Judyth Reichenberg-Ullman

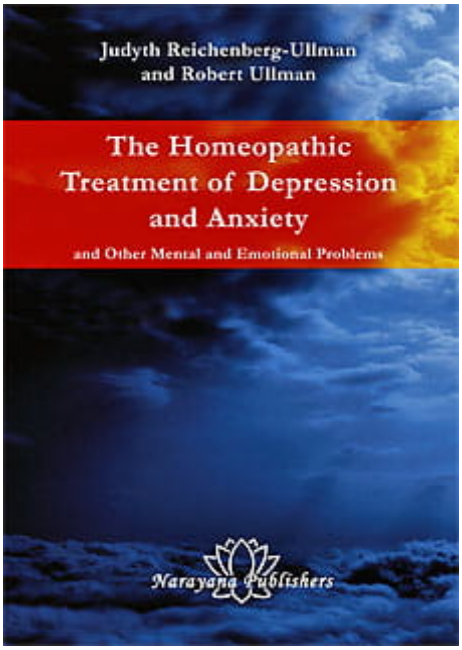
The Homeopathic Treatment of Depression and Anxiety

Sample text

The Homeopathic Treatment of Depression and Anxiety

from Judyth Reichenberg-Ullman

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Foreword

This revised edition of *Prozac-Free* is indeed a most welcome and needed addition to the growing number of homeopathic books published in recent years. *Prozac-Free* and *Ritalin-Free Kids*, the Ullmans' previous bestseller, are among the best books that focus exclusively on the psychiatric applications of homeopathy.

Judyth Reichenberg-Ullman and Robert Ullman are the perfect people to write this book. Licensed naturopathic physicians board-certified in homeopathic medicine, they bring to their readers over thirty years of experience as homeopaths, as well as over thirty-five years as mental health professionals. I met Judyth and Robert at the beginning of their careers in homeopathy and at the same time that they met each other. Since then they have become among the best known and respected authors and teachers in the North American homeopathic community. They have a special talent for sharing their knowledge and love of homeopathy in a down-to-earth, easy-to-understand style. The Ullmans' mission is to make homeopathy accessible, comprehensible and available to the general public and the professional community as well as to raise the standards of homeopathic education and practice.

I am a psychiatrist and homeopath. I am called often by those wishing to know if this or that mental or emotional problem — their own or that of a family member or friend — can be helped by homeopathy. Is there a recommended book that can be read prior to making an appointment? Unfortunately, until now, I have had to recommend books that are not quite suitable. Finally a book has been written to which I can refer those seeking alternatives to psychiatric pharmaceutical drugs, and I have been given the honor of writing its foreword.

The case histories which comprise the largest portion of this book are wonderful examples of how homeopathy has helped people with mental, emotional, behavioral, and personality disorders. To the reader with no prior experience with homeopathy, the cases

presented may seem implausibly miraculous. Results like these with harmless, highly dilute medicines? Yes. If we could ask other well-trained, experienced homeopaths if they also see these kinds of results, every one of them would say, "Yes, this is what happens when you give the correct homeopathic medicine." In my thirty years as a psychiatrist I have found over and over again that nothing can match homeopathy in efficacy for treating mental and emotional illness when the provider of homeopathic treatment is a well-trained and competent classical homeopath.

Why has it taken so long for homeopathy to break out of the fringes of medicine into the mainstream in the United States when it is already an acknowledged medical art in Europe, Latin America and India? The reasons are undoubtedly complex. One might say that no movement can enter the cultural mainstream which is itself not compatible with the spirit of the times, the Zeitgeist. An excessively strong materialistic bias in American science and medicine has been a big factor. The weakening of the deathgrip which mechanistic materialism has had on the scientific and intellectual community coupled with the growing popularity of vitalistic ideas has allowed homeopathy to come out of isolation. And, incredibly, at the same time homeopathy has been blessed by the world-wide emergence of brilliant teachers. This has allowed many contemporary classical homeopaths to broaden and deepen their knowledge at an astonishingly rapid pace and to aspire to (and obtain) excellent results like those described by the Ullmans in their books. This book draws wonderfully on the "new homeopathy", if I may coin a phrase to distinguish it from nineteenth century theory and practice, in its deep and penetrating insight into patients and in discerning the appropriate medicines for them.

