

Focussed Mindfulness and Homœopathy in the Treatment of a *Sepia* Case

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Clare Walters PhD is a classical homœopath and a Journey practitioner. She developed Focussed Mindfulness initially to help clients suffering with physical pain but now uses it in all areas of her practice. She offers supervision over skype and runs workshops and training courses for practitioners: www.absolute-specialists.co.uk. The techniques are explained in her handbook *From Pain to Peace*.

Abstract: Focussed mindfulness is a technique that takes the patient through layers of consciousness to the deepest level: the true self or vital force. Here they get a momentary experience of health and insight in to the cause of their disease. This acts like the simillimum, stimulating healing, and the various layers that the patient goes through gives the homœopath information about the remedy they need. The process is illustrated here in a *Sepia* case. Focussed mindfulness can be used during a consultation to bring immediate relief to the patient and complement the homœopathic medicine leading to better results than either of the two therapies alone.

Keywords: Focussed mindfulness, homœopathy, mindfulness meditation, complementary therapies, pain relief.

Focussed Mindfulness

'In the state of health the spirit-like vital force animating the material human organism reigns in supreme sovereignty.

It maintains the sensations and activities of all the parts of the living organism in a harmony that obliges wonderment. The reasoning spirit who inhabits the organism can thus freely use this healthy living instrument to reach the lofty goal of human existence.'

The Organon Aphorism 9.¹

Focussed Mindfulness guides the patient to a profound experience of health as defined by *Hahnemann*: the reasoning spirit inhabiting a healthy living instrument. This briefly allows the vital force to be fully expressed, directing the patient towards a healthier way of being and giving him insight into the cause and effect of his disease.

In more contemporary language Focussed Mindfulness takes the patient through all that is blocking him from an experience of one-ness, grace or awakening. This can be experienced during a one-hour consultation and it gives the client both immediate relief from his suffering, and hope that he can achieve a lasting improvement in his health. The patient must then be encouraged to practise the exercises regularly between consultations to give the healing process some momentum. This fully supports the action of homœopathic medicines as the two approaches work in harmony, leading to healing of deep and miasmatic disease. I have found that used together they achieve greater improvements in health than I achieve through either of the two approaches used in isolation.

How the Practice Evolved

I have been developing the practice since 2007 when I first began to introduce Journey work into my homœopathic practice. At the time I was treating a large number of people with chronic physical disease such as fibromyalgia and irritable bowel syndrome²³. I found that by using the two approaches together, the patients quickly made the connection between their chronic physical pain and past, intense emotional pain and then were more inclined to take control of their own healing journey. Moreover, while guiding them through a Focussed Mindfulness process I could often 'see' a medicine and this gave me added information that I used to inform my choice of prescription.

I now employ this joint approach in all areas of my general practice, finding it useful for physical pain, emotional distress and complex and chronic disease. I also teach Focussed Mindfulness to practitioners both for their own spiritual development and so they can use this powerful tool in their own practices.

Deeper Levels of Consciousness

In order to understand how Focussed Mindfulness works it may help to envisage our levels of consciousness as a series of concentric arcs. At the centre is the intellect. Many clients have their focus at this level, a habit that reflects our cultural reverence of the intellect above all other states of consciousness: we believe that it can resolve all our problems from personal relationship challenges through society's ills to existential dilemmas. People who are habitually focussed on their intellect tend to be out

of touch with their feelings and with their deeper levels of consciousness.

The next arc of consciousness is the body where we feel physical and emotional pain. Patients who are habitually focussed on this level are often acutely aware of their pain but fear feeling it fully as they believe that they will be overwhelmed by it, so they use various strategies of avoidance. They may repeatedly tell stories about their suffering to gain some temporary amelioration; they may seek relief from outside, either through medication, addictive behaviour or another form of diversion ; or they may suppress the pain, self- narcotising, and in so doing separating themselves from being fully engaged in life.

