



How Can I Cope without the Support of My Mother?

Lac Ioxodonta Africana

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A 35-year-old woman sought my assistance for postnatal depression (PND) and cachexia during her second lactation. There is a history of heart and kidney disease on both sides of the family and her mother had died suddenly a few years prior with lymphoma. Her father has cancer of the bladder. She misses her mother very much (she cried in the consultation when speaking of her [*Sepia*]) and says that she often dreams of her (*Thuja*). She also has falling dreams and dreams of separation and loss (*Thuja*; *Carcinosin*).

She had mumps as a child and chicken pox in her early 20s followed by glandular fever (*Carcinosin*). She is vaccinated and has had vaccines as an adult for overseas travel. She used to love flying. However, after an aborted takeoff at an overseas airport, she's now terrified of flying and has a history of disliking closed-in places or being pinned down or trapped (*Carcinosin*).

Motherhood... Her Joy

She much enjoyed her first pregnancy at 32. However, because of the baby's posterior position, she did not labour well and had an emergency Caesarean section at five cms. She breastfed for 21 months with no problems and weaned when she was 20 weeks pregnant with her second baby. It was during this first lactation that her mother died: "I was in total shock and barely remember the subsequent three months after it happened".

She was determined to have a VBAC (Vaginal Birth After Caesarean) so went to yoga classes and laboured well at home, going to hospital when she was eight cms dilated.

Because she went into shock when an epidural was administered for the first birth she opted for a spinal tap for pain relief for the second birth. However her blood pressure plummeted and another emergency Caesarean section was performed.

During the second pregnancy she developed what was thought to be a melanoma at 2 o'clock on her right breast. She chose to have it excised.

I prescribed three morning doses of *Sepia* 30C and afterwards she immediately felt much more energetic and positive so went back to the gym and yoga. When she returned for her next visit a month later she reported a bruised feeling in the outer quadrant of the right breast. She'd been wearing an underwired bra so had stopped that and reported that firm massage disgorged a heap of "pussy-looking milk" from the outer nipple pore. There is also some right-sided scapular pain which radiates down the right arm. This reminds her of an

injury she had in her teens when she fell heavily on the dance floor. Another old symptom of a blocked left ear has returned along with bright yellow expectoration and yellow blood-streaked coryza. She's very thirsty for cold drinks and reports that her stool is fermented.

What followed was three months of breast problems with pain and congestion. Primarily it was the right breast but symptoms eventually moved to the left breast which had a bloody discharge along with the usual redness and heat of mastitis. This situation responded slowly but steadily to *Phosphorus* 200C then *Phosphorus* 30C as well as *Streptococcinum* 200C. During this time she had an ultrasound and a biopsy of the right breast; no abnormality was detected.

Motherhood... Her Despair

After three subsequent months of trouble-free breastfeeding she returned to tell me that she was unexpectedly pregnant and contemplating a termination as they felt that they could not cope with three little ones and no family support.

She did not want any medicine but wanted my professional opinion regarding any issues that a termination might have since she'd had such recent problems with her breasts. With the family history of cancer and her recent breast problems which resulted in a simillimum of *Phosphorus*, we spoke frankly and in depth about the anti-cancer advantages of breastfeeding and the research which links termination to the possibility of breast cancer [1-3],

SUMMARY

Lac Ioxodonta Africana is a homeopathic medicine concerned with issues regarding Matriarchy and with women needing the support and guidance from other women during mothering. It is also, due to the subthemes of Murder/Brutality/Violence and Suffering/Homeless, a medicine for trauma around conception and/or gestation. *Lac delphinum* is also a medicine with emphasis on the need for group support. The rubric: Tranquillity is to be found in both medicines. However *Lac delphinum* is a medicine that offers a sense of tranquillity during a time of chaos and has rubrics associated with mothering being an imposition. It is, therefore, a medicine which can provide a sense of tranquillity and support during Birth.

KEYWORDS *Lac Ioxodonta Africana*, *Lac delphinum*, Post-natal depression, Maternal support



There are several instances in the *Lac loxodonta* proving which elicited day-dreams of eggs in a variety of animals: stingray; shark; skate and pupating (bag of silk) from a caterpillar to a butterfly.