The new homeopathy probes with great depth and accuracy into the nitty gritty of the patient's difficulties. The reader may note that there is no psychiatric or psychological jargon in the homeopathic analysis. The patient is described and understood in his or her own terms. One must understand the patient correctly and in-depth

based on what one hears and sees. The patient's suffering must be translated into the language of homeopathy in order to find a correct medicine. The homeopath must honor the patient's unique expression of self. Doing otherwise is to flirt with failure.

Although homeopathy can produce dramatic results with many psychiatric patients, let's not toss out the baby with the bath water. As a medical doctor, psychiatrist and homeopath, I haven't thrown away my prescription pad. Psychopharmaceutical drugs remain indispensable in many situations. Though my preference is to use homeopathy for every patient, the concurrent, continued use of prescription medications may be necessary, at least temporarily and sometimes permanently. Even in those cases where we cannot take the patient off psychiatric drugs, we usually can reduce the dosage and thereby decrease uncomfortable side effects, while at the same time producing real improvements in functioning.

Homeopathic treatment of mental and emotional disorders characteristically results in an increase in vitality, self-perception, self-knowledge and feelings of well-being. Homeopathy, if practised on a wide scale, has great promise as a social psychiatry. If practised in the prison system, recidivism could be greatly decreased. Perpetrators and victims of domestic violence respond well to homeopathic treatment. The antisocial behaviors of those adolescents and children who disrupt the classroom could be eliminated if homeopathy were as easily available as Ritalin. One needs merely to extrapolate from the remarkable case histories presented in this book to imagine the possibilities for social transformation with the widespread application of homeopathy to the mental, emotional and personality disorders that are the direct and indirect causes of most of the unhappiness on our planet.

This book is far more than an introduction to psychiatric homeopathy. Professional homeopaths will find it immensely useful and stimulating; the authors have presented many unusual medicines which are straight from the cutting edge of the theory and practice of the new homeopathy. Psychiatrists, psychologists, social

workers and other psychotherapists may discover an alternative to conventional drugs for those of their clientele who need medication. Homeopathic treatment does not replace psychotherapy. Psychotherapists who refer to homeopaths will not only be astonished by the relief of distress afforded by homeopathic treatment but pleased by the enhancement of therapy. Homeo-pathy results in increased self-perception and deeper insight which enables therapy to progress far more rapidly and effectively. These remarkable medicines seem to break the "resistance" to therapy. Homeopathic treatment removes depression, anxiety, delusions, dissociation and other symptoms so that therapy can do what it really does best: promote growth and development through self knowledge.

Homeopathy is a gift for those who wish to understand themselves more deeply, remove negativity, and live more expansively in love and creativity. Homeopathy, exquisitely gentle yet incredibly powerful, is for those who understand that the golden hammer opens the iron door.

Michael K. Glass, M.D.

Ithaca, New York

Acknowledgments

We thank our teachers, particularly Dr. Rajan Sankaran, who has informed, inspired, and revitalized our homeopathic practice since we began studying with him in 1993. It is thanks to his brilliant guidance that we have been able to prescribe medicines we had never considered, or even known of, with such dramatic results.

Introduction

A Better Answer for a Happier World

We do not live in a happy society. An astounding number of individuals rely on prescription medication, as you will see as you read further in our book, to keep their thoughts positive and their moods stable. Contemporary, highly technological life is complex, fast-moving, quickly changing and highly unpredictable. The common wisdom is that it is necessary, simply a matter of course, to take pharmaceutical uppers, downers, or whatever is needed to remain on an even keel. What if we told you that there is another type of medicine, one that is safe, long-lasting, deep-acting, highly affective, and has the potential to alleviate your physical problems as well as your depression? A medicine that is inexpensive, individualized to your unique symptoms, and one which you need to take only infrequently. One that produces significant positive changes with more frequency than Prozac or other conventional medications. And what if we shared with you the true experiences of others who were depressed but who now feel very well thanks to this medicine? Would you consider a different alternative? We hope so! This is our reason for writing this book and has been the career to which we have dedicated ourselves over the past thirty years.

