

The *Lac* Remedies in Practice

A clinical materia medica with cases

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INTRODUCTION

The Lac remedies

Until quite recently remedies made from milk occupied a relatively small niche in our materia medica, and it was only *Lac caninum* that was familiar to most homeopaths. This has changed markedly over the past 20 years, thanks to the contributions of homeopaths such as Nancy Herrick and Rajan Sankaran, who undertook provings of animal milks, and Karl Müller, who provided remedy pictures of milks based on clinical experience. We now have a whole family of remedies derived from human and animal milks, and a growing understanding of their common and their individual qualities. It has become clear that these remedies are very deep acting when used constitutionally, since they address themselves to the earliest of traumas, the failure to bond adequately with the mother at birth.

The materia medicae in this book are derived entirely from my own clinical experience using *Lac* remedies in my homeopathic practice. They are therefore somewhat different from materia medicae derived largely from provings. Thankfully, there is also a great deal of congruence between the two, particularly regarding keynote and common themes.

My experience using *Lac* remedies has shown me that it is not the birth trauma that produces a *Lac* picture constitutionally. If that

were the case, we would only need one *Lac* remedy. Rather, particular *Lac* remedies run in families, and are inherited genetically. When a baby is born with a *Lac* constitution, it is more liable to have trouble forming a bond with its mother for two reasons. Firstly, its mother often has a *Lac* constitution, and therefore is intrinsically at a disadvantage with regard to forming a bond with her child. And secondly, the child itself, resonating constitutionally to a *Lac* frequency, is less able to bond fully.

In some cases both mother and child have the same *Lac* constitution, but the clinical picture is mild. In other words, the mother-child bond was established relatively normally, and the child grew up expressing the psychological and physical profile of a *Lac* remedy, but in its more benign form. In other cases, bonding was severely compromised, and in these cases the clinical pictures of both mother and the child express the more pathological degrees of *Lac* symptomatology.

Let us now consider the general themes that are encountered in *Lac* remedies.

Missing Foundation

Breast milk is our first sustenance. It provides all the physical nourishment we require and forms the basis for psychic bonding with our mother. This bonding is the foundation for our psychological development as a separate being. Through bonding to our mother we continue to be protected, as we were in the womb. We are still one with our mother, and hence safe. Only after bonding has successfully been established, can we begin to separate safely, to experience ourselves as separate entities, yet connected to mother, and hence to the world.

In *Lac* cases bonding was never fully established with the mother. This missing foundation underlies all the various dynamics that typify the *Lac* state. There are many reasons why bonding may have been unsuccessful. One common reason is that the mother was in a *Lac* state, and hence was not available emotionally. *Lac* mothers very often give birth to *Lac* children. If the mother did not bond with her mother, she cannot bond with her child. In such cases the mother may be aware of a profound distance between herself and her child. Often love will grow in time, but the child's psychological foundations have already been severely affected.

There may be various physical reasons why the mother cannot bond with the child. She may be severely ill after giving birth, and hence not available energetically. She may have post-natal depression. Or the child may be premature, or so delicate that she cannot be nursed by her mother, and must lie alone in an incubator. All these scenarios are encountered in *Lac* cases.

Very often in *Lac* cases there is a history of separation from the mother during the first two years of life. This can weaken an already shaky bond with the mother, and further threaten the individual's sense of personal security. Equally common is a history of difficulties in breastfeeding. It does not seem to matter whether the difficulties appeared to come from the mother (e.g. Lack of milk) or from the child (e.g. poor attachment to the breast).

Ambivalence

When a baby is born, it instinctively moves towards the mother's breast. This reaching out towards the mother is the first movement of the child towards a specific goal, and it lays the foundation for healthy

connections with other people later in life. When this first movement is interrupted, the individual grows up not knowing how to connect with other people.

Famous studies of new born babies showed that when their mother did not respond to their reaching out, they tried again and again to reach her¹. After several attempts fail to elicit a response, the baby stops reaching out, and withdraws. This withdrawal from contact is a kind of giving up, and it is seen in every *Lac* case. *Lac* individuals lack prior experience of reliable close connection. Rather, they have the early imprint of failing to connect with mother. The initial healthy reaching out movement toward the other was interrupted.

As a consequence, when they are faced with the possibility of relationship later in life, they cannot reach out and trust that the bond will be reliable. That would only open the original wound. If they do manage to open up and form a close bond with another, the loss of such a bond feels absolutely devastating. It repeats the original traumatic experience after birth, of losing the mother, who is everything.

A baby who has no contact with another person becomes autistic. In *Lac* cases contact is there, but bonding is incomplete. The result is a person who is constantly in a dilemma - should I try again to connect (Gestures, makes: grasping or reaching at something – Millenium), or should I protect myself? This is a fundamental dynamic in *Lac* cases. The person feels torn between the two movements – towards or away. Yes or No. As a result, ambivalence is a key symptom in most *Lac* cases.

¹ James Robertson's film, 'Young Children in Brief Separation', 1976, Robertson Films

The original ambivalence towards attempts at connection continues later in life, whenever a connection to another person is considered. And this basic ambivalence spreads out, to cover reactions toward many things. Should I move towards Life or Death? Towards Expression or Silence? Towards Independence or Connectedness? Towards Feeling, or Neutrality? It is the basis of the well-known *Lac* tendency to feel pulled between looking after self, and connecting to others.

