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### ***CASE THREE: CEREUS SERPENTINUS***

*As you read this next case, try to recognize what part of the remedy, of this anthropological concept, belongs to decompensated state and what belong to the compensated state. Try to better understand what are the main issues of these remedies and how our patients might present when they are in these states.*

This is a 66-year-old woman. In comparison to the first two cases she is not directly asking me to help her to make this passage. She found out about me from a friend whose husband is being treated for pain in the spine in terminal stages of life. Her main issue now is that she cannot sleep.

My impression is that she is a nice person. She is talkative, seemingly open, makes jokes, and it is pleasant to be in her company. She comes to the visit with her husband who appears to be a very careful person.

When they entered my office, I was surprised to learn that it was she that was the patient, for my impression was that it was the husband who was sick. His face was yellow and she gave the impression that she was there to console him. Little by little the situation changed from trying to console her husband to a different image: of doing her best to detach from him and to be less concerned about him; to show that their living together is almost at the end. At the beginning of the interview she looked so phosphoric and toward the end she looked more serious and hard and the husband looked as if he was looking to me for support.

Her face is quite pale. Her voice is very lean and weak in spite of the fact that she talks with a precise attitude, of a person who wants to be heard.

This is what she said spontaneously...

About 4 years ago my cervical spine was frozen. I spent all winter warming up my neck and then I had different kinds of massage and physiotherapy. My toes began to go numb and they had to operate on a herniated disc (L4-L5). During the operation they realized that it was not just a herniation.. .but a metastasis. I was immobilized and stuck at home. In the meantime my nervous system began to do its own thing.. .and...

*After the operation she had to stay at home for 5 months without moving. She has to stop at this point in the interview so she does not cry; her face is red with a clear expression of anger.*

Her husband...

<sup>A</sup>It is very hard for her to urinate, very hard. But it began a year ago after the treatment with the drugs while the doctors in hospital say that it is only due to her illness. But she also has difficulty breathing and often her legs even get locked and she gets all contracted as if she had tetanus...

*A very common expression of Cactus patients is SPASMOTIC RETRACTION. This is not merely cramping because cramping can come and go. This spasmodic retraction is strong and long lasting. It is a kind of clenching that can last a long time.*

What is going on? What is the issue?

When I have finished urinating I feel that I still need to go...before, I don't manage to do it because I don't feel the bladder anymore and then I feel that I cannot empty it... When I stopped the antidepressants I felt better. The urologist found nothing wrong but said that the psychiatrist is right and that I have to continue taking his treatment because I don't sleep and if my mood gets worse things will get much worse too... I am completely at rock bottom.

What do you feel?

I feel tremors inside which throw me to the ground, I feel the blood stops flowing and my knees hurt.

And?

If I attempt to walk I have to stop and as I lie down everything goes, but I have to stay sitting up in bed otherwise I cannot breathe... But now I cannot remain in this position any longer because my back hurts me too much and they say that they cannot do any more. Now my spine has more holes than an old piece of furniture. BUT I HAVE TO SLEEP AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO...

I always have a continuous buzzing: IN BOTH EARS...§ if my mood is good then it lowers a little.

Can you tell me about your mood?

What I see is all black.

Do you want to tell me something about this?

It's just that my husband and I often laugh about it...I often have erotic dreams, especially in recent years.

Tell me more about these erotic dreams.

To tell the truth I used to have them before but they were never nice and I never managed to get to the bottom of it. Instead the recent ones are pleasant...but the dreams are not any different...it's I who feel different when I have them...

OK, can you try to describe your emotions in these dreams?

Before they were always about self-denial and now I am the same but I don't feel bad...it is as if I were finally above it...it is like saying that I don't feel pleasure in anything sexual and I don't even feel sorrow at something that is not.. .I don't know how to explain.. .it is as if I no longer have any need for pleasure or sorrow...

What is your feeling about this?

It gives me a certain sense of freedom.. .do you understand me?

### **Follow up**

I tried Cere-b first, but she had little improvement. I knew it was possible to do better so I gave Cere-s; I could only find 200C, and in my experience it is much better to give it few times a day. I had her put a few globulin in a glass of water and take it sip by sip.

A few days after she called me and told me that "I am happy because I can sleep better because the pain in the back is less painful."

She called back a few days after that: I was happy by the quality and length of her dreams. She was annoyed by the amount of sexual dreams she was having. The erotic dreams were occurring daily. She did not want to tell me anything about the dreams; she didn't even want to tell her husband. She wanted to keep them secret.

Up until this point she had no improvement with her urination. I decided to make another potency. In the C potency it is not easy to go from 200C to 300C, so I asked her to take one spoon of the 200C water and dilute in water and shake and take that. With this new potency she had less difficulty in urination. She also told me that she was able to have bowel movements more easily.

*2 months after the initial case*

She came to the office without her husband. Her voice was extremely weak, but the look in her eyes was extremely vivacious.

I feel more serene. It is great stuff to be able to sleep in any position. (Before she could not lie in her bed or even sleep in an armchair.)

I don't know what happened to my bones or nerves or whatever and I cannot tell you I have no more pain. The pain is there and I can feel it but I feel it in a different way. It is less stressful and I can sleep.

Before the pain was coming and going and leaving; now this is something that continuous and remains in the background. Something has changed that allows me to endure this pain. It is no longer like skewer.

It is as if I feel this pain trespassing my bone, but I can adapt to it. Before the pain was coming and leaving; now it is continuous but I can move around it and find a good position to sleep. Before it made me have a strong anger and I was even angrier to be so angry. I am more serene now.

I asked about her dreams and she got cross:

Did my husband tell you something about my dreams?

*Probably I made a serious mistake with my Cactus patients in not being more patient. I was driven by my strong interest to know more and therefore I was unrelenting in my questions and my patients reacted badly to them. It was difficult for me to be patient and wait for them to share and my persistence made it more difficult for them to be forthcoming.*

This morning I had a dream of fight with my brother. All of a sudden he took his car and ran over all the people around him. I was watching and I could not understand. All of the sudden the car started to run in circles and I had the courage to face this car as if I was a matador in front of the crazy and bleeding bull. I stopped him because he was unable to cross me. I kindly opened the door and told him to come close to me. I started to hug him and take him close to my chest and to caress him. All the people around wanted to kill him but then everybody became calm when they understood what I was doing. Everybody thought I was his mother and you know the mother is always able to forgive. I took him to a good doctor. I wanted to see about all the people on the floor that had been run over; luckily they sustained only superficial damage. It reminded me of one of the images that you can see in a documentary about the running of the bulls.