The Restoration of Health:
a Physician’s High and Only Mission

Evaluation of a Patient Presenting with a Diagnosis of Schizophrenia

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Abstract: A case of a 35 year-old man with diagnosed schizophrenia is presented. While he originally benefited from the prescription of, first, Kali bromatum, then Stramonium, he was clearly not cured. Once the author recognized the autism traits in this patient, coupled with his savant and self-stimulating qualities, the prescription of Buto rana was made, with much deeper curative effects. The author contrasts palliative effects in a case with those of a truly curative remedy.

Keywords: schizophrenia, autism, cure vs. palliation, Buto rana, Kali bromatum, Stramonium

As Hahnemann so eloquently said in the very first paragraph of the Organon, The physician’s highest and only mission is to restore the sick to health, to cure, as it is termed. Although I have read this aphorism many times, I must confess I am not perfectly clear what it means. How exactly do we define cure? Since we live in an allopathically dominated environment, many times we homeopaths look to the “Old School” for our guidance. Allopaths spend all efforts to determine the “Scientifically Reproducible Best Probable Result” for a given malady. If the patient’s symptoms are relieved, they are deemed to be cured, or at least “better.” But while the malady at hand may improve or even abate completely, often times the patient is one step further on a long downward spiral that will not lead to a happy ending.

In our hearts and in our highest desire, we homeopaths are remarkably different from our allopathic colleagues. We seek a higher goal than simply the lessening of symptoms. We seek above all else to restore Health. Perhaps it is here that the true definition of Cure lies.

All of us have certain cases where the definition of Cure was obvious in our patient, who beamed as they reported the sudden dissolution of their pathology and the resounding improvement in their well-being. But many patients have a lesser response. And some of them positively perplex the homeopath on their follow-up; one is unsure if the patient is better, worse or the same at times.

To understand Cure, we must first be able to define our goal: Health. While we all have a general sense of it, Health is at times difficult to concretely define and apply to the patient in our office. Hahnemann gives clear reference in the 9th paragraph of the Organon: “In the healthy condition of man, the spiritual vital force (autocracy), the dynamis that animates the material body (organism), rules with unbounded sway, and retains all the parts of the organism in admirable, harmonious, vital operation, as regards both sensations and functions, so that our indwelling, reason-gifted mind can freely employ this living, healthy instrument for the higher purposes of our existence.”
Hahnemann is describing distinct features of Health including:

- Unbounded sway: Freedom of the Organism
- Maintains all parts: Balance, homeostasis
- Vital operation, sensation: Sensitivity
- Vital operation, function: Power, ability of the body
- Free employment of instrument: Creative force of the system
- Higher purposes of existence: Wisdom, altruism, contribution to the world

We have all met individuals who display a very healthy condition in Hahnemann's words. Perhaps we have experienced this level of health in our own selves. A sense of balance, joy, energy, desire to create, freedom to move and express, sensitivity to the world around us and an overwhelming sense of harmony and rightness in our being are all very clear signs of a healthy organism. This is the goal of our Homeopathic Prescription. We can use these guideposts during follow-ups to determine if our patients are truly better, merely less symptomatic, or actually suppressed. Let me present a case so that we can further examine the gradual movement toward health through Homeopathy.

A 35-year-old man presented with a long history of schizophrenia treated with various medications without much success overall. He developed loss of memory, hallucinations and paranoia from antipsychotics in the past. He lived alone with his wife, and was employed as a high level scientist, but was only able to work part time. He was incapable of caring for himself, often forgetting to eat, bathe, groom or dress properly. His medications at this time included Lithium, Welbutrin and Xanax.

On initial observation, he appeared quite restless and tremulous. His brow was intensely knit and he appeared to be wincing as he spoke. He was somewhat agitated as he spoke and his legs moved constantly. He jumped rapidly from idea to idea, but his overall emotional intonation was quite flat. His speech centered on biblical topics and could be quite confused. I followed his thoughts only with considerable difficulty.

He stated that the chief problem was nausea and a decreased appetite. But he quickly shifted the discussion to his concerns about his intense guilty feelings. He felt disgraced before the eyes of God and certainly deserving of some type of divine retribution. The guilt produced a constant sick feeling in the pit of the stomach. "I am a disappointment to God and my future is shot. I don't really want to survive; I am inept and deserve to die."

He reported being constantly persecuted by Devils. "When good things happen, watch for the Boom to fall. Something terrible is going to happen." He would become panicked if criticized. He had a history of violence, striking walls and hitting himself on the head if he could not think quickly enough. During the interview he bit his nails and picked at the lips.

He had strong fears of car accidents if he had to travel. He feared losing his job because the family might starve to death. He craved coffee and chocolate and had an aversion to fat and grapefruit. He awoke frequently between 2 and 4 in the morning. He had a slight eczema on the right hand. When asked about sex, he stated, "In our society, 99% is bad and only 1% is good."

Of interest, he also had a peculiar gift for remembering dates with incredible accuracy. If asked what happened on a certain date even many years ago, he would be able to recall the day specifically.