Beyond this arc is the unconscious mind. Here are all the habitual patterns of behaviour and our unquestioned beliefs and fears. Many of these were put in place in our early years, either through inheriting them from our parents, learning from our carers or through our own experience. People who habitually function from this level of consciousness live mostly on automatic pilot. They tend not to question their ways of being and doing and are unaware that they have choices.

Most of us move freely between the intellect, the pain body and the unconscious mind most of the time. There are deeper levels but as a culture we rarely acknowledge these and we are not generally aware of them. The first of these I call the soul mind. This is the level of the collective consciousness explored in depth by Jung⁴. We are accessing the soul mind when we feel a strong sense of place and of belonging, this might be for instance to our family, our culture, a landscape or the house we grew up in. It is at this level that we feel emotions that are not necessarily from our personal experience but are those of our forebears: for instance anguish, terror, yearning, all-consuming love and heroic courage.

Continuing disease at any of these layers can ultimately lead to physical ill health.

The outermost arc represents the true self and beyond this the absolute. The absolute is boundless and it is described, amongst other things, as the infinite, grace or source. When we take our awareness here we are conscious of

peace, acceptance, infinite wisdom or joy: words that are attempting to describe the indescribable, and we lose all sense of the self. There is no boundary to the absolute; it seems to be both inside and outside of us.

Touching the absolute is our true self. This is the level where we are aware that we are one with everything and we get a sense of ourselves in this context. It can also be described as our pure essence and homœopaths might want to call it the vital force or dynamism; it is an unfettered place of pure potential and it is referred to in some way by every religion known to man. Here we have a sense of ourselves as connected, as pure love, joy and peace and we become aware of a deep wisdom. It is this that has the potential to heal the disease that lies at shallower levels of consciousness. In my understanding homœopathic medicines work at the level of the true self.

Focussed Mindfulness takes our awareness through all the arcs to the true self. From the first time we experience this we know that it is always there and it is merely that our shallower levels of consciousness have been blocking us from it. With regular practise we can learn to remember this more and more of the time and this puts our fears, our pain and our thoughts into a healthier perspective: we are free to heal.

The most direct way of accessing the true self is through an exercise called the Pain Release Process; this takes the patient's awareness directly down through the layers of consciousness.. As they pass down the patient becomes aware of some of the blocks that normally prevent them from accessing their true self: their intellectual resistance, suppressed emotions and unconscious beliefs. They will describe these as they are guided through the process and may mention memories that they associate with them and this gives the homœopath great insight into their case. Once they achieve a state of one-ness with the absolute the patient will gain a direct experience of health and will receive what can be termed knowledge of the heart⁵, or divine wisdom, or a gut knowing about how they could live a freer life. When the patient completes this process it is as if they receive their simillimum.

Sometimes the patient's mind is too controlling and will not allow their awareness to pass down the levels of consciousness in this way. Focussed Mindfulness practitioners then employ other processes, which are easier for the client to follow. These processes, which are described in my book⁶, distract the mind or heal some emotional pain sufficiently to give the patient a momentary glimpse of their true self. Over time and with regular practise this teaches the mind that it is safe to relinquish its control and allow a full experience of a Pain Release Process.

From Pain to Peace

I used the pain Release Process with Laura when she returned for her second follow-up appointment. She had been given *Sepia* 1M after both previous consultations, had felt great relief from her physical and emotional symptoms but had then relapsed.

Laura is a mother in her forties. She wants to go into her school and offer stress management workshops to the staff but says she cannot because she lacks confidence. She has fatigue, uncontrollable frustration and anger directed at her children and partner, physically she has a persistent sinus infection and tightness in her chest for which she has recently been prescribed antibiotics and oral steroids. Her father left her mother when she was fourteen and she felt that she has supported her mother emotionally ever since. As she gave her case her eyes were constantly filled with tears.

I felt that talking about her symptoms again would result in her turning the same problems around in her head and it would not bring her any relief or new insight, so I asked her to close her eyes and notice how her body was feeling. She said that her chest felt restricted.