Who are we to dare to suggest a natural alternative to antidepressants, especially at a time when many think that serotonin-regulating drugs are the panacea for mood disorders? We are licensed naturopathic physicians board-certified in homeopathic medicine. From 1976 to 1978 Judyth was a psychiatric social worker assigned to the locked psychiatric ward of a major teaching hospital, in halfway houses, outpatient clinics and private homes. Robert has worked extensively with hospitalized psychiatric patients and developmentally-disabled children and adults. Disillusioned by the side effects and partial and temporary improvement resulting from major tranquilizers and other psychiatric medications compounded with numerous, often serious, side effects, we

became convinced that there must be a gentler and more effective solution to mental illness. Each of us came to this realization a decade before we ever met each other.

As you can see from the many patients we have treated successfully whose cases we recount in our book, we believe we have found an answer that can transform the lives of many people. We present these real, but anonymous, cases from our practice and ask you to draw your own conclusions about the effectiveness of homeopathy.

Val's Success with Homeopathic Treatment for Depression

Let us share with you the story of Val, one of thousands of patients with mental and emotional problems that we have treated over the past fifteen years. A computer programmer from Eastern Washington, Val was 38 years old when she first came to our clinic nine years ago. Discouraged and disappointed, after having put on thirty extra pounds, Val simply wanted to feel better. A starvation diet through a weight loss clinic and four mile a day walks five days a week had not been enough to shed the excess weight.

Val suffered great annoyance from her environmental and food allergies, which caused a myriad of symptoms including dizziness, a seriously stuffy nose, irritability, bloating, migraines and 4 A.M. panic attacks. Annoyance crossed over the line to misery during the spring and fall hay fever seasons when her headaches, sneezing and dizziness were constant. At the age of two, Val, never having been breast-fed, was covered with eczema from head to toe due to her sensitivity to cow's milk. Dry, chapped, bleeding, cracked skin still bothered her with some frequency. She also complained of ringing in her ears, athlete's foot, heartburn, premenstrual headaches, constipation and offensive body odor. You can easily understand why Val wanted to find a way to feel better.

"I've been depressed as long as I can remember," she shared with us. "I've had suicidal feelings about twice a month for years. I guess

I take after my mother who was on antidepressants for thirty years." Val had not realized her dream of writing children's books. She had contemplated relocating to a different city, a career change, moving to a different apartment.

Nothing she tried, including years of psychotherapy focusing on her dysfunctional family, had really made a difference. Val described her father as responsible but absent and her mother as a tyrant. A quiet child, she coped by becoming "lost in a dream world with a cast of thousands". A sensitive peacemaker, Val proved herself by achieving straight A's, being the class valedictorian, and by completing two graduate degrees. As a "loner egghead", friendships did not come easily. Nor did intimate relationships except when she fantasized about movie stars and guitar heroes. Despite her quick wit, vivid imagination, and pleasant personality, Val was unable to make deep connections with others.

Val had a nervous streak, even as an adolescent. In college her worries escalated into full-blown anxiety attacks. Uncomfortable in tight places, she preferred to wait for an empty elevator.

Val benefitted considerably from *Aurum sulphuricum* (gold sulfide). Her moods, allergies, heartburn, headaches, abdominal distress, dizziness, athlete's foot, explosive diarrhea, eczema, sinusitis and body odor all improved significantly. Others told her that she looked better. Her anxiety was much reduced and she felt more stable emotionally. We prescribed a dose of the medicine on an average of once every four to six months.

As we came to know and understand her better, Val confided that her biggest issues were despair about feeling she had failed in her career, doubt of her ability to survive, and a disconnectedness from others. After four years of periodic visits, Val described herself as "happier than I've been in years. I'm back to writing and researching. I have no suicidal thoughts. I get up in the morning and I'm happy to be alive. I'm amazed. I'm feeling so much better emotionally. I'm sleeping well and I'm having no anxiety attacks."

As homeopaths do, we continually tried to delve more deeply into Val's state. "Part of my problem in defining myself", she shared, "is that I don't know what I feel. In childhood I learned not even to think. I didn't really develop an identity until I was in college." She also mentioned her terrible constipation as a child. This led to finely tune the medicine even further to *Aluminum sulphuricum* (aluminum sulfate), which has been repeated four times over the past 14 months. An excellent medicine for people who lack a clear sense of self and self-control, often as a result of being raised by a dominant parent who suppressed the child's will and individuality, this medicine also matched Val's physical symptoms very well.