Chest: Awareness; heart's beating, of; s/if: body is soft bag (see Fig. 1).

"My body felt like a big soft bag (dark on the outside; light on the inside) with my heart beating in the middle of it." [Prover 1]

This is then, perhaps, a remedy for ensuring the well-being of the foetus and for anxiety associated with an inability to conceive; IVF; threatened miscarriage or proposed abortion (*lac-ory*) [4].

Dream: Children; foetuses; children abused

This, in a way, is consistent with Herriek's nominated themes of:

- Murder/Brutality/Violence and
- Suffering/Homeless

It gives some perspective regarding the circumstances surrounding the source of the milk for the *Lac loxodonta* proving in that the female elephant had just given birth to her first calf, which had to be euthanized due to a congenital, untreatable deformity.

And it also gives approbation to Herriek's observation that these aspects of the proving as well as the rubric Dream: Murder, violent, may derive from a form of morphogenic resonance concerning the brutal culling of elephant herds that occasionally transpires [5].

She subsequently presented five times at different abortion clinics over the next several weeks but just could not go through with it. Her obstetrician referred her to a psychiatrist and she was put on Zoloft® and she hired a woman to clean the house.

Seeing the baby's heartbeat during an ultrasound in the 5th week connected her to the picture of her mother's death. "I had a vision of her heart stopping beating and I wondered if I could grieve so much again?"

I saw her again in the 7th month of her pregnancy. She is still very sad about her

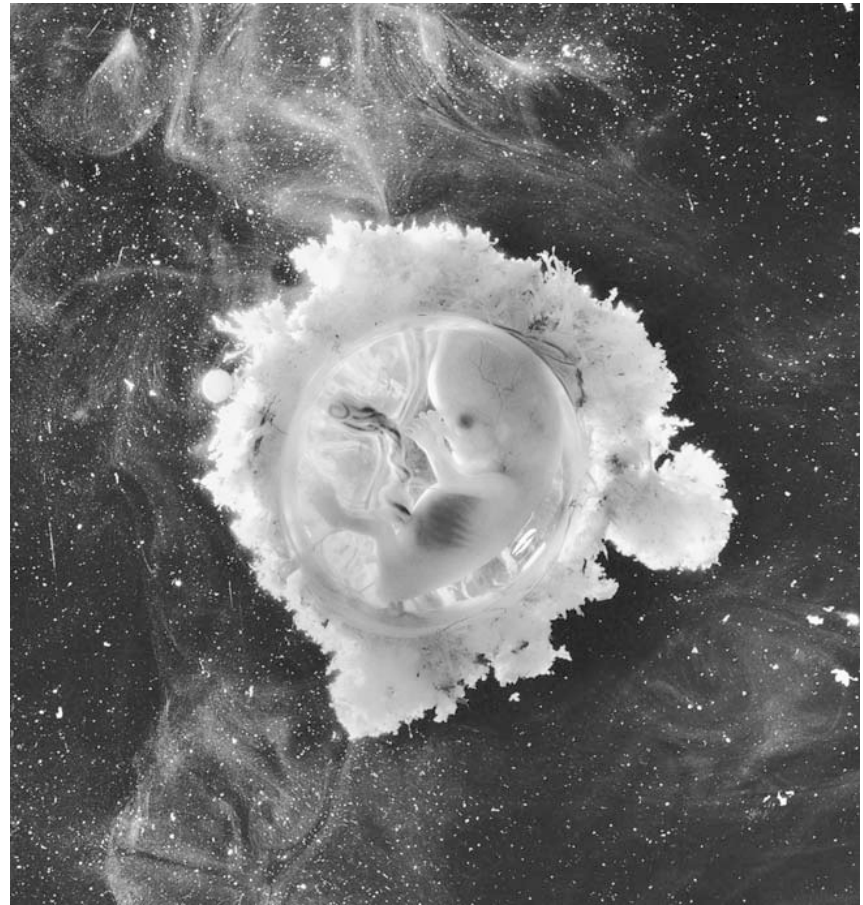


Fig. 1 "My body feels like a soft bag (dark on the outside; light on the inside) with my heart beating in the middle of it." (Prover 1) [photo by Lennart Nilsson – www.lennartnilsson.com].

situation and her psychiatrist wants to increase her dose of Zoloft® but she wants to try and decrease it now that the birth is getting closer. Tears are, however, flowing easily and often. When she cried during the consultation I asked her what feeling she had with the tears and her reply was "I feel guilty!" They are worried about their financial situation and she's longing for the support of her mother to help her through this last trimester and beyond. Her husband has been working many extra shifts of overtime so they can get ahead.