Paradise Lost

A newborn child has just emerged from the paradise of the womb, where it felt at one with its environment. The movement towards Mother is a movement toward safety, a continuation of connectedness. When this is not possible, the child tries to retreat back into the womb. It curls up and withdraws its senses. In *Lac* people we see an attempt to withdraw away from life, back into the paradise of the womb, or even the spiritual world, whence came the child's soul. Two manifestations of this attempt are narcotic use, and spiritual identification. In both cases, the individual seeks to return to a pre-natal feeling of oneness.

Most *Lac* cases are not addicted to narcotics. The spiritual realm is more often chosen as a haven from the cold isolation felt in this world. Most *Lac* individuals are spiritual people, in both senses of the word. They have some experience of higher states of consciousness, and they identify with philosophies which emphasize spiritual realities. Frequently, they identify with New Age philosophy, a kind of user-friendly religion, which emphasizes that you are Spirit, and all things are possible. In so doing, the *Lac* individual maintains the split that occurred at birth, between Heaven and Earth. In effect, she says 'No thanks' to life on Earth. Many individuals who responded deeply to

a *Lac* remedy have commented, 'I never really fully committed to being here on Earth.'

This denial of Earth-based reality is common in *Lac* cases. They appear as 'space-cadets,' more interested in your Sun-sign than in a real connection; more keen to heal the planet's Heart chakra, than to connect with their own injured feelings. And their original retreat to a prior paradise was a desperate one, hence this desperation can be seen in the zealous manner in which *Lac* individuals express their spirituality. If you affirm their attachment to Spirit, they can feel secure. If you do not, they begin to doubt it, and then they may have to feel the terrible loneliness of the newborn child, disconnected from its mother. Repeating the mantra, 'I am surrounded by white light' is a poor substitute for early maternal bonding.

Alone and Co-dependent

Having failed to bond completely with Mother, the *Lac* child feels very alone, and this feeling never leaves her. She will feel alone for the rest of her life, unless she experiences profound healing. Even if she is in a long-term, committed relationship, she is liable to feel alone, and most *Lac* individuals find it hard to maintain such relationships. *Lac* cases often report that they feel cut off from the world, alone and unsupported. (Lac clients very often use the word 'unsupported' in their histories).

Just as the newborn defended itself by withdrawing, so the *Lac* individual tends to isolate himself, not daring to feel the devastation of further failures at reaching out. Like *Natrum*, he becomes good at caring for others, whilst being unable to care for himself.

The *Lac* child cannot bear to simply lose the mother. Instead, he seeks to win her love. *Lac* cases typically report that they tried as children to please their mother, and as adults they continue to try. They were ‘good’ children, just like *Natrum muriaticum*, helpful and responsible. Very often they were the eldest child, helping mother by shouldering some of her responsibilities towards the other children. They thus became like little adults. Later, they continue to take responsibility for other people, and feel guilty when they don’t. In this sense *Lac* cases have unclear boundaries.

Mother-Child

There is a mother – child dynamic that is very typical in *Lac* cases. The patient says that as a child they looked after their mother. In other words, the roles were reversed. I have had *Lac* children complain to me that their mother behaves like a child. They were referring to the mother’s dependency, and her emotional immaturity. *Lac* constitutions, like other constitutions, run in families. Very often the mother and the child both respond to the same *Lac* remedy. In such cases it is common for the mother to use emotional blackmail to maintain the care she gets from her child. She may say, ‘You are killing me’ when the daughter comes home late from a night out, and the daughter, who has grown up hearing how much her mother has sacrificed for her, feels very guilty.

Here both mother and daughter are acting out *Lac* programmes. The daughter is looking after her mother, in order to win her love. The mother uses her daughter for support, since she feels so alone and unsupported. During consultations *Lac* mothers will often bring a child in for support. Even though the child is only ten years old, he will correct his mother’s mistakes, point out symptoms his mother has

forgotten, and hug his mother when she cries. The mother appears to have no idea that this relationship is inappropriate. This dynamic is especially seen in one-parent families, which are surprisingly common when the mother is a *Lac* individual.

As the *Lac* child of a *Lac* mother grows up, he begins to resent the manipulation that he senses his mother is using. He is used as a confidant and partner by his mother, and this puts enormous pressure on him. By the time he is a teenager, he is liable to have developed a lot of anger towards his mother, an anger that usually survives well into adulthood. When a case revolves around anger towards the mother, a *Lac* remedy is often indicated.

With regard to *Lac* mothers, two very different dynamics are typically seen. One is the mother who could not bond with her child, and remains detached. She may do her best to be a good mother, but she knows she does not feel the closeness to her child that she should. She may favour another child, or even be actively unkind toward the child she could not bond with. In the latter case, it is as if she took out on the child all the anger she felt when she, as a child, was rejected by her mother.

