

China Crisis

It's a great life if you don't weaken...

By Mary Aspinwall

M.J. first came to see me on 28th April 1998.

At the time he was 56 years old.

He and his wife have three daughters and two sons.

He seemed very anxious and was accompanied by his wife, who also wanted to talk to me and sat in throughout the first consultation at his request.

Medical History

As a child M.J.'s speech had been a bit slow to develop.

He found school difficult especially reading, writing and maths and felt more relaxed once he was able to leave. His energy had always been low, even as a teenager. In his early twenties he had a bad shock when his father had a serious accident. As a result he had to take over a lot of the day-to-day running of his father's business.

Two months later he was diagnosed with *nephritis* with severe swelling of the ankles and eyeballs. ***He was told by the doctors he had only six months to live.*** When he proved them wrong they told his wife:

“You have a miracle for a husband!”

In his thirties he inherited a property from elderly relatives.

As part of the agreement he and his wife had to care for the relatives as they were both invalids. It was a difficult time and his wife was also expecting their first child.

Then in June '92 he was publicly cheated during a business transaction and two months later he had to be readmitted to hospital with nephritis. He was in for a fortnight and had to return again a month later after a relapse. From 92-94 he was on steroids.

Observation

MJ was a very shy and gentle man.

I immediately felt very warm and protective towards him (unusual for me!).

He often deferred to his wife whilst she was with us.

He became confused when telling me the children's ages.

His wife gently corrected him.

She was clearly very fond of him and they were very close.

Symptoms

Kidney symptoms:

Kidneys, tender, << evenings 7-8pm

Kidneys, tender, < night

Kidneys, badly damaged < L

(concomitant)

Urination, burning in penis on passing urine
could be before, during, after urination (but not all the time)

Urine, protein in

Concomitant symptoms:

Back, pain < driving
< sitting in same position

Back, pain mild throbbing
Foot, inner instep, left pain pinching

Extending to sole of foot

Foot, instep, pain < night

Foot, instep, pain < touch

Heel, pain, out through

Other symptoms:

Energy, wanting < 7-8pm

Mind, irritable < company

Sleep, restless “Sometimes I have to take sleeping pills. I get up some nights to pee. I can’t get a full night’s rest I’m twisting and turning. I usually get 6-7 hours. I have silly dreams but I can’t remember them.”

Unlike the earlier symptoms he had experienced, that had led to his hospitalisation, his symptoms now were less extreme, more chronic:

“I’m off form I have no energy... Generally, I just feel uncomfortable, not 100%”. I get cranky and give short answers.”

“...they say a kidney transplant is the only way.”

His head throbbed at the occiput most days and he also suffered from chest pain and heartburn with tenderness around his kidneys.

“It comes and goes ... I’m on medication. I was on cortisone (92-94), but now I take blood pressure medication (94-98). I feel all puffed up. I wish I was better physically. I’ve no energy to get up. I’m tired during the day”

“I’m just very tired... I need plenty of rest then I feel better.”

His mental and emotional state was not good either:

“I’d like to be more out-going. I don’t like going out and meeting people. I’m not able for it... If someone comes into the house to socialise I step back ... I stand behind my wife. I was always like this even as a child.”

“People try to take advantage of you... tell you something to get you going... or brain wash you into buying something ... I’m just not quick enough... If I was in a car with 4 or 5 fellas I’d be the last to speak... I wouldn’t be quick enough... I missed out a lot at school”.

“I miss my father an awful lot. I take things to heart, feel very serious about things, feel wretched. I felt terrible about the time I got cheated – I just didn’t spot it until it was too late. Everybody knew... I found they were all against me...”

They were too strong for me... I never say no, I feel too weak.”

“I inherited in preference to someone else in the family who lived locally and that led to a lot of hassle. I wish I had never gone to live there (he repeats this)... they tried to burn the place. They burned the ditch. They burnt it in stages coming closer to the house each time. ***I was desperate...frightened.***”

In Chinese medicine the kidney is the organ that relates to fear.

“I feel very unhappy there ...you know people are talking about you. I’m very sensitive... people know that and they take advantage. People take advantage of me. I know I am not able for them. I helped a neighbour and he turned his back on me when I was in hospital (1992). You can’t turn a blind eye to that.”

“I hated school, the big classes and the teachers the loud ones were the worst. I felt I should be better. ***The deadness was there.*** I felt sad. I never had a friend, my brothers and sisters always had friends.”

(He mentioned how much better he felt now he had his wife’s support).

“I feel at a dead end.”

Wife: “ He’s very down, he lacks confidence. Since the last bout in 92 we don’t go out much. We lost a baby in 86 and in 84 our son was born with heart problems. M prefers to stay at home. He doesn’t like crowds and he is very quiet in company.”

What needed to be cured?

