



“ROLE OF CONSTITUTIONAL HOMOEOPATHIC MEDICINE IN GENERALISED ANXIETY DISORDER” – A CASE STUDY

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Abstract –

Generalised anxiety disorder affects personal and professional life of an individual. The World Health Organisation has predicted that the repercussions of the Covid- 19 pandemic on mental health could possibly linger for the coming decades, underlining the robust strategy in managing the mental health disorders.⁽¹⁾ Homoeopathy has a significant role to play in managing this malady.

Keywords – COVID-19 pandemic, Generalised anxiety disorder, Homoeopathy, Constitutional medicines.

Introduction –

Individuals suffering from “Anxiety” undergo emotional distress. This mental health issue can detrimentally affect an individual's everyday tasks, professional efficacy, and personal bonds. When ceaseless apprehension turns into an incessant element in an individual's existence, it is identified as Generalized Anxiety Disorder. The triggers for such anxiety can be manifold, encompassing areas like academic achievements, routine chores, interpersonal relationships, apprehension of adverse consequences, and health-related worries.

The global health crisis has spurred a significant rise in the number of individuals struggling with mental health issues, with anxiety disorders appearing as the most widespread.⁽²⁾

Homoeopathy holds a significant potential in tackling this critical issue. This holistic system of medicine operates on the tenet on “Similia Similibus Curantur” or “Like cures like” and emphasize on holistic approach of treatment with particular emphasis on mental symptoms.

The Homoeopathic case taking is in-depth and time intensive process which provide an opportunity for counselling, which can aid in mitigating anxiety. This elevates the Homoeopathy to the level of both an art and a science.

The world health organisation has predicted that the repercussions of the Covid- 19 pandemic on mental health could possibly linger for the coming decades, underlining the robust strategy in

managing the mental health disorders.⁽²⁾ The pandemic has triggered the re-evaluation of integrated health systems as a novel strategy to counter such situations and Homoeopathy could play a potential role in managing mental health disorders.

Background –

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound repercussion on the mental health and wellbeing of people worldwide. It is estimated that the COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to a 27.6% increase in the global incidence of Anxiety disorder, with an estimated 53.2 million new cases reported globally.⁽³⁾

In India, it is estimated that nearly 200 million people have experienced a mental disorder, with almost half of those suffering from depression or anxiety disorders.⁽⁴⁾

The current weighted prevalence of GAD in India is 0.57% according to India's National Mental Health Survey in 2016⁽⁵⁾

Mental symptoms reflect the inner self or innermost part of man and individuality of the patient. Dr Kent has said that most of the diseases originate in the mind and only recently the modern medicine is accepting this view.⁽⁶⁾

Given this context, constitutional homeopathic medicine holds promise as an effective approach for generalized anxiety disorder.

Discussion -

Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) is a prevalent mental health condition identified by persistent and excessive worry regarding different life circumstances, such as finance, family, health, and the future. This worry is difficult to control and can lead to significant distress or impairment in social and occupational areas. The exact cause of GAD is unknown but it is being associated with various risk factors, including a family history of depression and anxiety, childhood abuse, low self-esteem, environmental stress, and drug misuse.⁽⁷⁾

Aetiology – Although the precise origin of GAD remains a mystery, it is linked to various risk factors. These encompass a family history of depression and anxiety, childhood abuse, low self-confidence, environmental stressor and drug abuse. In terms of aetiology, stress and genetics are primary contributors to GAD.⁽⁷⁾

Pathophysiology - The study of how genetic factors and sustained threat can contribute to the development of Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) has shown that people with the short allele of the 5-HTTLPR gene may be more susceptible to GAD.

The prolonged exposure to sustained threat leading to the development of GAD also appears to influence the individual's baseline psychophysiological functioning, possibly due to changes in neural activity resulting from genetic and epigenetic factors. This can put the person in a state of heightened physiological alertness, characterized by increased heart rate, reduced heart rate variability, and increased skin conductance response.⁽⁸⁾

The underlying mechanisms of Generalised anxiety disorder involves several regions of brain i.e the amygdala, insula and frontal cortex that are fundamental to processing fear related stimuli, anxiety, memory and emotional responses. The amygdala, a component of the brain intricately linked to emotional experiences, processes sensory information via the basolateral amygdala complex, which in turn activates GABAergic neurons. These neurons play a crucial role in regulating the nervous system by mitigating feelings of stress, anxiety and fear. A deficiency in GABAergic neurons can amplify these negative emotions, leading to physiological symptoms of stress.⁽⁹⁾

Symptoms – Excess worry, Restlessness, feeling keyed up or on edge, Being easily fatigued, Difficulty concentrating or mind going blank, Irritability, Muscle tension, Sleep disturbance (difficulty falling or staying asleep, or restless, unsatisfying sleep).

