

Restoring disrupted circadian rhythms

A portal to the inner self

by Elizabeth Adalian MARH



Elizabeth Adalian has been practising homeopathy for nearly 20 years. She worked for a number of years as a teaching clinician at the College of Homeopathy. She has also taught extensively in Eastern Europe, as well as in Africa. She has spent time exploring the lesser known remedies in the light of modern-day disease phenomena. She presents regular seminars exposing this research, with the aim of extending it to a wider audience.

Insomnia can include difficulty falling asleep, difficulty remaining asleep, or early waking. These all contribute to non-restorative sleep and result in compromised daytime functioning.

Insomnia is increasingly recognised as an affliction of the 21st century. This can be such an entrenched part of our patients' lives that they hardly consider it worthy of mention, as if it's taken so much for granted that it's not regarded as an issue that can be addressed.

I therefore stress the importance during initial case-taking of eliciting the full sleep symptoms which, when removed as the first layer, free up the organism to 'receive' the constitutional simillimum.

It often transpires that the sleep disruption is triggered by specific circumstances on the patient's timeline, in which case the remedy needs to take account of that particular causation. The first remedy based on this layer often leads in, directly, to a related curative prescription.

Of course, if the simillimum covers the full sleep symptoms, then it is the ideal first prescription. The main nosodes, *Carcinosin*, *Medorrhinum*, *Psorinum*, *Syphilinum* and *Tuberculinum*, can all be indicated

here, especially where there are inherited miasmatic indications in the case, and / or the sleep disruption dates back to early life.

According to the website www.breitbart.com, looking at a computer, television, or being connected to a mobile phone within the hour before going to bed can markedly disrupt sleep patterns. This is because these influences undermine the full function of the different brain structures. It is not just the images but also the exposure to artificial light at that time, which can increase alertness and suppress the release of melatonin from the pineal gland. (*Melatonin*, therefore, as a remedy, can be a useful support in such cases.)

I have observed that exposure to video games is the most harmful of all these influences and quickly becomes an addiction. Not only does this create distance from other people, but it also plunges the individual into an alien 'virtual' world as a form of escape. This influence suppresses the urge to sleep at the

same time as suppressing the ability to relax. One could call this a 'wired' condition.

In my experience, *Mancinella* has become a major polycrest for this due to early exposure to frightening images. The *Mancinella* child / teenager is very impressionable, like *Calcarea carbonica* and *Phosphorus*, but is attracted to the dark side, like *Stramonium*.

I have prescribed *Scorpion* (*Androdoctonus*) where addiction to video games is so entrenched that social interaction with others is totally ruled out. The brain becomes dull and the outlook becomes increasingly gloomy. *Syphilinum* also addresses this addiction, and is another remedy which suffers from sleep deficiency.

A general change in sleep patterns can be a precursor to a child's initial decline. In these cases, sleep disruption predisposes to a range of mental states, veering from depression to mania (in extremis, reaching to psychosis). On the other hand, especially in psychosis, the patient might lose complete track of their circadian clock and become hyperactive at night. The remedy *Coffea* is worth considering to take the edge off this restlessness and calm the mind. *Cypripedium* is



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another remedy which calms the mind in this type of state, especially when it becomes habitual. *Hyoscyamus* relates to insomnia in hysterical or manic phases.

Bipolar patients may have an inherited susceptibility to sleep disruption, together with difficulty waking. This combination contributes to disturbed circadian rhythms, affecting not only the overall mental state but also the physical one. The rubric 'sleep, unrefreshing' can indicate liver weakness to the homeopath, but it could also be a sign of a compromised psyche. The *Magnesium* group of remedies is known for this symptom: *Magnesium* patients also show signs of depression to various degrees. However, an all-pervasive depression where the patient cannot function even after the morning aggravation period may indicate a deeper remedy such as *Helleborus*.

Bipolar disorder in children is not as rare as once thought. Many bipolar patients, especially children, experience nightmares and often have an obsession with death

and violence. This may indicate the remedy *Stramonium*.