Val has continued to feel progressively better. She now owns a home, which allows her to feel comfortable and secure, and is more satisfied with her work. Generally even-tempered and on an even keel, she continues to feel quite well rather than "lost in the trough" as she did prior to homeopathic treatment. She is spending more creative time on her writing and still hopes to publish her work. Val continues to work on herself and, although her life is not perfect, it is dramatically improved from when we started working together and she has not needed to resort to antidepressants. Yes, there *is* happiness and well-being without drugs. You will read many stories in our book about people who, like Val, have experienced wonderful changes in their lives from homeopathy.

What Makes YOU Tick?

Despite all the scientific research regarding serotonin and other neurotransmitters, we, as homeopaths, do not believe that the human mind or body can be wrapped up into a neat little package. Given so many different manifestations and variations on unhappiness, it does not make sense to us that they can all be attributed to one cause.

Conventional wisdom in mainstream medicine is habituated to finding a finite number of categorical boxes into which you can

potentially be placed. If you can be pigeonholed into a diagnostic box, then your doctor can find the medicine or medicines that correspond.

The problem, to our way of thinking and our clinical experience, is that this approach misses entirely the inherent uniqueness and individuality of each human being. By trying to find commonalities in people and symptoms, you might be able to narrow them down to half a dozen or fewer possible medications. The problem is that the more specialized conventional medicine has become, the more you are likely to be evaluated in pieces rather than as a whole, integrated human being.

A homeopathic practitioner, to the contrary, tries to discover just what makes you tick and why you became depressed in the first place. We do not try to fit people into a narrow range of diagnostic categories in order to prescribe one of a handful of medicines. We listen to your story, understanding that, in its own way, it is unlike any story we have every heard before, then we prescribe for you as an individual, one of nearly two thousand safe and natural homeopathic medicines.

Some of you may be perfectly satisfied taking antidepressants but we know that many of you chose to read this book because you are seeking a safe and effective alternative. We hope that it will inspire you to open your mind to another alternative, one that might bring you and others you know and love more far-reaching and lasting healing than antidepressants. Homeopathy is fascinating and complex. To prescribe effectively for depression and other serious mental and emotional problems requires years of training and experience. Homeopathy, like any type of medicine, cannot help everyone, but we estimate that a well-trained and experienced homeopathic physician or practitioner can help up to 70% of those who are committed to continuing treatment for at least one year. You are likely to feel better within four to six weeks of beginning treatment, sometimes sooner.

If you choose to pursue homeopathy for yourself or your loved ones, do not even consider prescribing for yourself. Find a practitioner who is well-trained, highly-qualified and experienced as a homeopath, as well as seasoned in treating patients with mental and emotional issues, to help you. Then, you will be more likely to experience the positive results that we discuss in our book. Regardless of which path you choose, we wish you the very best with healing and hope that you find happiness and peace.

14 Life Is Just Too Much to Handle!

Lightening the Load of a Hectic Life

We live in a busy, fast-paced, complex society — bearing the responsibilities of family, home and job. The simple life of the '40s and '50s is gone. Our highly technological world has led to more choices and decisions, often split-second. Paying the bills, keeping up with phone calls, beeper calls, faxes and e-mail. Living from paycheck to paycheck. Or, for some, having so much money that they don't know how to spend it. We are struck by how stressful the lives of children are today. Often gone from morning till night, carrying beepers so they won't miss out on anything, playing video games as fast as possible. They barely have time to grow up! Too much work, too little enjoyment and not enough heartfelt connection with other people. This is a prescription for unhappiness.

"A Half-Empty Kind of Guy"

Max, forty, was burned out. A telephone-cable repair supervisor from St. Louis, he was just plain exhausted, not to mention discouraged with his life and his job requiring long hours on the road. He described himself as a simple, down-to-earth man in a hustle-bustle world. Bored and overwhelmed with his job of twelve years, he also felt distant from his girlfriend. Stress at work and more stress at home. It just felt like too much. Max told us he felt like there were "two hammers beating on me at the same time".

A great hindsight critic, Max had a litany inside his head about what he could have or should have done differently. A constant second-guesser when it came to all of his perceived mistakes, he complained of below-average self-esteem. Bombarded with decision making, he based his choices on fear rather than intuition. Filled with self-doubt, he never felt he had enough on the ball to succeed in his undertakings. This led Max to have an "I'd better take what I can get" philosophy about his possibilities and capabilities. Although he had begun to interview for another job, he never

felt he had a ghost of a chance of being hired elsewhere. The truth was that Max's employers placed a lot of value on his expertise, but he never believed it. He described himself as a "half-empty kind of guy".