I asked her to allow this feeling of restriction to intensify and let it be fully felt and after a few moments I asked her to notice if there was a deeper feeling. She said she felt frustration and she filled up with tears. I asked her to allow herself to fully feel the energy of that frustration in her body and repeat after me 'I allow the frustration, I accept the frustration and I surrender to the frustration'. I encouraged her to allow all the feelings to overwhelm her and then, after a few

moments to again notice what she was feeling in her body.

She said: 'I am not accepted for who I am,' and she felt sadness in her heart. I asked her to allow all sadness to come and then I asked her whose sadness she was feeling. She said it was her mother's sadness and her mother's shame. She began to sob.

I asked her to feel this fully, to allow all the sadness and shame to be expressed: all her sadness, all her mother's sadness and any other sadness that was here, and then to explore what was the deeper feeling. She said she felt a burden on her shoulders and sobbed: 'I have to fix everything: parents, kids, partner and nobody is there for me.'

She felt sad and lonely and had an image of a small child curled up in a ball and hiding. She said she felt safety in her stomach. The thought was 'why bother' and she felt that she could no longer feel anything. As she has a tendency to begin analysing and this can inhibit the process, I asked her to bring her awareness back to the body and she said that it was as if she had a cricket ball in her stomach. I enquired what was held in the ball and she said anger, I then asked her if this ball had words and she said 'SHUT UP' angrily. She said she felt resentful and defensive and then the words were 'I will show you.'

I asked her to surrender to the feeling and allow it to be fully felt, to let it overwhelm her and to open to all anger: hers, her mothers, her family's and humanity's. I took some time over this as it felt like a big discharge of suppressed emotion. She became fully absorbed in the feelings in her body and she was no longer conscious of her analytical mind. I then asked her what was deeper than this. She felt fear and as she surrendered to this feeling: she felt tenderness in her heart. She said she felt exhausted looking for love.

I asked her to surrender to the feeling of exhaustion and her body began to relax and she felt a sense of acceptance in her belly. She then felt a sense of space and deeper than this, she felt love. The love was in her belly but as she explored it she found it to be boundless, she felt no difference between what was inside her and what was outside. Love was everywhere. She then noticed that it was self-love.

I told her that this self-love was always here in the core of her being and then asked her how she would be if she remained in touch with it for a whole day. She said she would feel safe, relaxed and able to go with the flow.

I asked her how she would be when she had been in touch with self-love for a whole week and she said lighter and less burdened. After a month she felt she was having fun and enjoying the kids. After a year she was confident, achieving and felt taller. I asked her what advice she would have for herself from this future place and she said: 'everyone has their own journey and what is right for me isn't necessarily right for everyone'.

I gently brought her awareness back to the room and when she opened her eyes she looked relieved, peaceful and happy. She left the consultation in a much better frame of mind and her chest felt free. I prescribed *Sepia* 12c daily and arranged to see her again in a month.

The Pain Release Process confirmed many *Sepia* symptoms: involuntary weeping, constriction in the chest, indifference, pressure in the stomach as from a stone, avoids the sight of people, forsaken feeling and anger about former vexations. It was interesting that she hissed 'I will show you' when asked what the ball would say as this would seem to express a desire to seek revenge and punish her mother: the response of someone requiring an animal medicine.

A Pain Free Life

After ten days Laura wrote to me: 'I have been reading your book [on Focussed Mindfulness] and it has been bringing up lots of different reflective thoughts, nothing heavy but all helping me to get to know myself! I stopped the medicine after three days as I thought it was making me worse. I have found myself feeling much more content than ever!! My chest seems much better too and I have more energy.'

It is heartening that Laura has continued to explore her emotional pain since her last consultation. She is now actively involved in her healing process and is taking more control of her life. At her next consultation I will be looking to see if she is still harbouring anger and hurt in relation to her mother as I find that patients, and in particular women, who did not receive unconditional maternal

love as a young child often bear a wound that is very difficult to reconcile. I am, however, confident that Focussed Mindfulness alongside indicated developmental⁷ medicines will support her healing process.

(Endnotes)

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