In these cases restoring the circadian rhythms releases much-needed vitality for fundamental cure. The organism once again becomes 'compensated' and no longer needs this set of symptoms to act as a 'siphon' for its all-important energy.

The frontal cortex and the hippocampus are the two main brain structures which become

Asthma can cause sleep disturbance

undermined through sleep disturbances. These brain structures have a strong link with the limbic system, where the mood is regulated and bonding takes place. Recently, it has been discovered that new neurons, which have been impaired through this deficit, can re-generate. This is optimistic news for us, as homeopathy can come into its own here.

A physical symptom such as asthma or epilepsy might trigger sleep disturbance. One could then consider syphilitic remedies such as *Arsenicum album*, *Mercurius vivus*, or *Kali bromatum*. Incidentally, *Passiflora* is a remedy which calms the spasm, both in asthma and epilepsy, at the same time as inducing sleep.

High cortisol levels are induced by sleep loss, which can compromise the adrenals, and lead to the following physical ailments:

- allergies
- arthritis
- *auto-immune disease (including cancer)
- diabetes
- *fibromyalgia

The frontal cortex and the hippocampus are the two main brain structures which become undermined through sleep disturbances

- ● gum disease
- heart disease
- infections / inflammations
- obesity
- osteoporosis
- *thyroid disease.

(*Auto-immune disease, fibromyalgia and thyroid disease are all more common in women.)

Thyroid disease can be triggered after childbirth and is blamed on the hormones (*Sepia*). However, it can equally be caused by the lack of sleep which ensues at this time (*Cocculus*). If the patient has been traumatised by the birth experience, *Opium* could be the operative remedy. Therefore, it is important to elicit full sleep symptoms, especially leading up to the onset of the illness.

Loss of sleep in teenage girls results in different emotionally-based syndromes than in teenage boys: girls are more likely to manifest anorexia, anxiety, depression, panic attacks and post-traumatic stress disorder. Boys are more likely to develop alcohol or drug

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addiction, autism and schizophrenia. However, as gender roles are becoming increasingly less distinct in today's society, there is increasing overlap in this division.

Head injury can lead to insomnia, so it is important to always check for this as a cause, which can date right back to the birth process. *Cicuta*, *Natrum sulphuricum* and *Helleborus* are all significant chronic remedies for this scenario. All these remedies manifest marked depression as a concomitant. By addressing the sleep symptoms, a lot of energy is released which supports an improvement in the overall mood.

Many patients do not recall their dreams. However, without this capacity, the brain cannot reassemble difficult traumatic memories into more lasting and less hostile ones. Perhaps dreams act to remould the brain by renewing the connections between the neurones and, especially in cases of post-traumatic stress disorder, full integration cannot occur and the

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Insomnia has increased in recent times

patient cannot fully move forward without this outlet of dream recall.

When exploring the rubrics for three major sleep disturbances (apnoea, snoring and sleep-walking), four important trauma remedies feature highly. They are *Aconite*, *Hyoscyamus*, *Opium* and *Stramonium*. When the specific sleep disturbance is addressed in the case, the contributing trauma is resolved. This way, the organism is freed up for dream recall to assist this

Medicinal or pleasure drugs can contribute to sleep / dream impairment by wiping out REM sleep

Circadian rhythm

Definition: The natural pattern of physiological and behavioural processes that are timed to a near 24-hour period. These processes include sleep-wake cycles, body temperature, blood pressure, and the release of hormones. This activity is controlled by the biological clock, which is located in the suprachiasmatic nuclei of the hypothalamus in human brains. It is highly influenced by natural dark-light cycles, but will persist under constant environmental conditions.

Example:

Disruptions to the circadian rhythm can cause problems with the sleep-wake cycle.
(<http://sleepdisorders.about.com/od/glossary/g/CircadianRhythm.htm>)

process. (If someone snores, or experiences daytime drowsiness, it may well be that there is a degree of apnoea supervening, which may remain hidden from the patient's awareness.)