The other common *Lac* dynamic is the *Lac* mother who is totally dependent upon her child for love and emotional security. Since she could not find it from her mother, she seeks it in her child. Here is a being who needs her so much that she can rely on the connection. In these cases the roles are reversed, and the child grows up looking after the mother. (In practice, we also see a mixed picture, where the mother is cool to the child, yet still manages to rely on the child and be looked after by her).

Mother and child themes run through *Lac* cases in many ways. A *Lac* patient will often dream of children in danger, and sometimes of saving such children.

In life many *Lac* people are staunch advocates for mothers and children, often in professional roles. This advocacy is seen especially often in *Lac humanum* cases.

Where is the Man?

Single-parent families are extraordinarily common in *Lac* households. The majority of the *Lac* mothers I have treated were single mothers. I have wondered why this is so, and come to the following hypotheses.

- The *Lac* woman does not trust love. In a relationship with a man this mistrust has the effect of pushing the man away. Subconsciously, the *Lac* mother feels safe with her children, but not with her husband.
- The *Lac* mother develops such a dependency on her child that she excludes her partner. This can contribute to a relationship break-up.
- *Lac* people tend to be co-dependent. Thus a *Lac* woman may attract a man who needs looking after, become pregnant, and then realize she cannot be a mother to the man as well as the child.
- *Lac* women are less likely than most to be willing to have an abortion after an unplanned pregnancy. This may be in part due to emotional sensitivity, and also the fact that they may have dreamt of the close contact they would enjoy with their child.

Even when the *Lac* mother stays with her partner, there is a tendency for her to push him out of the picture. *Lac* clients often report that their father was in the background and the mother was dominant at home. Sometimes the *Lac* mother is so dependent upon her child for emotional support that she breast-feeds until the child is three or four, and keeps her in the bed with her at night. This has the effect of pushing the father away. He cannot compete with this intense mother-child bond, and so he withdraws. The *Lac* child grows up feeling that her father is ineffectual, and later she tends to see all men in this light.

When the *Lac* child grows up without the strong presence of a father, she tends to identify with her mother. This often involves taking on her mother's resentment towards men. But where does this resentment come from? Again, there are several possible origins.

- The mother resents her own father, because he did not protect her from her needy mother.
- The mother resents her husband, because she feels unsupported by him.
- A man or men have actively been cruel to her.

Whatever the dynamics, many *Lac* women are distrustful of men, and some are overtly hostile. The hostility expressed towards men in the past by aspects of the Feminist movement can be due, to some extent, to this hostility that many *Lac* women feel (often unconsciously) towards men. *Lac* women have a strong tendency to advocate for the rights of women and children, and this has led to many of them being involved previously in the Feminist movement.

Victim-Consciousness

In my experience, the single most characteristic feature of most *Lac* cases is the way they feel that they are a victim. They tend to express helplessness, and to complain about how unfairly others have treated them. Indeed, they express a lot of indignation about this. As long as they remain caught in this victim-consciousness, they are unable to move forward in life. Taking the correct *Lac* remedy can often do a lot to break this tendency.

Victim-consciousness is a defence mechanism which the *Lac* individual uses to avoid feeling his own feelings of hurt and helplessness. When the small child feels rejected by his mother, there is a tendency for him to blame himself. Low self-esteem and self-criticism are features common to all *Lac* remedies. In order to protect himself, he turns the blame onto his mother, and becomes her victim. This first defence is repeated with other people later on, becoming a pattern. Whenever the *Lac* person feels rejected, he reacts with anger and indignation, and with blame. This is less painful than feeling the hurt which lies beneath.

Lac cases actually use the word 'victim' frequently during the consultation. They may be referring to themselves, but just as often they project victimhood onto others. One woman who responded well to *Lac felinum*, referred to her partner as a victim, and said he was like a starving man at a banquet, who could not see the food in front of him. She was describing herself precisely. Another word which *Lac* cases use over and over is 'Abuse'. It matters not whether actual abuse occurred, or how serious it was. It is the frequency of use of the word which stands out in *Lac* cases, irrespective of the facts. *Lac* people feel that they have been abused, because they did not feel protected by their mother. Of course, when the mother-child bond is weak, actual abuse is more likely to happen. It is very common for *Lac* individuals

to say that they were their mother's scapegoat or whipping boy and in some cases this appears to be true.

Unsupported

Equally common is the complaint from a *Lac* individual that they have no support. They feel unsupported by their parents, unsupported by their friends, unsupported by their work colleagues. Sometimes this is true, because *Lac* people, by pulling away from others, cut off their own support systems.

One highly characteristic feature of *Lac* cases is the way they cut themselves off from their own family of origin. So often they refuse to have contact, citing terrible treatment they have received from the whole family. This is usually more about the perception of the *Lac* individual. She does not trust love, and will push it away rather than risk being hurt again. After taking a *Lac* remedy, many people re-establish contact with their family, and no longer have to be on guard to make sure they are not emotionally abused.

Community Awareness and Advocacy

Every wound has within it the seeds of its own healing. In *Lac* cases, the wound of abandonment leads the *Lac* individual to seek connection with the community as a whole. Unable to nurture herself with one-to-one contacts, she develops an interest in community affairs, and will often find a job working for community organizations. In fact, she is often enthusiastic about community to the point of being zealous. The community replaces her own family, and her fierce dedication to community reflects how much she needs this connection. In

Lac consultations the word ‘community’ is often spoken many times by the client.