She's been having lots of vivid, violent dreams of murder; groups of people and animals being killed (sometimes with a gun)... "blood everywhere!" Her short-term memory is almost nonexistent: "It simply drops out!"

Her mouth, tongue and throat are red and sore: "itchy; hot, better sucking on ice-cold water." There is pain and tension in the left side of her neck and the tickle in her throat results in a dry cough. Also she feels that

her digestion is poor and wonders if it's gluten as she prefers grains to vegetables. She has lots of abdominal distension and indigestion and flatus and has vaginal flatus.

Her toddler has recently weaned and she feels somewhat sad about that. "I like to keep my babies close to me. I'm having difficulty in allowing my older child to have some days at kindergarten. I am dog-tired and needing to nap each afternoon so it makes sense to get a routine going where I'm not the sole carer of all my little ones but I don't relax when they're out of my sight."

She had carpal tunnel syndrome in the last pregnancy and has recently developed a sense of paraesthesia in both hands and wonders if it's returning. She's also been getting leg cramps. Because the weather has been hot lately she finds spending time in the family pool very refreshing.

On this occasion I prescribed a stat dose of *Lac loxodonta Africana* 1 M.



Rationale for the Prescription

The essence of *Lac loxodonta Africana* concerns Matriarchy and the role that the matriarch has in nurturing her family... the group.

Herrick reminds us that one of the most outstanding characteristics of the elephant is its devotion to its young. Female elephants have many calves over a lifetime; even bearing young up to the age of 60. The mother stays in constant contact with her calf for the first six months and never lets it out of her sight. The entire herd is constantly watchful over the calf's every move... the mere whimper from a calf causes [the whole family] to stop and patiently wait until the problem has been solved before moving on. Whenever a calf is in frank danger, members of the herd (and perhaps even all the adults in the herd) will work together to save the calf.

Now, with the death of her mother it is her turn to take on the role of matriarch and she feels that she lacks the strength to do that.

Lac loxodonta Africana is predominantly a psoric medicine and psora promotes a strong mother/child bond [6] and vacillates between Positiveness (optimism) and Despair.

Rubrics [7]

Theme

- Water

Generalities

- Water, playing in >
- Lassitude; desire to lie down, with
- Weariness, afternoon
- Short naps >
- Afternoon

Mind

- Despair; sadness; despondency; depression; melancholy
- Weeping; tearful mood; tendency, to; despair, from
- Dullness; sluggishness; difficulty of thinking and comprehending
- Prostration; mental exhaustion; brain fag

Mouth

- Itching; palate

Throat

- Itching
- Pain; sore
- Evening
- Tension; left side
- Cough; dry

Stomach

- Eructations

Abdomen

- Distension

Rectum

- Flatulence

Female

- Bubble; water or air in vagina; as if

Extremities

- Hand... sensation as if lying in a puddle of water
- Cramps; thigh

Dreams

- Vivid
- Groups
- Animals
- People
- Murder; violent

She felt well-supported by the medicine and managed to drop her dose of Zolof® to 75 mg/day and came to see me six weeks later (two weeks before her due date). She was smiling again for the first time in a long time and had a distinct air of tranquillity about her (*lac-lox-a*; *lac-del*). She brought her little ones with her and they were mischievous as children of that age tend to be but she coped with them calmly and lovingly. She reported feeling like she is "in a bubble; nesty"; and, although still needing an afternoon rest and feeling really "waddy and cumbersome", is enjoying staying up late after the children have gone to bed getting last minute things organised for the new baby.