Medicinal or pleasure drugs can contribute to sleep / dream impairment by wiping out REM (rapid eye movement) sleep, the phase when dream processing occurs. Ideally, the first aim in these cases is to address this layer, at the same time as removing the toxic effects of their influence on the organism. The bowel nosode *Morgan pure* is valuable in cleaning the liver of medicinal drugs. *Nux vomica* and *Sulphur* also act in this way. *Avena sativa* is a useful remedy to wean the patient off pleasure drugs. All these remedies, at the same time, promote calm sleep patterns.

In all cases, the first sign of cure is often revealed through positive changes in the sleep symptoms, which might be when the patient starts to:

- sleep better
- recall their dreams
- make sense of their dreams or
- use their dreams for ongoing guidance.

In one *Opium* patient I treated, the cure came completely through the dreams. Each dream integrated the past trauma: as the dream recurred, it became less and less threatening each time until it no longer held any torment whatsoever. Once this was achieved, the patient was able to restart their life and embrace their hitherto blocked potential.

In conclusion, we can address the collective malaise that results from sleep deprivation by restoring the circadian rhythms as an uppermost layer in our cases. This way, we can make a very valuable contribution, not only to the patient and their family, but also to society as a whole, to ensure it functions at its optimum capacity.

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The homeopathic longview

Now and Then

by Jerome Whitney



Jerome became actively involved in homeopathy in 1970 as a student of Dr Thomas Maughan and the South London Group from which emerged the early founders of contemporary homeopathic education. Over the years he has developed a series of presentations and workshops designed to further the understanding of homeopathy. He continues to actively research and write articles for professional journals, teaching at homeopathic colleges as well as participating in the Homeopathy Course Providers Forum. Jerome lives near Crystal Palace, and enjoys hiking and biking, when the sun shines.

There is an old saying that ‘what goes around comes around’ which can also be expressed as ‘history repeats itself’. For many this repetition of patterns, events and circumstances throughout history is interpreted as a succession of spiralling stages.

In the case of homeopathy, during the summer of 2011, there emerged a number of published articles that are a mirror of articles that began to appear 165 years earlier, during 1846. The history of conventional medicine and homeopathy is repeating itself once again.

Now: 2011

In *The Atlantic* magazine for July / August 2011 David Freeman wrote an article entitled ‘The Triumph of New Age Medicine’ that fully supports the opponents of homeopathy who argue that it is nothing more than a sugar pill whose claimed successes demonstrate ‘the placebo effect’. However, the article then goes on to enumerate, at length, the increasing number of failures of contemporary drug-based conventional medicine. The author also repeats the patently untrue statement that homeopathy may have no double-blind trials to demonstrate its effectiveness; however, he stresses that outcome and population-based studies repeatedly show that homeopathy and alternative medicine in general produce positive healing results. As a consequence he argues that the techniques of practitioner-patient interaction of alternative therapies need to be studied and emulated.

Then: 1846

During 1846 Dr Sir John Forbes, editor of the *British and Foreign Medical Review*, penned an article titled ‘Homœopathy, Allopathy, and “Young Physic”’. In it he demonstrates the mathematical utter impossibility of there being any medicinal substance in

a homeopathic sugar pill above the 30th dilution and argues that its successes are due to ‘the power of nature’. He goes on to contend that homeopathic cure is the result of the abandonment of injurious drugs, the influence of imagination, and reliance on the natural healing capacity of the body. In conclusion he recommends adopting some of the approaches he sees as inherent in homeopathy which have a reliance on the physiological, hygienic nature and use of small (not infinitesimal) doses.