Community involvement offers the *Lac* individual two means of overcoming his sense of isolation. Firstly, by helping the community he feels more worthy, and also more needed. And secondly, by living in close interaction with the local community, he no longer feels so alone.

Part of Lac’s attraction to community work is his need to help others. This is a key-note feature of *Lac* cases. They offer the support that they themselves wish to receive. For the *Lac* individual, the community takes the place of the family, just as God or Spirit may take the place of father.

The need to help is accompanied in *Lac* cases by a strong aversion to injustice. Thus many *Lac* individuals become advocates, particularly for women and children. I have been struck by the fact that it is only my *Lac* clients that use the word ‘advocate’ in consultations. They identify strongly with the role. The *Lac* person’s work with community, and her strong sense of injustice, usually reflect a left-wing political bias. However *Lac* is generally more interested in community and in spirituality than in politics.

Rebel with a Cause

One of Lac’s primary defences is to rebel. The newborn’s move away from his mother, when he has not been taken in, is the first ‘No,’ and it is followed by many more. Mother is not only the original source of nourishment. She is also the first authority. The child’s withdrawal is not only a protection, but also the beginning of a kind of rebellion. Later on, he will feel the need to rebel against authority,

particularly when that authority is seen as uncaring. This combination of rebellion and sensitivity to injustice often results in the *Lac* person become an activist. The intensity of the *Lac* activist's commitment to the cause is directly proportional to his own sense of indignation at being abandoned.

Another remedy that often has activist tendencies is *Ammonium*. Both types are prone to suffer great indignation at injustice, and both types tend to be community-minded. Let us look briefly at the differences between *Lacs* and *Ammonium* salts.

Firstly, the *Lac* issues of abandonment and feeling unsupported are not prominent in *Ammonium* cases. Secondly, *Ammoniums* tend to have clearer boundaries than *Lacs*, both in terms of knowing when to say 'No,' and in terms of psychic empathy. Thirdly, *Ammoniums* do not try to please like *Lacs* do. And finally, the ambivalence seen in many *Lac* cases, born of a deep psychic split, is not seen in *Ammonium* cases.

Causticum is another remedy that is known for its activist inclinations. Here the similarity with *Lac* is less. With *Causticum*, advocacy is not personal. In other words, he is not fighting for victims because he felt a victim himself. Secondly, *Causticum* tends to be detached most of the time, without being split in a pathological sense. *Lac*, on the other hand, is very emotional, but may become detached as a result of a pathological split.

Push and Pull

One area where ambivalence is seen very often in *Lac* cases is in romantic relationships. Only the relationship with the mother is more fraught with danger and filled with more opportunities for healing.

Lacs approach romantic relationships from one of two directions. Either they are extremely wary, and slow to warm to the other person, or they jump in heedlessly. This-all or-nothing approach is expressed at many points in the relationship, because *Lac* people are pulled so strongly towards and away from intimacy. When they finally fall, they fall hard, and then they can switch from aloofness to being clingy and dependent. It is common for a *Lac* person to state that they have been clingy in some relationships, and aloof in others. The middle ground of open adult relating is not so easy to maintain, since the early dynamics of reaching out for, or pulling away from mother, are so strong.

The *Lac* individual often finds herself caring for her partner. She may have chosen a partner who needs help, such as an alcoholic, in which case she will give and give until she feels resentful that she is getting little back. Or she may adopt the role of parent to a man who is emotionally immature. By looking after him, she wins his love, but fails to achieve true intimacy. After taking the indicated *Lac* remedy, many individuals begin to see their co-dependency more clearly, and move toward healthier relating.

Boundaries

There are many similarities between *Lac* remedies and *Natrums* and *Ignatia*. However, one important difference is the strength of personal boundaries. These are strong in the case of *Natrum* and *Ignatia*, weak in *Lac* cases. Again we can postulate the origins of these weak boundaries

as arising from the early experience of failure to bond adequately to the mother. A newborn child has no sense of boundaries. Through bonding to the mother, it gradually learns that it is not its mother; that she is a separate entity. In the process, the child learns that it has boundaries, which separate it from the world, and from other people.