The product of a typical Midwestern farm family, Max felt unjustly punished by his father. "I got the message that I couldn't do anything right, and it stuck with me." Like glue. Max's feelings about his life were those of total loss, failure and helplessness. When he felt worst, he was gripped by a tight feeling in his chest and a loss of appetite. Rather than look at what he could change in his environment or what role others played in his disappointments, Max pointed the finger at himself, just as his father had done to him. His inner dialogue went like this: "What can I do to improve myself? I thought I was trying, but I guess I'm not doing it well enough."

Ultimately Max felt quite desperate and anxious, as well as clueless about how to remedy his life. He called himself a defeatist but could not figure out how to pull himself out of the pit. He lamented, "I've failed in so many ways, made so many stupid decisions in my life. I mull things over to death, afraid of making the wrong decision. Everyone is dissatisfied with me. It's too much to bear." When we asked what was unusual about him, he answered, "I'm a nobody. I know that's a pretty sad statement but that's how I feel. Wrung through the wringer."

Max had never done well in school, mostly Cs, Ds and Fs, even though he was an intelligent man. Convinced that he would fail, he panicked before tests and inevitably was the last to finish. Awkward in social situations, he didn't speak unless he was very sure. "I go off and sit by myself or dismiss myself. I don't fit." Max's greatest fear was of negativity, even though he knew he generated it himself. "I don't trust the human world. I feel like a pea in the ocean and there's nothing to do about it." Max dreamed about unfinished projects.

The first medicine we gave Max, *Aurum metallicum*, had little effect. However, he benefited considerably from *Cadmium sulphuricum*, a

medicine for depressed, discouraged individuals who feel stuck and unable to move. Though their ideals may be high and they may be quite capable, they never feel that way. Their performance anxiety is great because they suffer from such tremendous self-doubt and reproach. This metal is actually used in telephone cables, so it is interesting that Max, who worked with the cables for many years, needed this particular substance. Perhaps his state was brought on by the continual exposure to the substance.

Six weeks after taking the *Cadmium sulphuricum,* Max felt less desperate. Whereas he acknowledged feeling "beside himself" prior to the homeopathy, now he enjoyed more periods of being at ease. "I'm not so focused on the problems at hand. I feel more able to come up with a solution. I've seen some possibilities to get out of my situation. My outlook is moving forward."

Over the next six and a half months Max continued to improve. He actually changed jobs and his spirits improved. He and his girlfriend were getting along better. "I'm not at all depressed. I'm actually pleasantly surprised when I step outside myself and look in." Seven months after the original dose of the *Cadmium sulphuricum,* Max felt that he was slipping when lots of pressure came up in his new job. The self-blame had begun to creep back. We repeated the medicine at that time.

Many people believe that once a failure, always a failure. This case shows that, with the right kind of help, that is not necessarily true.

"I Felt God Calling Me"

Meg, a forty-year-old clothing designer, was the middle child of three children. She first came to see us four years ago, and we have subsequently treated her two daughters and her mother as well. Although Meg was quite close to her mom, her father was a mean, critical and abusive alcoholic. Meg's grandfather made sexually suggestive advances toward her, which caused her to lose her trust in him. Meg's family moved from California to Florida when she was twelve. Not only was she traumatized by moving far away from

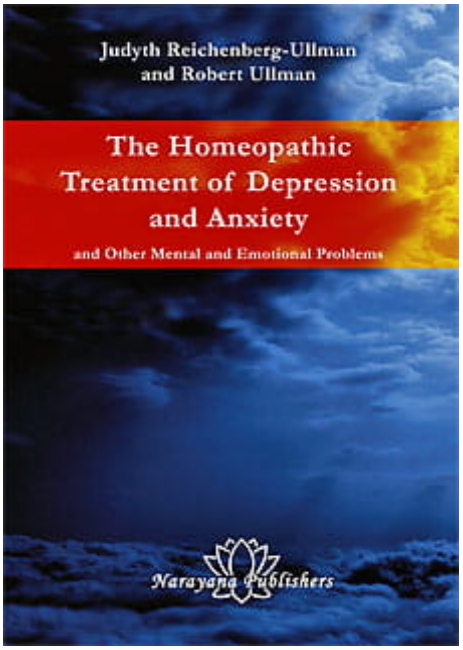
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