

CAMPHORA OFFICINALIS

Materia Medica Pura

Mind

Anxiety. Very great anxiety. [Hoffmann, I.c.] She tosses about anxiously in bed, with constant weeping. [Hufeland, I.c.] The ideas become confused; delirium. [De Meza, I.c.] Talking nonsense. [Hufeland, I.c.] He talks nonsense and undertakes nonsensical things. [Unzer, I.c.] Rage, with foam before the mouth. [Alexander, I.c.] All external things are repugnant to him, and excite in him a repellent crossness. The boy crawls into a corner and howls and weeps; he takes offence at everything one says to him, as if he thought he was being ordered about, and he thinks he is insulted and affronted. Quarrelsomeness, insists he is right. He is hasty and does things in a hurry. The first day the disposition was lazy and unhappy during the cold and rigor; after twenty-four hours, however, the disposition became ever better and better, even during the pains.

Discussion on the theme for camphor

Allen's Encyclopedia of Pure Materia Medica brings forth our best picture of the Camphor proving. In this prover he felt as though 'I must be dead...the external world did not exist for me any more', imagining that he had been 'transferred to another world.' He felt he was 'alone in the great universe, the last of all things'. It was a feeling of 'hopeless, endless, damnation', 'I was the spirit of evil in a world forsaken of God.' What we see underlying Camphora patients is a great feeling of aloneness, an emptiness, a desolate feeling of coldness. Many types of reactions can stem from this in order to not feel it. Whatever starts to trouble them will tend to lead you to this point as you explore their case further. Their depressions, their fears will be centred around this aloneness. It may be that their work has no meaning for them any more, 'it is empty', yet they won't leave/change for the fear it may bring up for them. Another patient talked about an emptiness when they feel depressed as though being in an empty room, something bare, cold and with no one around. Another lament I have seen in patients is of not having a partner in this life because of the fear of being alone. As much as they fear it, they will follow on by saying 'the perfect person is out there waiting for me.' Imagine having just run out of petrol in your car in the city. It is 3am on a winter's morning. You are walking alone down the city street. Just you, the cold bleak surroundings, the buildings are empty, it is quiet, there is no one else but you. The wind is blowing highlighting the bareness of the place and it seems that the nearest phone is miles away to get any help (Delusion, longer, things seem). This is the emptiness of Camphora, it feels like hell (Delusion, hell is in) for them and that's what they want to avoid. A situation in the past where there has been violence of some kind has necessitated the person to close off, shut down in order to not have to deal with it. As a result they may describe the way they

feel as 'a not feeling', if asked about this they would lead you to the deeper level of emptiness, aloneness, 'as if there was nobody there for them' type of feeling. Another patient described it as thought they felt dead inside, nothing is there for them to feel excited about. The fact that there are Delusions of the devil, hell, horrible visions; Fears of impending danger, death, evil, illustrates that there must have been something terrible in the past that the patient has come through. In many cases I have seen the patient constantly tell me 'that it's all right, it will be better soon', 'I'm very positive about what's going to happen' etc. to allay their fears of just how negative their situation seemingly is. This is the positive side to their case I mentioned earlier. When pushed, they can be violent, aggressive, and very demanding of your attention. In extreme cases you see the 'shrieking for aid' as their symptoms may intensify. This is when they suddenly call you up and demand to see you immediately as they can't take it any more. In the proving we see extremes of feeling, from wildness to collapse; despair of salvation to being positive; ecstasy to a feeling of general dissatisfaction with life. Their reactions can become quite 'acute' almost frenzied in nature having fears of the dark, danger or evil. What makes this different from Stramonium, is that to be alone is terrifying and dangerous, for what could happen to you, as there is an acute threat, a danger to your life - they are alone in the wilderness. In Camphora it is the very act of being alone that is so terrible, they are alone in the whole universe. They both have clinging, in Stramonium, it serves to protect, in Camphora, it relieves one of the misery that aloneness brings. In Pulsatilla, there is also the fear of being alone, however, Camphora can be more direct, stronger and if not now, then in their past you will see a degree of violent behaviour either by the patient or experienced by them, as opposed to Pulsatilla's mild, yielding and teary disposition. Platina also feels alone, however, we see two parts to him, one part feels superior to those around, 'I'm better than you', whilst the other part feels as if they are not appreciated; they feel out on a limb because of their position of authority but in doing so feels as if they do not belong to their own family; estranged from the family. To overcome this they have to perform in order to prove their worth. Physically we can see similar alternating patterns with convulsions and cramps to the physical collapse we know of in Camphora; the icy coldness with aversion to being covered; icy coldness alternating with internal burning. They may be prone to digestive problems, diarrhoea, colitis, Crohn's disease etc, highlighting an area of weakness. The physical body reflecting the inner state, ie. pathology that leaves the body in a state of emptiness.

Reference: The Encyclopedia of Materia Medica, Vol 2, T.F. Allen