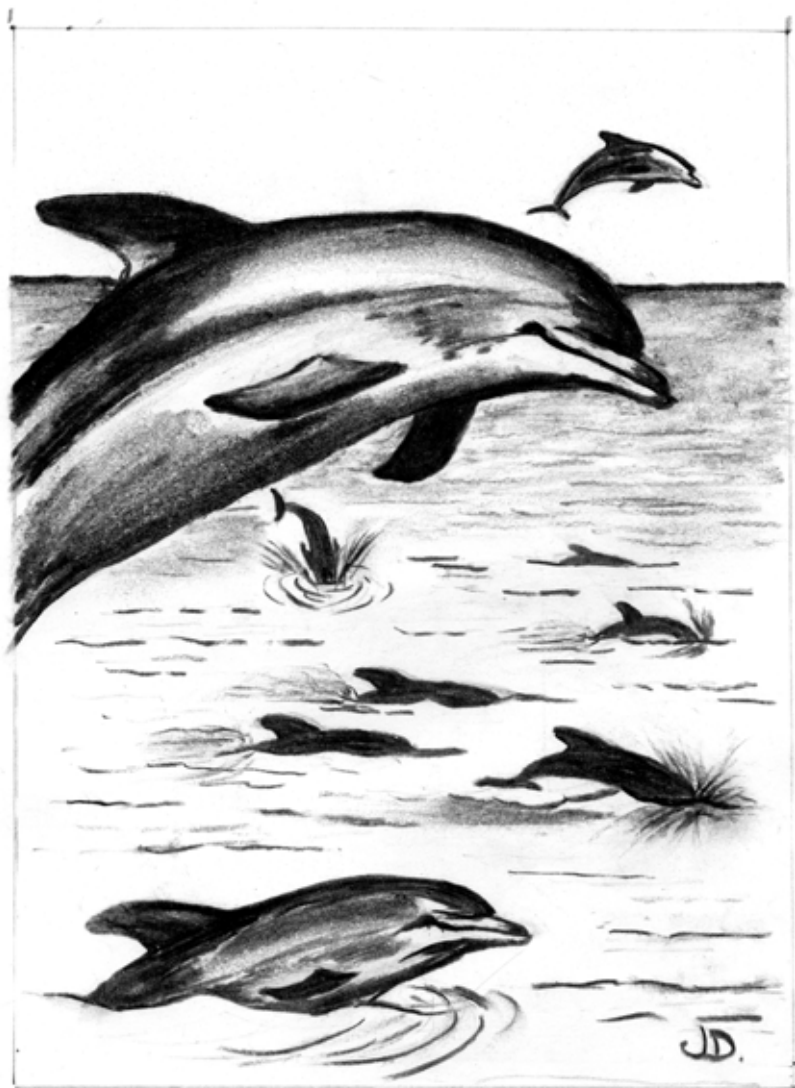
When bonding to the mother is weak, these lessons are not learned so distinctly. The child continues to try to merge with the mother, and hence differentiation is not completed. This results in indistinct personal boundaries in *Lac* individuals (as it does in *Boron* individuals, who seem to go through similar dynamics at birth).

Weakness of personal boundaries expresses itself in several ways in *Lac* cases. First of all, *Lac* people are extremely empathetic. They actually feel the feelings of other people, through a kind of psychic osmosis. In this sense they resemble *Phosphorus* and *Carcinosinum*. Like the latter, many *Lac* people become healers and therapists, and they struggle to keep their feelings separate from their clients.

Secondly, *Lac* people are co-dependent, which means they cannot separate their own responsibilities from those of others. As a result they tend to take on too many responsibilities. And when they fail to fulfil a responsibility that was not theirs in the first place, they feel guilty.

(Bert Hellinger has shown convincingly that personal guilt arises when we feel that we have threatened our place in the family or community. Since *Lac* people never feel secure in their family of origin, it follows that they will easily feel guilty. When you know deep down that you belong, you do not fear that by making a mistake you will be expelled. It is this fear that Hellinger has shown to be behind most personal guilt).

There is a lot of similarity between *Carcinosinum* and *Lac* cases. In particular *Carcinosinum* can appear very close to *Lac felinum*. We shall examine the differences later in the chapter on *Lac felinum*. Suffice for now to note that the principal issue for *Carcinosinum* is the search for Self, whereas for *Lac* it is the search for connection to Other.



LAC DELPHINUM

Lac dephinum *has a very distinct energy in women (I have seen no male cases).*

There is a combination of innocence, warmth, and sensuality that tends to be irresistible to men.

The most obvious example of this energy is Marilyn Monroe. A sex kitten, not a cat. The combination of child-like vulnerability and sexuality is very typical of Lac dephinum. Her helplessness makes her seem even more desirable. And yet a man who falls for her finds he has taken on more than he bargained for. She can be very demanding of his attention. She needs constant reassurance that he loves her and finds her attractive, and she is so moody and volatile that he runs away from her.

I have found that Lac dephinum women lack many of the defence mechanisms that help other Lac people to cope with grief and loneliness. In this sense they resemble Lac caninum. They are more open emotionally, less analytical, and more in touch with their feelings. As a result, they are so sensitive that they easily feel overwhelmed by their own emotions.

Fear

Fear is the emotion which dominates *Lac delphinum*. She has many fears, but the most important are fears of attack and fears of abandonment. *Lac delphinum* is both psychic and highly imaginative. This works against her, as she can imagine hidden dangers, particularly at night. She senses attackers in the shadows, or ghosts by her bed. Some such women are terrified by horror stories, yet also

Lac delphi / Sensual, helpless, warm, feminine, addicted, chaotic, escapist, vulnerable, panicky, dreamy, magical, thinking.

attracted. They watch horror movies, then feel terrified and haunted for weeks.

Lac delphinum has a peculiar relationship to danger. She seeks dangerous situations, and feels calm in them. For example, she will drink too much, and then drive. This can be compared to the dolphin who is always aware of sharks nearby, yet is not threatened. Dolphins will chase sharks away from the pod, and it is only sick and young who fall victim to sharks. Yet dolphins are very aware of the danger from sharks. Several *Lac delphinum* women reported dreams of being *stabbed by sharp objects* such as spears or knives, which may represent the shark's teeth.