Background to 2011 and 1846 *Heroic medicine then and its off-springs*

From the 17th century onward the practice of formal medicine in Europe and North America progressively evolved in a more and more abusive direction. Patients were subjected to repeated and excessive bloodlettings, leeches, purging with heavy metals, sweating, and blistering, all of which were applied for even the most minor complaints. This debilitating approach to treatment reached such a level of severity that it became known as ‘heroic medicine’ because one had to be a ‘hero’ to survive the depletion from such aggressive practices. In fact, it was far less depleting to be

treated by the local herbalist or bonesetter. Meanwhile to be an emperor, king, or former president did not absolve one from the ongoing heroic medicine serial killing epidemic. King Charles II, Emperor Leopold II, and the first US President, George Washington, each experienced assisted deaths by having been relieved of four pints of blood and associated blistering practices.

Concerned doctors began to rebel! By the late 18th century, compassionate physicians began to question the severe methods of the ‘heroic’ school and independently initiated a search for or devised more moderate alternate forms of treating and healing their patients. Prominent among these medical reformers, whose influence has had and continues to have international significance, were Franz Anton Mesmer, Samuel Hahnemann, Samuel Thomson, an American herbalist who contributed to the emergence of naturopathy, and Vincent Priessnitz, hydrotherapy and spa movement founder. Included in the working model of the therapeutic systems founded by these medical pioneers was the acknowledgement that the human body is also animated by a life principle as well as being a biochemical system. The seeds of 19th,

20th and 21st century alternative medicine had been sown!

As the 19th century progressed, the public turned more and more away from heroic medicine towards the rapidly growing popularity of the milder alternatives. This was true particularly for mothers who found the sugar-based homeopathy powders effective in the treatment of their children, who eagerly ingested them. By the early 1830s the profession of conventional medicine and its publications in England, Europe, and North America began to react to the rise of the alternatives: Volume 1 of *The Lancet*, 1834-35, reported the following regarding the soon to be Queen, Victoria:

There seems to be a particular proneness in the English Nobility to run after quackery ...

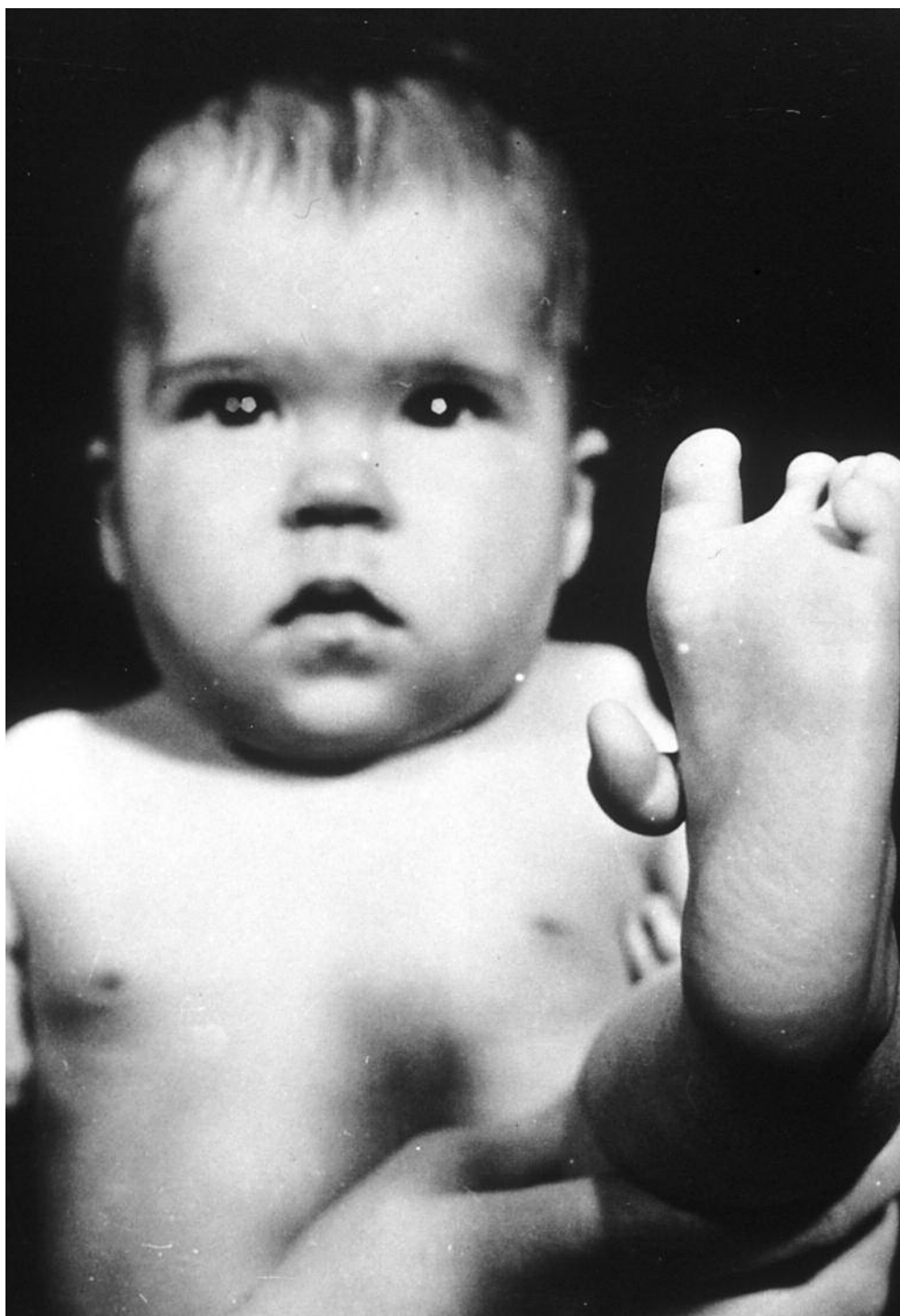
Her Majesty is still persevering in the homeopathic system and she supposes that she derived advantage from it. Nothing can be more absurd ... Her brother sends her those invisible pills from Germany.