On analysis, several symptom ideas emerged very strongly at this time.
1. Intense Guilt as if he had done something that is unforgivable.
2. Delusion he was persecuted by devils; deserving of divine retribution.
3. Agitated, restless legs, tremulous, anxiety from reprimands.
5. Confusion, loose associations, rambling, near mania.
6. Waking 2-4 am.

The primary remedy for these symptoms is Kali bromatum, which was prescribed in 200C as a single dose. Anacardium, Hyoscyamus, Stramonium and Veratrum album were also considered.

Two months later he was significantly better. The intense guilt, persecution by devils, violence, agitation and waking had all improved. He had developed a very itchy groin rash at this time. My decision was to wait.

Four months after the first visit, the rash had become...
progressively worse and he now had nocturia driving him from bed three to four times per night. Urinalysis and prostate exams were normal. A trial of *Anacardium orientale* 6C BID for two weeks was not helpful. Topical antifungal medication cleared the rash after several more weeks.

Ten months after first visit, the patient worsened. He described a pattern of trying to do his best to please others. He became intimidated when reprimanded, or when he was in the car or around dogs. This intimidation rapidly became a panicky, terrified sensation. He felt very small, "as if a funnel cloud is coming." His fears were worse at night. He initially tried to hide or disappear, but intense frustration and rage began to build up inside. He would hold his breath and his face would turn red. He would suddenly strike out or begin striking himself. He still picked his face. He was hypervigilant and described having "spooky" dreams. His wife described a kind of childishness in him. He was forgetful and just did not seem to understand the rules of things.

While the patient appeared to be in considerable distress, the overall symptom picture had changed. The religiosity and delusion of being persecuted by devils had gone. While some sensation of guilt remained, it was not the main symptom of the case. Fright, hypervigilance, impulse for violence, and childish hiding seemed to be the main features at this time.

*Stramonium* 200C was prescribed in a single dose. Differential analysis included *Baryta carbonica*, *Anacardium orientale* and *Tarentula hispanica*.

Approximately one week after taking *Stramonium*, the patient discontinued all psychiatric medication without consulting either myself or his psychiatrist. The next follow-up visit was two months after *Stramonium*. He reported feeling significantly better, with more energy and less anxiety. He was still somewhat hypervigilant, but his face was less pinched and he felt more connected to him overall. He reported that the fears were still present and worse at night. He still had occasional surges of anger, but no striking. He still picked at his face unconsciously.

On follow-up seven months after *Stramonium*, he presented with a breathless feeling that was worse at night, especially on falling asleep. His face was much more pinched and the speech contained more flight of ideas. He felt full of worries about his health, about being fatigued, about getting into trouble and about making mistakes. He was striking himself frequently. "I become so mad at myself, especially when I make mistakes." He was becoming very careful and meticulous about many things. There was difficulty staying focused and on task.

Some symptoms of *Stramonium* had recurred including the fears at night and striking himself, but new symptoms were present that did not particularly point to *Stramonium*. The case appeared to be in transition, but there was a clear relapse of some symptoms. *Stramonium* 200C was repeated.

Two months later the case was very little changed. A thorough re-examination of the symptoms was conducted. The main symptoms included a general sense of being a failure in life. When the guilty feelings were very strong, he desired to be alone and go for a walk (to shut off the world for a while). He described his parents as being overly pampering, giving him food and clothing and shelter. He was unable to describe any particular emotional picture of his family and childhood. He was always a loner, never able to make contact with others. On exploration of his unusual ability to recall dates, he described long periods of time in his childhood when he systematically took apart the calendar and translated it into various mathematical algorithms to be able to accurately define the corresponding day of the week with any date in history. On questioning about various dates from the past, he could give the accurate day of the week with remarkable accuracy. In the interview, he was consistently childlike in his relating to others. He yielded to all other opinions before his own. He enjoyed his work, which involved complex mathematics and engineering skills, but he had no particular relationship with other employees. He felt quite productive unless he felt under time pressure from others. His mannerisms and speech were quite eccentric, perhaps due to the lack of emotional relatedness. His panic attacks continued and were most frequently related to reprimands.

At this point neither *Stramonium* nor *Kali bromatum* seemed to be exactly correct. Many of the same symptoms were present, but the overall intensity, mania and near delirium were no longer the heart of the case.

The strongest symptoms at this point included:
1. Fears of reprimand, something happening, accidents, poverty, catastrophes.
2. A general detachment from others, desire to be alone, better for being alone, lack of emotional bonds.
3. Unique ability for dates that was internally generated through intense practice and during a time when he was alone.
4. Childish quality, unable to care for himself.
5. Guilty feelings, delusion he was a failure, not acceptable to the world.
6. Picking at himself, striking himself, biting his nails, reproaching himself, eccentricity.