Relationships and Sexuality

Whereas many *Lac* individuals complain chiefly about their relationship with their mother, *Lac delphinum* tends to struggle especially with her relationships with men. She knows she is sexually attractive, and may use her sexuality to hook a man, from whom she seeks security. *Lac delphinum* is often clingy and dependent in relationships, and this tends to push partners away. She very easily goes into a helpless, childlike mode, where she expects to be looked after. She is also moody in relationships, because she easily feels neglected, hurt and indignant. As a result she is prone to brief and stormy relationships. She will also push men away deliberately, because she easily feels trapped.

Another pattern I have seen in *Lac delphinum* is a tendency to attract older men, who become father figures. They provide security for *Lac delphinum*, but are seldom sensitive enough for her. Hence she

pouts and fights with them, and eventually leaves them. Often in the process she becomes a single mother.

Sexuality is a prominent feature in the proving of *Lac delphinum*. Most of my patients who responded to the remedy had a high sex drive and a strongly sensual feel. Yet many also reported problems with sexuality. The most common complaint was that they could not connect sexuality with their heart. They either felt love, or sexual, but not both at the same time. Often there was an inability to reach orgasm during intercourse, part of a general inability to let go during sex. And some reported fear during sex, as if they were being raped. The same women felt some masochistic desire to be raped by their partner, and some also felt violent themselves during sex. It appears these symptoms relate to the fact that male dolphins are very aggressive when mating. Several males will chase a female and effectively gang rape her.

Heart-centred and Dreamy

Lac delphinum has a very warm heart. This is part of her attractiveness. She feels great empathy for almost everyone, and will give and give when she feels needed. As a mother she tends to be a natural, exuding maternal warmth whilst dreamily floating through the early stages of being a parent. Very often motherhood is the one stable element of her life, the one relationship she can count on to endure. She is generally a permissive mother, who delights in every aspect of her child.

Although *Lac delphinum* often has a sharp intellect, she is frequently unable to focus. She is particularly liable to space out when she is anxious. Her boundaries are not strong, and she easily feels

overwhelmed by pressure. She then panics and goes into a fugue-like state, where she feels dreamy and cannot think straight. Indecision is a keynote symptom of *Lac delphinum*. She fears making a mistake, and hence will not decide. Perhaps this also relates to the life and death situations that dolphins face with regard to sharks.

Lac delphinum's dreaminess is an essential characteristic of the remedy. It is there even when she is not stressed. She will laugh easily, and seem unable to take problems seriously. She has a child-like giggle, reminiscent of *Ignatia* and *Pulsatilla*, and she likes to fool around and make others laugh.

Play, Escape and Magical Thinking

Playfulness is another keynote of *Lac delphinum*, closely tied to her dreaminess. Dolphins are famous for their playfulness. I feel it is more than coincidence that dolphins are so often used in New Age images of spirituality. Those New Agers who are attracted to the dolphin image often share characteristics with *Lac delphinum*, including innocence, dreaminess and unrealistic optimism. I have found that *Lac delphinum* people are attracted to using aphorisms to attract what they want, and to ward off trouble. It is a kind of magical thinking that can be seen as an escapist or immature form of spirituality, associated not only with dolphins, but also fairies, unicorns and angels.

Lac delphinum is a very escapist type. One way she will escape is to bury her head in the sand. She simply will not look at difficult issues, and so she can feel quite slippery when she seeks psychological help. Instead of responding when asked a question that touches on a painful issue, she may laugh, or stay silent, or change the subject.

Another way *Lac delphinum* escapes is by taking drugs. It is a very addictive type, particularly to alcohol and sedatives like valium and marijuana.

Depression

Lac delphinum is prone to depressive illness. Her life is very often chaotic, and lacking in support. She is extremely sensitive to the world's harshness, and she easily feels overwhelmed, and then sinks into depression. When depressed she is very tearful, and full of self-pity and self-loathing. She is also prone to anxiety when she is depressed. At such times she isolates herself, though she can also behave in a clinging way if she trusts someone. A depressed *Lac delphinum* usually appears lost and hopeless, and has little idea how to help herself. She tends to feel extremely disconnected from other people, and hence very lonely.

Lac delphinum has many characteristics in common with *China*. In particular, both types tend to be dreamy and psychic, and both types are prone to panic. They also share the same defence mechanism. Both can be very stubborn and defiant, particularly with men. One *Lac delphinum* patient told me that she studied astrophysics at university, just so that she could beat her father at something. She was beautiful and sensual and dreamy, the kind of woman you would only expect to be an astrophysicist in Hollywood movies.

As children, *Lac delphinum* are shy, sensitive and dreamy. They tend to live in an imaginary world, and are easily frightened. As with other *Lac* types, sibling rivalry is often strong.

Case 1

36 year-old woman, dark hair.