The *Lancet* then goes on to attribute the presumed homeopathic cures to:

- previous allopathic treatment
- spontaneous remission
- poor diagnosis.

Heroic medicine now and the revival of the alternatives

Following World War II, conventional medicine began to experience periodic crises that resulted in an erosion of trust by the public, who began looking elsewhere for medical advice and treatment. During the late 1950s and early 1960s thousands of deformed children were born as a result of mothers taking the 'miracle' drug



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Thalidomide. Confidence in the medical profession continued to be eroded time and again by news of inappropriate medical research such as the 'Harvard-MIT radiation at the science club' study in which 19 boys were observed for ten years while drinking radioactive milk without their knowledge. These and other incidents were not stopped by ethical concern of those responsible but rather by public outrage. Meanwhile today's 'miracle drug' and 'medical magic bullet'

Thousands of deformed babies were born due to the drug Thalidomide

became the cause of tomorrow's injurious and life-threatening after-effects. A summary of a number of these medical failings is outlined in the July / August issue of *The Atlantic*, of which the following quotation is an example:

Unfortunately, the drugs we've thrown at complex illnesses are by and large inadequate or worse, as has been thoroughly documented in the medical literature. The list of much-hyped and in some cases heavily prescribed drugs that have failed >

➤ to do much to combat complex diseases, while presenting a real risk of horrific side effects, is a long one, including Avastin for cancer (blood clots, heart failure, and bowel perforation), Avandia for diabetes (heart attacks), and Torcetrapib for heart disease (death). In many cases, the drugs used to treat the most serious cancers add mere months to patients' lives, often at significant cost to quality of life. No drug has proved safe and effective against Alzheimer's, nor in combating obesity, which significantly raises the risk of all complex diseases. Even cholesterol-lowering statins, which once seemed one of the few nearly unqualified successes against complex disease, are now regarded as of questionable benefit in lowering the risk of a first heart attack, the use for which they are most widely prescribed. Surgery, widely enlisted against heart disease, is proving nearly as disappointing. Recent studies have shown heart-bypass surgery and the emplacement of stents to prop open arteries to be of

surprisingly little help in extending the lives of most patients.