Since he was a child MJ had felt he was “***not able***” and “***too weak***” for this world. He felt persecuted and abused to the point of being frightened and anxious. He had found a protectress in his wife and he “steps behind her” when he feels threatened by a situation. This fear had presented not only as a mental state, but had come through to the physical level as very severe, at times life-threatening, kidney pathology. In his language he spoke of deadness and dead ends. According to his doctors the left kidney in particular was badly damaged.

I felt very confident in selecting:

Mind, delusions persecuted
(but also search for synonyms that might reveal other remedies and find)
Mind, delusions tormented
Mind, delusions wronged has been
(and made a super rubric of all three)

Strangely China is in all three!

I want to add to this a rubric that covers his weakness, which is at the root of his persecution. I find:

Mind, Will, weakness of

I think this is accurate. He could have challenged those who had cheated him or tackled his neighbour about the lack of reciprocation, but he lacked the will to do so.

The one aspect about the case that jarred for me was that this mild-mannered man's first concern was to tell me about how cranky and 'short' he was with others when he was tired. It is at odds with everything else in the case where he does not say 'boo to a goose'. *Nandita Shah once said "Look at the bit that doesn't fit."* So I decide to include this in the repertorisation.

Irritability, with weakness

So why choose only mental symptoms and not physicals?

For me the mentals were so clearly stated and stressed that they were more reliable. I looked for the stranger physical symptoms like the pain on urination, pinching in the left foot, but the rubrics were small and none of the remedies appealed. I decided it would be safer, in this instance, to check the physicals against remedies that covered the mentals well.

CHINA was extremely well-indicated with Nat Mur a poor second.

China covers his temperament:

Mildness. (Boger)

Sadness.

Sensitive, oversensitive.

It covers his beliefs:

DELUSIONS, IMAGINATIONS: TORMENTED, HE IS

DELUSIONS, IMAGINATIONS: UNFORTUNATE, HE IS

Delusions, imaginations: vexations and offences, of.

Delusions, imaginations: wrong: suffered, has. (Dockx & Kokelenberg)

His reaction:

Dwells on past disagreeable occurrences.

Ailments from: anger, vexation: grief, with silent. (Stauffer)

Company: aversion to, agg.

Confidence: want of self.

Cowardice.

FEAR: HURT, OF BEING: FEELINGS, HIS, BY OTHERS. (Phatak)

Offended easily.

Reproaches: others.

His slowness:

Confusion of mind.

Dullness, sluggishness, difficulty of thinking and comprehending.

His crankiness and abruptness:

IRRITABILITY: WEAKNESS: WITH. (Knerr)

Morose, cross, fretful, ill-humor, peevish: evening. (Jahr)
Morose, cross, fretful, ill-humor, peevish: talk, disinclined to.
Talk, talking, talks: indisposed to, desire to be silent, taciturn.

Kidney symptoms:

Ailments in general: left. (Phatak)

Generalities, Bright's disease, albuminous nephritis (Knerr)

Extremity Pain

Pinching: foot. (Hahnemann). This despite the fact that it wouldn't have come out in repertorisation.

Lower limbs: foot: sole. (Boenninghausen)

Ailments in general: left. (Phatak)

Prescription: China 30c split dose Bedtime and Rising.

(By the way I have since switched to giving a single dose in nearly all cases as I found it generally works just as well. The split dose was just a habit I had picked up from the way I had been treated myself in the past).

Follow-up 1/ 2nd June 1998

(four weeks after remedy)

Observation: Came with his daughter, but had consultation alone whilst she sat in the waiting room.

Mind: "I'm more at ease with myself, but I'm still on a sleeping tablet"

Energy, low 7-8pm slightly better

Mind, irritability? "much better... a big change".

Kidney, pain throbbing ? slight improvement

Foot, pinching pain and sore instep? both slightly better

(I ask "How much ?") " 20%"

Head, throbbing? also 20% better

Chest, heartburn? 30% better (he now likes giving marks out of 100!)

Sleep, waking refreshed ? "That has improved"

Kidney, tenderness? 20% better

Kidney, pain pinching left ? better by 20%

Urination, burning? better by 30%

Generalities, tiredness? "I'm resting less in the afternoon...some days it's very good. Definitely I'm better in the evenings 7-8pm."

Mind, shyness ? "I'm better when meeting people".

Mind, hiding behind wife ? "I'm more able to cope."

"Things are better with my business. It doesn't affect me that much. ***I feel that bit more confident and stronger...I don't worry as much***".

He volunteers that his appetite is very good, a big improvement on what it had been.

Mind, sadness? "No. I think it is possible to be happy."

Mind, delusion people are talking about him? "...not as much, that's 20% better."

"My spirit for doing something is better ...I could sit down and write a five page letter to my sister ...things came to me easier."

"I feel stronger and if I could keep going the way I am it would be great."

I am grateful to Vega Rosenberg who once said an initial 20% improvement was good going in a chronic case. MJ was appreciative of the improvement, but some other clients have been less than impressed at first!