Evaluation -

- 1) An assessment of behavioural and somatic symptoms is must primarily.
- 2) Following this, an evaluation for psychosocial stress, psychosocial difficulties and developmental concerns should be done.
- 3) A thorough review of the individual's past medical history is imperative, including any instances of trauma, psychiatric conditions and substance abuse.
- 4) It is crucial to exclude organic causes for the diagnosis of Generalized anxiety disorder. The tests to exclude these organic causes are thyroid function tests, blood glucose level, echocardiography and toxicology screening.
- 5) The GAD 7 questionnaire is a useful tool for screening and tracking the progress of patients diagnosed with Generalised anxiety disorder.

Differential diagnosis -

- Hyperthyroidism
- Pheochromocytoma
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- Transient ischemic attack
- Epilepsy
- Bipolar disorder
- Use of caffeine, decongestants, and albuterol.

Complications - Include Depression (often presents concomitantly with an anxiety disorder), Insomnia, Drug or alcohol use disorder, Gastrointestinal problems, Social isolation, Issues functioning at work/school, Impaired quality of life, Suicide potential. ⁽⁷⁾

Role of Homoeopathy –There is an old saying that there is no health without mental health.⁽¹⁰⁾ Dr. Hahnemann states in Aphorism 225: “If there is prolonged emotional cause, it has capacity to adversely affect health and it shall be given immediate attention.”

Homoeopathic system of medicine derives its strength by understanding disease as an internal dynamic derangement of vital force involving the whole organism and not dividing it into parts.

It is crucial to recognize that the causation and manifestation of anxiety vary greatly based on an individual's constitution. Anxiety, a pervasive condition, presents uniquely in each individual, and this diversity is reflected in Homeopathic repertories. These repertories feature a range of rubrics under the umbrella of anxiety, distinguishing between different manifestations such as anxiety related to business, future, pregnancy, speaking, time, sleep, and weather etc. This nuanced approach acknowledges the distinct ways anxiety can surface in individuals and reflects the need for tailored treatments.

Within the realm of homeopathy, constitutional medicines are prescribed based on the totality of symptoms exhibited by an individual. This personalized approach aligns with the understanding that every person is unique, and therefore, the appropriate medicine for addressing their anxiety will also differ. ⁽¹¹⁾

Aphorism 214 says mental diseases may be cured in the same way as all other symptoms. ⁽¹²⁾

Homoeopathic constitutional treatment helps eliminate Generalized anxiety disorder, prevent relapses as well as rebuild self-esteem and self-confidence. ⁽¹³⁾

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Case –

A patient named xyz came to my O.P.D for Anxiety.

Screening was done as per Generalised Anxiety Disorder DSM 5 TR.

Screening symptoms -

- ✓ Excessive anxiety and worry for at least 6 months
- ✓ Difficult to control the worry
- ✓ Restlessness, feeling keyed up or edge.
- ✓ Being easily fatigued
- ✓ Irritability
- ✓ Muscle tension
- ✓ Sleep disturbance
- ✓ Difficulty concentrating
- No H/o drug abuse, medication which can cause anxiety
- No H/O hyperthyroidism, HTN, panic attacks, social phobia, OCD, PTSD
- Then GAD 7 scale was filled by patient
- GAD 7 Score – 12

Chief complaints –

- Anxiety (3-4 years), started after the death of mother in law.
- Hair fall, 8-9 years
- Bunches of hairs falls off
- Legs pain, 2-3 years
- Aggravation - Standing for long time, night, exertion.
- Amelioration – Rest.

History of present illness – Patient started Anxiety 3-4 years back after the death of mother in law.

- **Past history** – No H/O child abuse, substance abuse or any other.
- **Treatment history** – Takes Ayurvedic medicine for constipation.
- **Lab investigation** – Patient told that she keeps on checking her blood pressure and glucose. It comes normal every time.
- **Personal history** – N.S
- **Family history** – Mother is Diabetic. No history of anxiety, depression in the family.
- **Obs/gynae history** – G2 P2 A0 L2 S0
- **Sexual history** – Satisfactory

• **Menstrual history –**

- Menarche – Menses started in 7th or 8th class. Patient doesn't remember exactly.
- Menses – Regular, flow irregular, clots, dark red, acrid, legs pain before menses.
- **Physical generals -**
- Appetite – Decreased, 2 meals per day, skips breakfast
- Thirst – Mouth dry but no thirst.
- Craving – N.S
- Aversion – Sweets
- Stool – Constipation since long time. (Takes Ayurvedic medicine for soft stool)
- Urine – Profuse
- Sweat – Scanty and offensive, it comes on back mostly.
- Sleep – Startles sleep during, does not sleep afterwards, sleeps between 12 midnight to 4.30 am., disturbed if some work is there next day.
- Dreams – Dreams of mother in law sometimes, routine work, hospital, disease.
- Thermals – Chilly