Past Medical History

Recurrent bladder infections

Appendectomy

Cervical dysplasia

Complaints:

- Tiredness for six months, since working on fishing boats. Feels run down.
- Moodiness:
 - ~ My mood has been very up and down lately, excited then depressed. When I am low I have no motivation. It lasts a day or so. Often I feel anxious if I am under pressure. I am in an on-off relationship. I have a fear of commitment, of being trapped. I need space. That is why I took the boat job, so I could watch whales all day. I love their power and their beauty. I also get needy in relationships.
 - ~ I have a fear of death, of loved ones dying.
 - ~ As a child I was shy and sensitive. I was afraid of making mistakes. I felt alone. I was a very giving child, keen to please. I mixed well with other children, yet I still felt alone.
 - ~ I have a fear of committing to anything. I can be very indecisive. I like to learn. I am intuitive, I love dance, music and art.
 - ~ I have had several dreams about dolphins and whales. And I often dream of flying.
 - ~ I can be very wild, but in a safe way. I am very playful. I get really giggly.

- I would like to have children. My libido is pretty high. I tend to daydream a lot.
- I get scared very easily, and then I space out, especially if I have big tasks in front of me.
- In relationships I expect a lot of attention. I expect to be listened to. I am also giving, and very sensitive to energies.

Analysis

This woman struck me as highly unusual. On the one hand she appeared sensible and mature, and on the other hand what she said contradicted that. She spoke of being dreamy, wild and spaced out, of being anxious and unstable. And yet she appeared calm and focused. I have found this kind of dichotomy quite often in *Lac delphinum* cases. They have a certain self-possession and a good intellect, yet they are prone to spacing out and to attacks of anxiety.

One of the most characteristic features of this case is her fear of being trapped in relationships. She cannot commit, and so the relationship is on and off. This is another common feature of *Lac delphinum* cases. There is a great need for closeness, opposed by an equally great fear of being trapped. (Dolphins are very social animals, that often get trapped in nets.)

Equally typical of *Lac delphinum* is her labile mood. These are creatures of whim, almost like mermaids, magical and inconsistent. They are often very beautiful, and they exude a soft sensuality, but they cannot be caught.

Of course, her love of dolphins and whales, and dreams of them, immediately put me in mind of *Lac delphinum*.

Treatment: *Lac delphinum* 1M.

Follow up after six weeks

~ I went through a lot after seeing you last. It was like I couldn't do anything for a week. I just couldn't focus. Lots of memories came up from my childhood, sadness over feeling separate from other kids. And a memory of my mother being really hard on me. She didn't understand me. I even cried over my sister always getting more approval from my mother than I did. And now I am feeling a lot better. My energy has gone from about 40% to about 80%, and my mood seems more stable. I have a sense I can cope better with stresses now. I am getting on well with my boyfriend, but I am still not really ready for total commitment.

No treatment

Follow up after a further two months

~ What did I come to you about originally?

Phillip: 'Your energy and your mood?'

~ Oh yeah. My energy seems fine now, except when I have too many late nights. And my mood is the most stable it has been for a long time. My boyfriend says I am much easier to be with. I am beginning to feel more able to commit to him. It is still scary, but not so much. And I have noticed that I don't get so scared now when he seems aloof. I used to fear that he would leave me. We

have been talking about having a child, and we both seem more open to it now.

Case 2

32 year-old woman, blond, slightly overweight.

This woman was in a state of distress when she first came to see me. She was tearful and vulnerable, and seemed very young emotionally.

- I have suffered from anxiety and depression since I was 21. I think I have been depressed on and off my whole life. When I get anxious lights seem to shimmer, and distances go unclear. For the past six weeks I have felt overwhelmed. I split with my partner, and since then my self-esteem has been really low. It was only a brief relationship. I feel my career plans are disintegrating. I want to paint. I have painted my arse off, blindly believing I could make it as a painter, and now I don't have that faith anymore. I feel pathetic, without any direction, and I feel so tired.
- It feels very uncomfortable crying here with you.
- I get by with sedatives and alcohol. I take valium every day.
- I am a single mother. My daughter is six years old. I work as a top-less waitress. I am good at it, but it's not very stimulating.
- I had a bad relationship with my parents. My mother used to throw stuff. But she supported me. Dad tried to have me put in a children's home, because I lied and smoked pot. Dad had a short fuse. He smacked me with a wooden spoon. It was humiliating.
- I am very sensitive, to everything. I used to be angry and defensive with my parents. I am also very compassionate with everyone. I

connect strongly to people, and try to help them. I am very intuitive with the men at work. I can give them what they need.

- ~ I tend to isolate myself. I feel unlovable. If I am attracted to a man I feel afraid. When men see my fear they reject me. The last three guys left me. They all said, 'Something is missing.' It was devastating. I was very close to the last one.
- ~ I am needy, starved of love. And I can get pushy. I resist if things don't go my way. And I can hold onto resentment. I resent my mother. She is so horrible to me. And I am so dependent on her. She babysits for my daughter. She is vicious and cruel. I always felt unloved as a child. I was picked on at school. I used to cry all the time.
- ~ I was afraid of the dark. I didn't want to go to bed. I still am afraid of the dark. I am afraid of seeing dead people. Once I saw a guy by my bed at night. He was transparent.
- ~ Sometimes I smell my grandmother at night.

