

# Emotional Trauma

The long term effects of emotional trauma can manifest in our lives as disease if the feelings of fear, anger, grief and loss are denied, suppressed and unresolved. These effects can then form the basis of disease that may manifest on any level, mental, emotional or physical. This is called somatisation and refers to the tendency to experience and communicate psychological distress in the form of physical symptoms. People tend to then seek medical help for these symptoms rather than realise and consider the mental/emotional causation.

As Peter Chappell says in his book Emotional Healing with Homoeopathy 'Suffering occurs in the traumas of growing up, in events like wars and economic recessions, in crisis, and in personal or countrywide catastrophes. Bereavement, illness, loss of one's job, loss of one's home are all examples of traumatic crisis'.

We will look at some remedies for acute grief and trauma however if the trauma dates back many years it's often wise to seek the help of a qualified homoeopath who will be able to help you gently unravel the layers.

As home prescribers, in treating emotional trauma as it happens in the acute phase, we support the system to process and heal rather than suppress and somatise the trauma. In grief the remedy does not 'take the grief away' but rather helps us to gather ourselves and cope with the process. In particular when we do this for our children and when they see us looking after ourselves in the same way we strengthen and support their emotional growth and development.

The materia medica descriptions of the remedies show us common trauma patterns as well as help us to understand how different people react to emotional trauma.

[Aconite](#): Sometimes called the "Arnica of the Emotions", it is good for sudden fright and ailments from strong emotions. Great fear, trembling, anxiety and worry; they are restless, agitated and may fear that they will die. Aconite soothes and brings you back to a centred and calm state. They may have palpitations and hyperventilate, producing symptoms of pins and needles and numbness throughout the body.

[Arnica](#): After an accident or trauma the shock state remains. They startle from sleep, suffer frightful dreams, and wake in fear. There can be ailments from bad news accompanied by shock, denial, and a sense of distance from the body with denial that anything is wrong and aversion to and fear of being touched.

[Gelsemium](#): A strong keynote is ailments from bad news causing a shock to the nervous system with over excitability initially and then weakness, trembling and fatigue. They can become speechless or paralysed from fright. There is a strong dread and shut down, weak at the knees, shaking hands, trembling voice; they anticipate even the simplest things with dread and worry and this wears down the vitality. To conserve their strength they prefer to be quiet and undisturbed.

[Ignatia](#): This remedy is very good when a person's acute response to grief is to weep. The keynote is that the weeping comes in bursts that the person will try and control, there might only be tears in the eyes. They feel shattered inside from disappointment, disappointed love, fright or bad news. They can be worried but will try and present a composed front to others. They may sigh a lot and also have a sensation of a lump in their throat. The person may hyperventilate, twitch, jerk, have cramps and display contradictory, unpredictable behaviour. They will pull away from comfort and reassurance and may sweat from the face. Children and adolescents may not be as composed as adults, and when they do cry, may burst into tears loudly and dramatically and storm out of the room.

Nat mur: Irritable outbursts over small things, these people will not cry in front of others at all or perhaps feel like they would like to cry and it won't come. There can be deep sadness and a state of despair. The person may feel betrayed, alone and like they really need some nurturing however they will not let on that they feel like this. They can have trouble falling asleep as they tend to stew over past events, old hurts and conversations at night.

Phosphoric acid: Exhausted and debilitated within their mind and body since a traumatic event, they may feel isolated in their communication with loved ones. This can be after discord or it might be simply living in a different city or country from loved ones and not being able to have contact or pick up the phone and have a conversation. Worry and anxiety about loved ones can affect their sleep and they may also have crushing or vice-like headaches. The exhaustion can result in difficulty gathering their thoughts or finding the right word, there just isn't the energy to make the pathways work.

Pulsatilla: Associated with the trauma and suffering is the feeling of abandonment. Their anxiety can show as easy tears and becoming very clingy. In children they want their mother's attention at all times. This state can arise from the loss of a parent due to divorce, parents going away for a holiday, starting daycare or school, anytime the child must face separation from mum and dad.

Staphysagria: Deep anger and indignation followed by resignation after a hurtful act that violates ones boundaries. They are either very mild and suppressed or will respond very angrily to perceived insults. It is well indicated after sexual assault and after a difficult birth, episiotomy or other invasive procedure such as a C-section. This remedy helps people to stand up for themselves.

Stramonium: Indicated for people who have been a victim of or threatened with violence or robbery and remain traumatised afterwards. There is fear of the violent event happening again. They may develop a strong fear of leaving the house, being alone, the dark and be prone to terrifying nightmares.

Next month we will explore **Polypharmacy**.