Prescription: No remedy. Wait. Two spare remedies to hold. Instructions to take them bedtime and rising if symptoms stopped improving and worsened. He took remedies on 9th June 1998.

Follow-up 2/ 30th June 1998
(three weeks after repeat remedies)

Observation: Came alone.

“Not too bad, I’m still fairly tired all the time. ...generally otherwise I’m not too bad. My energy is better since the last time. *I feel stronger*. I’m moving forward ...more out-going. I came off the sleeping tablets two weeks ago and my sleep is settling down...if I didn’t have the pain I’d be fine ...that’s what wakes me.” (5 or 6 times a night he gets a spasm in his kidney or leg, but he can sleep longer than before from 10pm-8am).”

He had had one episode of intermittent throbbing kidney pain lasting 10 to 15 minutes all afternoon to the following morning

Mind, irritable 7-8pm ? “My crankiness is another 10-15% better again than it was.”

Foot, instep, pinching left? “...still the same.”

Head, throbbing? “That’s about 40% better than it was first visit.”

Chest, heartburn? not as frequent

Sleep, waking refreshed “tired all the time... I still have to lie down occasionally between 3-5pm”

(hadn’t up till then mentioned that before remedies had had to take a daily nap)

Kidney tenderness? “not so bad driving the car about 35% better than it was before the remedies”

Mind, delusion
people talking about him? “Doesn’t worry me much now.”

Urination, burning on ? “45% better ... it’s still slightly there”

“I was very tired after staying up to 11.30pm. We were out with a crowd to see a band and I wasn’t worth tuppence the next day.”

(I point out gently that because he is starting to feel better, he may be overdoing it a little. Encourage him to rest whenever he is tired, perhaps to reinstate the naps)

Prescription: No remedy. Wait. Two spares to hold. Instructions as before.

Follow-up 3 / 30th July 1998
(last remedy taken on 9th June)

“I’m much better generally, my back pain has improved and **my whole system is much stronger**. My energy is better in the evenings. I feel more confident and I’m not as tired as I used to be...it’s easier to get up in the morning. The pain in my left leg is not so bad as it used to be... I can go out more, I’m more outgoing. If I carry on like this for another two months I’ll be back to as good as I’ve ever been.”
(Why stop there?)

“The throbbing in my kidney has improved, it’s not as noticeable. I find the little rests a great help. My sleep is very good I take no tablets and there’s no pain ... well only a little.”

Prescription: No remedy. Wait.

Follow-up 4 / 17th September 1998
(six weeks later)

To summarise:

All physical symptoms continued to improve steadily. Apart from the pinching in the left instep and a tenderness around the left kidney. He was only occasionally resting in the afternoon. Much more confident, especially in his business dealings. Although can be less confident if tired. A slight burning on urination all the time now, though he hardly notices it. Night time spasms of pain in the kidney and leg a lot better, not woken by them at all anymore. Only one mild episode of feeling faint. Return of an old symptom- nausea on waking.

Follow-up 5/ 10th November 1998

Again further improvement in all physical symptoms. Pinching in left instep is completely gone. Shyness had improved “immensely and work-wise I feel much better too. I have extra energy”. The delusion that others are talking about him is gone. His crankiness is completely gone and his depression/sadness is also much better. The burning on urination is now on and off and doesn’t last as long -definitely better. Only had to get up to pee once at night. “Can feel my whole system changing...**I’ve put on weight and feel much stronger. There’s less tension and I’m easier in myself**”. Two episodes of feeling faint but less so than before. The old symptom of nausea on rising that had returned is now gone. The left kidney still throbs sometimes, but not as badly as it had before.

Prescription: No remedy. Wait.

Follow-up 6/ 17th December 1998
(last remedy taken on 7th December 1998 after a “slight slip”. He had been feeling more tired).

A big improvement in his sleep “as sound as could be”. Wife says he is less

restless. Relaxed in himself, not jittery. He says he is way more confident. Very pleased with his appetite "...can eat a fine dinner now". No confidence problems about going out, although sometimes doesn't go if he's tired. Only cranky a very odd time. "Small things go wrong but I don't lose sleep over them. His instep still pinches a bit and his kidneys are still tender, though they throb less.

(I tell him he is doing well and to call me if he needs me).

10th September 2002

There has been no return of kidney symptoms and in general has been very well although in the past few months he has had a hip replacement done. He feels the hip may have been damaged by the high doses of steroids he was given during his treatment.

Miracles happen all the time

When MJ first came to me in 1998 he had experienced disturbance on a mental and emotional level since his school days and severe kidney pathology from his early 20s. I was not overly hopeful in terms of his prognosis. The doctors treating him had advised him that his left kidney was seriously damaged (the right less so) and that the only treatment liable to improve his health to any great extent would be a transplant. I am delighted that the miracle man, yet again, proved us all wrong.