Mental generals-

Anxiety –

- Cause – Death of mother in law. She was supportive and good natured. She lost support system after her death.
- Symptoms – With palpitations and restless ness
- Duration of Anxiety – Till problem/pending work is not done/resolved.
- Aggravation – When pending work is there.
- Amel – When problem is resolved, talking.
- Anxiety health about
- Anxiety trifles.
- Childhood- Parents used to pamper her a lot. Choosy before marriage, spent a lot of money on clothes. Independent. Did everything on her own. Emotional, used to weep on small things.
- Marriage - Love marriage. Husband wanted her to be housewife and dress smartly. She left the opportunity of govt. job as per husband's wish. As she always wanted to be an independent women, so she started crèche at home. Husband is dominating. Used to weep a lot after marriage.
- After pregnancy – She has lost all her desires after 2nd child as she got busy. Now feels lazy to dress. She keeps on thinking about the problem (if any) and even small things at home. Feels tired now. Wants to rest. Doesn't weep that much now.
- Cannot tolerate if others are angry with her but not now. She has started feeling Indifference towards others.
- Injustice cannot support.

Rubrics taken –

- Indifference +++
- Anxiety with fear ++
- Anxiety health about ++
- Anxiety trifles ++
- Domination by others, ailments from. ++
- Ailments from death of loved ones ++
- Injustice cannot support ++
- Forsaken feeling +
- Anxiety, Sleep disturbed +++
- Food and drinks, sweets aversion +++
- Constipation chronic +++

Reportorial chart –

- Causticum – 28/9
- Sulphur – 24/9
- Graphite – 24/7
- Sepia- 23/8
- Natrum mur – 23/7
- Nux vomica – 22/9
- Calcarea carb – 21/9
- Phosphorus – 21/9
- Lyco – 21/8
- Merc – 21/8
- Nitric acid – 21/8
- Arsenic – 21/7

- **Medicine prescribed** – Out of above medicines, “Sepia” was chosen as “Indifference to others” was the prominent symptom.
- Sepia 1M, One dose,
PL for 15 days on 28-10-23 (GAD score- 12)

Follow ups-

Date	Symptoms	GAD score	Medicine
15-11-23	Anxiety better, hair fall status, legs pain better.		Pl 30 *t.d.s for 15 days
29 – 11-23	Anxiety better, legs pain better, hair fall slightly better. Feels calm now. Appetite better. Quality of sleep was better. Thirst same.	GAD 7 Score - 6 (Mild Anxiety)	Pl 30* t.d.s for 1 month.
21-12-23	Anxiety better, legs pain better, hair fall better. Appetite better. Quality of sleep was better. Thirst better.	GAD score- 4 (Mild anxiety)	Pl 30 * b.d for 1 month
27 -1-24	No anxiety, no leg pain. Hair fall better. Good appetite. Sound sleep. Feels thirsty now.	Gad score -0	No medicine

Conclusion –

Initial assessment - A detailed case history was taken, focusing on her mental, emotional, and physical symptoms. Patient xyz displayed a type of personality who was emotional, independent, pampered, loved in her childhood but everything changed after marriage. Her husband was dominating and wanted her to be a housewife. She sacrificed all her dreams of being an Independent women for her husband. After doing all the sacrifices and losing her mother in law, she developed anxiety. Now, present situation is that she is getting indifferent to other which was the main eliminating symptom. She was prescribed the constitutional remedy “Sepia”

Potency selection - As the case was chronic in nature and the remedy matched the symptoms and was a similimum, higher potency was selected.

Treatment Plan: Patient was instructed to take the homeopathic medicine as directed and maintain regular follow-up appointments. She was also advised on relaxation techniques like “meditation” and “to indulge in hobbies” to support her treatment.

Progress and Results: The GAD score on the day of case taking was 12 which got reduced to 6 after one month. Anxiety, legs pain and hairfall were better. Appetite, thirst and Quality of sleep also got better.

After two months of starting the constitutional remedy, Patient reported a noticeable reduction in her anxiety symptoms and GAD score further reduced to 4. Her worrying had decreased, and she felt calmer. Her legs pains were better. Appetite got better. Quality of sleep was better. Thirst better.

Over the next one month, her symptoms continued to improve drastically. Her anxiety was completely gone. GAD score was zero. No legs pain. Hair fall reduced. Good Appetite. Quality of sleep was better. Thirsty now.

Patient experienced better sleep, increased focus, and a greater sense of well-being. She also reported a positive shift in her perspective towards stressors and challenges.

Follow-up and Maintenance: Patient continued with the constitutional remedy under my guidance. Regular follow-up appointments were crucial to monitor her progress and adjust the treatment if necessary. Patient also practiced self-care strategies to manage stress and maintain her overall well-being.

To conclude, I would like to say that this case study highlights the positive role of constitutional homoeopathic medicine in managing Generalised Anxiety Disorder. By addressing the individual's unique symptoms and characteristics, homeopathy offers a personalized approach to healing mental health conditions. Homoeopathic treatment can catalyse a positive shift in those grappling with this distressing mental and behavioural state as we saw in the case study.

Further research and clinical trials are needed to validate the efficacy of homeopathic treatment in GAD. However, this case study underscores the potential benefits of a holistic, integrative approach to mental health care.