She plans to have at least five days in hospital leaving her husband to care for the children. While she's looking forward to having the space and time to bond with the new little one she's anxious regarding the type of care her older children will receive from their dad. "Guys just don't get it! I really wish my mum was here to help. She'd take care of them brilliantly. After that last remedy I had a dream about her again so I kinda know that she's with us."

So, it seems that having adequate support is still her main issue.

Although she's having protein twice a day she reports having polyuria and polydipsia... (still wanting cold drinks). Nevertheless, her blood pressure is stable and there's no peripheral oedema. She is enjoying tasty curries which give her reflux and she's been gagging when cleaning her teeth in the morning. She is also very anxious about how she's going to deal with the anaesthetic as she's booked for another Caesarean section.

On the strength of that group of symptoms I was tempted to re-prescribe *Phosphorous*. However, with the issue of perceived lack of support, my mind turned to *Lac delphinum* which Herrick has stated seems very much like *Phosphorus*. I have written elsewhere [8] about the ability of *Lac delphinum* to provide an energetic space for birth support; much as a midwife does.

We discussed the issue and I explained to her how the energy of the milk of the dolphin would hold the space for her to birth knowing that all was well.

Rx: *Lac delphinum* 200C NMN two weeks before the due date.

A few weeks later I received this email from her:

I would just like to thank you for your support and the recent remedy given to me on my last visit. My baby came a week earlier than expected and was the first baby of the day to be born at the hospital on International Midwives Day!

My labour started at midnight. I stayed at home through the contractions till 3.30 am then headed off to hospital with contractions getting more and more intense. I then had to wait for theatre staff to arrive in order to have the baby. During this stressful period at hospital I visualised dolphins surrounding me, which calmed me especially whilst they were preparing me for the Caesarean section. It helped to put me in a happy place.*

After the operation my obstetrician said I was almost, or could have been, fully dilated which surprised me greatly as my other labours have been on and off for 24 hours or so. However I am happy that the baby got some of the labour hormones and got to choose when to be welcomed into this world!

(* Mind: Delusion: danger; impression of, yet remains calm [*Lac-delphinum*])



Rubrics I considered for *Lac delphinum* were

Themes

- Pregnancy/Baby; Fear; Guilt with Responsibility

Generalities

- Swimming >
- Ice cold drinks >
- Exertion, (physical) aversion to; heaviness of body and lethargy, with

Mind

- Calm
- Relaxed feeling; letting go
- Tranquillity; serenity; calmness
- Isolation; sensation of
- A/F: fright or fear
- Fear of impending danger
- Anxiety; children, about her
- Doubtful of self; inferior feels (This relates to her insecurity over becoming the Matriarch)

Stomach

- Acid reflux; heartburn
- Nausea; morning
- Thirst increased

Bladder

- Morbid urge to pass urine; frequent; sense of fullness, with

Sleep

- Sleepiness; afternoon

Dreams

- Mother, of

Also, Herrick has proffered for repertorisation:

- Dreams: Child; responsibility for; does not want – lac-del

And I have added:

- Mind: Anxiety regarding a safe situation to birth in – lac-del

The ongoing ambivalence regarding accepting this little one into her family was not so much about not enjoying her babies but was more a matter of feeling that she could not cope without the support of her mother.

Her baby is growing well; she's totally besotted as is the case with breastfeeding mothers and they're all managing quite fine.

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Vita

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As well as having conducted and published several provings, Patricia is a regular contributor to journals both national and international. Her work (provings, conference papers and journal articles) is available for perusal and downloading for personal use at: www.patriciahatherly.com

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"This work is the most comprehensive opus on the Lacs. The book will not only help those doing research on the Lacs, but will help finding the right remedy for a patient when a Lac is being considered, a much easier task. It is a work which I wholeheartedly recommend."

Roger van Zandvoort

"In the production of this collection of Lacs, Patricia has gone back to the source material in Animal Mind, Human Voices and other Lac provings and her attention to detail is impressive."

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"This is a monumental book... a priceless work... an indispensable volume."

Francis Treuherz Links 24(10)2011

"This is a thorough piece of research, well presented... a great resource which I would whole-heartedly recommend."

Linda Gwillim The Homeopath Spring 2011

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