In the absence of the mania, the case began to resemble much more the diagnosis of Autism, more specifically that of a savant. He lived in a separate world from others: a world of his own creating, where he could spend time practicing pure mathematics, devoid from the ambiguity of emotions. Despite being an adult, his emotional self had failed to develop, hence the childish, eccentric appearance. The remedy that most clearly represented this particular set of symptoms was *Bufo rana*.

George Vithoulkas has described this tendency for dull and childish individuals to develop brilliance in one specific area. While many authors have focused on masturbation as a key issue in the remedy, some have commented that the symptom is difficult to elicit. Paul Herscu and Alfons Geukens have expanded the concept of masturbation to include behaviors that are repetitive and self-stimulating. In this case, the preoccupation and hours spent taking apart and memorizing all aspects of the calendar reflect this idea. The patient escaped from human contact into this self-stimulation, and when he was disturbed and pulled into the world, rage or a violent response was possible.

Some rubrics that reflect these ideas in the case include:

- MIND - ANXIETY, health; about, own health; her/his
- MIND - FEAR, misfortune, of
- MIND - FEAR, happen, something will
- MIND - MANIA
- MIND - OFFENDED, easily
- MIND - SHAMELESS
- MIND - MORAL FEELING; want of
- MIND - COMPANY, aversion to
- MIND - COMPANY, aversion to, desire for solitude, masturbation; to practice
- MIND - ABSORBED
- MIND - INDIFFERENCE, apathy, surroundings, to the
- MIND - INDUSTRIOUS, mania for work
- MIND - CHILDISH behavior
- MIND - CHILDISH behavior, body grows; and only the
- MIND - IMBECILITY
- MIND - SUSPICIOUS
- MIND - STRIKING, anger, from
- MIND - BITING, nails
- MIND - ANGER, misunderstood, when
- MIND - FOOLISH behavior

I have followed this patient for seven years since the initial prescription of *Bufo rana*. In that time this remedy has been repeated in high potency about six times and with decreasing frequency. During that time period a number of significant changes have occurred. The original mania has not recurred. He has remained off psychotropic medications. The anxiety has increased during stressful periods and generally responded well to *Bufo*. He has retained his savant abilities, but at times they have waned a bit. But most importantly, he has grown up. He has become more of an adult in many ways. He is much more able to care for himself. He actively participates in decision-making. He remembers his wife’s birthday and actually gets her a present. He is affectionate and shows appropriate emotional involvement much of the time. His wife states, “It is like I have a real husband now.”

While there were clearly dramatic improvements in the pathology when *Kali bromatum* and *Stramonium* were prescribed, the prescription of *Bufo rana* has led to an increasing restoration of health. The patient is more alive, more related, more creative, and more able to employ his life to the higher purposes of existence. He is, perhaps for the first time, “in the game” of life. And I as a homeopath experience the result as a joyful feeling for this man, more than a simply a relief that the pathology is abated.

When analyzing the effects of the *Kali bromatum* and *Stramonium* prescriptions, I would say that the patient was palliated. Symptoms improved very nicely, but the overall level of health did not dramatically change. These prescriptions were definitely required, in that they were clearly indicated and acted for the symptoms prescribed. If they were not given, the patient would surely have continued to decline. A palliative remedy can therefore be thought of as a remedy that definitely puts a halt to the decline and deterioration of the case but does not lead to an overall improvement in the health.
The filled circle below represents our patient; and the striped circle represents his decline into a Kali Bromatum or Stramonium state. When the appropriate palliative remedy is given, the patient no longer displays symptoms of the newly developing state, and now returns to his baseline state of health.

![Diagram showing health decline and recovery process.](image)

However, when the Bufo rana was prescribed, not only did the symptoms of the patient improve, but the overall state of health gradually increased. The entire case moved in the direction of cure. This is represented in the diagram below, where the nature of the case remains in the Bufo rana state, but the individual gains more and more health with less degree of pathology.

![Diagram showing health improvement process with Bufo rana.](image)
Not long ago, I was lecturing at a medical school in Philadelphia. (The Hahnemann Medical College to be precise). An older pediatrician was lecturing before me and she said something very profound. She said, “When I began the practice of medicine many years ago, pediatricians needed to be excellent infectious disease doctors. But, as time has gone by, pediatricians have become psychiatrists.” I do not believe she, nor many of the students, actually grasped the significance of that simple observation. Hearty and healthy patients suffer from those acute infectious diseases, but what we treat today are patients with profoundly deep pathology. The very fabric of health in our society is unraveling. We must take on the difficult task of weaving that health, strand by strand, back together. Let us strive to support one another in these efforts.

(I wish to acknowledge my teacher Paul Herscu, ND for his clinical guidance in this case and for giving me an extremely pragmatic and functional foundation of homeopathic philosophy.)

About the Author: Todd A. Hoover, MD has practiced homeopathic medicine in Philadelphia, PA for the past ten years. He is currently a Trustee for the American Institute of Homeopathy and columnist for “Homeopathy Today.” Dr. Hoover is a graduate of the New England School of Homeopathy and currently a clinical preceptor for Hahnemann University School of Medicine.