- ~ I used to be promiscuous. Now my heart is more connected. I don't orgasm, except during foreplay. I think too much during sex.
- ~ I am very sensitive to injustice. I have campaigned for Greenpeace. I give to charities. I can't watch the news. It horrifies me, makes me feel sickened, defeated.
- ~ When I am depressed I feel guilty, a loser. I hate myself. Then I tend to rush around. I used to feel like a victim. I still do in relation to my parents. I feel so broken.

- ~ I want to be in the sea all the time. I surf when I can. I feel cleansed by the sea. I dream of the deep ocean, of whales. I love sharks. They are monsters. They hunt us. Humans are so arrogant.

- On a very deep level I feel disconnected. Everything is happening all around, without me. Sometimes I have dreams where I know that I am dreaming. I like to paint spirals. I get spaced out easily.
- I am also very playful. I goof around. I was a smart-arse, the school clown. I was told I was too communicative.
- I have a fear of getting old. I like challenging situations. In Vietnam I was doing heroin, and there were these junkies around me, yet I felt perfectly safe. I drive the car when I am drunk. I have just lost my driving licence.

- I am really into affirmations. They help me to feel positive when things are hard. And I am constantly noticing synchronicity, how everything is connected with everything else.
- Last week I had a strong dream: I was swimming under the water. There was a lot of light. I swam around my ex-partner. I wanted to eat him. A wave knocked me into him.

Analysis

This woman was also highly unusual. I had never before treated a case where the patient was so sensual, and yet so warm-hearted. She worked as a topless waitress, and used to be very promiscuous, yet the energy she gave off was centred more in the heart-chakra than anywhere else. Furthermore, she was highly sensitive emotionally, and intuitive. And despite her warmth, her attractiveness and her depth, she was depressed to the point where she appeared to be falling apart.

These extremes of light and dark are typical of *Lac delphinum*. Not the light and dark of *Stramonium* or *Mandragora*, but a more human spectrum, where the individual's strong positive qualities can barely enable her to cope with her extreme vulnerability and lack of

boundaries. Her combination of inner and outer beauty, and pathos, was similar to that I had seen in some *Phosphorus* cases, a beautiful damsel in distress, almost pleading to be rescued.

A superficial overview of the case could lead to the prescription of a *Fluoratum* remedy. There is strong sexuality, weak boundaries, despair and dependence on narcotics. And yet I was sure that *Fluoratum*s would not cover the case. There is a detachment and a cynicism in *Fluoratum* cases that was entirely absent here.

The patient's previous campaigning for the environment, and her tendency to help people, suggest a *Lac* remedy, as does her victim status in relation to her mother. She is an intuitive single mother with low self-esteem, who relies upon New Age affirmations, a very common *Lac* presentation. She never felt loved, and still resents her mother. In fact her mother is the only person she expressed resentment toward, despite having had an abusive father and some difficult romantic relationships.

Within the *Lac* group of remedies the only remedy, apart from *Lac delphinum*, that I have seen to be effective in cases that were this boundary-less is *Lac leoninum*. In both remedies there is often a lot of chaos and impulsiveness around romantic relationships, which can lead to depression and anxiety.

There are, however, many features which favour *Lac delphinum* over *Lac leoninum*. First of all, the woman is playful in a sensuous, girlish way. *Lac leoninum*s I have treated were less sensual, and less playful than this patient. Secondly, her dependence upon narcotics is far more typical of *Lac delphinum*, as is her spaciness. Then there is the keynote of the remedy, feeling safe in dangerous situations. She drives when she is drunk, and in Vietnam she was surrounded

by junkies, and shooting up heroin, yet she felt perfectly safe. And of course there is her special relationship to the sea, with dreams of whales and sharks (both frequent companions to dolphins in the wild, one safe and one dangerous).

Treatment: *Lac delphinum* LM1 daily.

Follow up after six weeks:

- I have felt a lot better on the remedy. I haven't needed to take valium for the past three weeks. Previously I was taking it nearly every day. I feel like I can cope with things better. I am not so tearful, and I feel like I have more to give my daughter now. I was just in survival mode before. I had a dream last week:
- I am in a tower, surrounded by armies of soldiers. They are carrying spears. They are all aiming for my heart. I felt so vulnerable. A spear goes through my back into my heart. I am in front of a family. My heart is bleeding. I try to tell them. I can't. I vomit blood.
- When I woke up there was such a feeling of sadness. My eczema has been a bit worse.

Analysis

She is clearly doing well. The dream appears to express very poignantly the heart-pain that she is processing. Literally a bleeding-heart, dying in front of a family she cannot reach.

Treatment: Continue *Lac delphinum* LM1 daily.

Follow up at 12 weeks:

I have had a good few weeks. I seem to be on a more even keel. I don't get so low, and I don't get as stressed as I used to. I am beginning to feel in control of my life for the first time in years. I haven't taken any valium since last time, and I am drinking a lot less beer. I realized the other day that I don't know how to receive love. I push it away. I don't let people get close. I want to change that.

Lac delphi / Sensual, helpless, warm, feminine, addicted, chaotic, escapist, vulnerable, panicky, dreamy, magical, thinking.