Corroboration of the above may be seen in the verbatim text of an email I received at the end of August 2011 from the son of a friend of many years, concerning his father, who had a stroke earlier in 2011:

The doctor has my father on so many pills that he doesn't even know the contraindications for them all. He has a computer program that tells him which side effects act on each other. His response for a side effect of a medication is simply one more medication. There are truly NO side effects to medications, they are all effects. One cannot suppress the effect of one medication with another, it simply poisons the body. My father will not let me organise his medication for him, even if I follow his doctor's recommendation. He is simply opening bottles and swallowing dozens of pills. The only reason these medications have ANY benefit is because HE BELIEVES they do. Most western medicine is no better than a sugar pill, I believe. It is simply

From the 17th century onward the practice of formal medicine in Europe and North America progressively evolved in a more and more abusive direction

his faith in his doctor that has been keeping him alive. The response to this aggressive over-prescribing by the advocates of heroic medicine now has been the primary stimulus that has contributed not only to the revival of

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homeopathy and the alternative therapies since 1970 but also to their continuously increasing popularity. These systems of medicine had been in continuous decline during the first 60 years of the 20th century. However, as the new millennium dawned, public demand 'voted with its feet' for the alternative movement and followed the pattern of the early and middle years of the 19th century. History was repeating itself in more ways than one.

With growing popularity and public interest, the pattern of the attacks on homeopathy and the alternatives that began in the 19th century has become even more vociferous in the 21st. Aided by funding from the multinational drug industry, disinformation charities have been established as well as anonymous bloggers on the worldwide web engaging in a torrent of libellous abuse in opposition to the alternatives. However, their basic message of opposition in regard to homeopathy remains the same now as then:

- 1) There is no medicinal substance contained in the remedies.
- 2) Any perceived result is due to the placebo effect.
- 3) There is no rational mechanism, based on 19th century scientific assumptions, as to how it works.
- 4) In addition, when subjected to 'cherry picked' meta-analysis of clinical trials, homeopathy fails to demonstrate positive results.

Then and now?

The medical practices of both heroic medicine then and now ultimately reached such a point of excess and ineffectiveness that their failings could no longer be avoided or explained away. In both instances thinking medical professionals resorted to exploration outside their paradigm into techniques employed by the very alternatives to which their profession was actively opposed. By publishing proposals supporting techniques from outside habitual practice, both Sir John Forbes in 1846 and David Freeman in 2011 were in effect 'swimming against the tide' while representing the thoughtful conclusion of an influential small core minority within the medical profession.

Change did result. From the 1850s and during the final years of the 19th century, the heroic medicine practices of bloodletting, blistering, and purging became



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Bloodletting was a principal tool of 17th century 'heroic' medicine

replaced by milder forms of treatment. Medicines were prescribed in smaller doses and many remedies employed by homeopaths were introduced into the allopathic materia medica. However, in the meantime, the modern drug industry was about to burst on to the world stage presaging our current era of heroic medicine style excess.

Will the core of questioning allopathic researchers and educators at the heart of many of America's most well-known and prestigious medical establishments interviewed and quoted by David Freedman in his 2011 *Atlantic* article have longer lasting influence than that of Sir John Forbes and his article of 1846?

We will only know in the spiralling cycle of time when **now has become then!**

Postscript

The following statement appeared on 8 September 2011 in a *New England Journal of Medicine* article entitled 'Global Noncommunicable Diseases – Lessons from the HIV-Aids Experience':

Therefore, although the rigorous pursuit of evidence-based behavioural

The response to this aggressive over-prescribing has contributed to the revival of homeopathy

interventions and societal policies that facilitate healthier lifestyles must continue, it is critical to welcome and integrate the use of low-cost biomedical interventions into prevention efforts for noncommunicable diseases, viewing them as complementary and part of a holistic approach.

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