-haired,

24-year-old man, an associate solicitor in a local law firm. He was dressed in a fashionably smart and professional manner. He was pale with dark rings under his eyes.

"I thought it would save time if I typed out the facts of my case," he said, almost leaping out of his chair and presenting me with a set of meticulous records.

So, time again. And one really couldn't help but notice the speed at which he moved.

Tom's problems had begun some years previously at school, when he had started to develop migraine. The attacks had gradually become more frequent and more severe. They had been fully investigated and formally diagnosed as migraine, which responded to conventional prophylactic treatment.

Later, at university, he began to experience troublesome mouth ulcers, which failed to respond to any treatment, either medical or dental. He also started to experience problems with heartburn and dyspepsia, for which he was referred to a physician, because it was suspected that he could have an ulcer. All investigations



proved to be normal.

In his final year he became quite anxious, experiencing frequent nightmares.

"They were horrible," he told me, "I was always racing about, being chased with axes or swords. I often woke up and had to rush to the bathroom to be sick."

And after university he became aware of fatigue. Nothing dramatic at first, just a feeling of tiredness at the end of the day, but gradually feeling so tired that he simply could not be bothered doing the things he had to do.

"That really worried me. I had so many projects on the go. Always reading four or five books at a time, having a full diary. I just couldn't be bothered. I just felt ill with headaches, stomach upsets or had zero energy. At times it's been a struggle to get up to work."

It was then that he started on a round of health practitioners. Over a couple of years various diagnoses such as ME, irritable bowel syndrome, candidiasis and food allergies were postulated, focused upon and treated.

"I just react to all sorts of things," he told me, indicating several pages of

allergy testings done in different ways at different centres. "Cigarette smoke, ink, petrol fumes and oranges give me a migraine without fail," he volunteered, "and wheat upsets my stomach."

"What about alcohol?" I asked.

An emphatic shake of the head. "Never a problem. I know wine is supposed to give you migraine, but I love it."

Throughout that first consultation Tom had repeatedly fidgeted and looked at his watch. I mentioned this and the fact that time seemed important to him. He laughed self-consciously and admitted that he was always in a hurry.

"With everything," he continued. "I walk fast and hate being held up. A nightmare for me is being in a crowd so that I can't get on. I hate people dithering ahead of me. And I eat fast, eat too quickly I suppose, which won't help my digestion, but I can't help it."

I asked if he thought quickly, too.

He looked pensive. "Yes and no. If I'm writing, my thoughts go faster than my hand, so my writing is illegible. That's why I type

everything. When I'm talking I find that my thoughts sometimes get jumbled and I mix my words up. I hate that if I'm with a client."

I asked Tom if he thought that the word "hurry" applied to him.

He smiled. "Actually, I'm more hurry, hurry, hurry."

### ***The remedy***

One can get the impression when one reads a case study that a remedy jumps out at the homeopath from the case history and the accompanying medical examination. In fact, there are many different approaches that can be used. Does one, for example, focus on a local problem, such as Tom's mouth ulceration, or try to work out the constitutional remedy? Is the constitutional remedy appropriate at any one time, or should one consider the totality of the case which includes the current cluster of problems? Whole books have been written about this thorny issue of what one should treat.

Sometimes, of course, there is something striking about the individual's case. Something which seems to run like a thread through every aspect of the individual's being. In Tom's case, the word "hurry" comes back again and again.

We have many remedies in the materia medica, which have this characteristic. One has to think of Sulphuric acid, Lachesis, Arsenicum album, Tarentula, Medorrhinum, Sulphur and Liliun tigrinum, among a lot of other well-known remedies. But of them all, Sulphuric acid is characterised by this pressure, this hurry in virtually all

aspects of life.

This hurry is the thread, which criss-crosses to produce a framework on which to build our tapestry. When we look more closely at the problems Tom was most concerned with, we find that confirmatory pictures slowly start to emerge.

The headaches that Tom suffered from were quite characteristic. They were usually left sided and he described an occasional feeling as if his brain was a bit loose.

He was hardly free of his mouth ulcers, which were painful, like acid burns inside his mouth. He was also very concerned about halitosis.

The anxiety and the nightmares are common features of this remedy. Tom considered deadlines to be sacrosanct, so anything which might make him late or fail to meet a deadline would make him feel extremely anxious.

The sensitivity to various fumes is interesting, as is the history of food sensitivity. Indeed, patients in need of Sulphuric acid have very often travelled extensively down the food allergy trail.

The tiredness is also interesting, because all of our "acids" in homeopathy have this feature. With Sulphuric acid it is present, but not usually so debilitating as to be a major issue. Indeed, Tom struggled with it, but always managed to keep working.

And finally, a neat little confirmatory feature, his liking for wine.

### ***The follow-up***

As might be expected, Tom was in a hurry to try out his homeopathic remedy, to see whether there really could be



*Time was important to Tom, a young man always in a hurry*

something in this method of treatment. I duly explained what we were striving to achieve and gave him a prescription for Sulphuric acid 1M, three doses to be taken over 24 hours.

When I saw him for his follow up consultation he was, of course, just as hurried as usual, but with some major differences. This time he was keen to volunteer information about how he had been. He still spoke quickly, but he himself felt that his thoughts and speech were much more in harmony, that he could verbalise his thoughts much clearer than before.

After a brief two-day period when he had an aggravation of his headaches and a transient feeling of nausea, he started to feel much calmer. The pressure to do everything at once, to put pressure on himself at work and play began to reduce. The mouth ulceration and halitosis cleared up within the next week and he felt a gradual improvement in his energy levels.

"I still can't believe it," he said. "Three little powders, it doesn't make sense. It must

be a placebo effect."

"Healthy scepticism is acceptable," I told him. "Just make your assessment on results."

No further treatment was given, merely a follow-up arranged for two months thence. At that appointment Tom said that he had continued to feel well, but that the headaches had started to return, as had halitosis, though not the mouth ulceration. He thought that pressure of work had something to do with it, since he had started to have unpleasant dreams once again.

Sulphuric acid 1M was again prescribed; three doses over 24 hours.

On the subsequent follow-up Tom declared himself to be amazed by homeopathy, since his headaches, nightmares and anxiety had all gone, as had his halitosis. He had not felt so well for several years, especially since many of the things he had seemed to react to in the past no longer seemed to bother him. He declared himself to be a complete convert to the method. And so he has remained over the following years.

Sulphuric acid is present in the environment, in exhaust fumes and acid rain. People in need of it homeopathically often suffer from migraine, food allergies and environmental illness. They generally also experience the tiredness of all acids, and often may have problems of "hyperacidity", affecting the stomach to produce indigestion, dyspepsia, heartburn and classic mouth ulcers. But the most common feature of all, in Tom's words is "Hurry, hurry, hurry."



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