

## INFERIORITY COMPLEX AND HOMŒOPATHIC REMEDIES

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*Translated into German by von I. Wolf.*

*Translated from the German by Waldo C. Peebles.*

The expression "inferiority complex" first came into fashion in the psychoanalytic school of Freud and was amplified by the great psychoanalysts Jung, Adler, and other pupils of Freud. It is quite clear, however, that the condition of "inferiority complex" was known at all times and was more or less successfully treated by physicians under the most varied names,—morbid timidity, misanthropy, stage fright, "the shakes", lack of self-confidence, and many others. At the present day when the causes and consequences of this condition are well known, its medical treatment has scarcely yet gone beyond the narrow circle of specialists, experts in psychoanalysis and psychotherapy, who maintain that they alone are capable of bringing about alleviation or even cure of this diseased condition of mind and spirit.

What basically is an "inferiority complex"?

1. It is in part a conscious, for the most part however, unconscious, condition due to a person's own weaknesses, which impel him to withdraw within himself.
2. It is a condition which—often accompanied by a feeling of self-torment or even self-destruction—drives a person to make himself even more insignificant than he really is, and who therefore avoids comparing himself with others or measuring himself against them.
3. It is a condition that is nourished by one's own mental state, in a truly ominous circle, made worse by failures and defeats in association with the world.

The causes of this complex are very deeply rooted, and when one asks the sufferer about it, he is not able to give a satisfactory answer. Only by means of psychoanalysis with its process of finding explanations as a result of testing, of the interpretation of dreams, and so forth, has it become possible to unravel the skein of deep causes of the "unconscious" in us and to clarify it.

The modern psychotherapists meanwhile have not seen that, other things being equal, not all persons are exposed to the same degree to the danger of falling victims to certain complexes, and that the role of environment and hereditary pre-dispositions as well as the influence of society are the basic factors here.

What weapons are at the disposal of the physician to support the patient in dealing with his inhibitions?

There is the procedure of psychoanalysis, the analysis of mental associations and processes. That lies within the sphere of a few specialists whose treatment is a long and expensive process. Even if successful, it is not always effective and sometimes even dangerous.

There is, furthermore, psychiatry, the science of mental healing, that is the medical treatment of mental disturbances. This procedure is very interesting from the viewpoint of the physician, provided that he is a psychologist. He will be able to render incalculably valuable services to the patient, especially if he understands how to combine his psychological methods with other curative measures, perhaps with autosuggestion (Coué).

The modern allopathic art of preparing medicines (pharmacology) has produced in recent years drugs which stimulate mental activity, resulting in an increase of mental capacity and nullifying the negative impulses from within. These drugs have actually and literally exerted an effect which dissolves complexes. They free the patient from the fetters of his morbid condition—during the time that the body is subject to their medicinal effect. But this time span is fairly short and sometimes other unpleasant symptoms follow it,—headaches and comatose states especially. Moreover, the momentary beneficial effect is often weakened in proportion to the number of times the remedy is repeated. And finally, when these remedies are taken too frequently and continuously, they can lead to a condition of illness and addiction to drugs. In spite of these misgivings one must admit that the medicines can be extremely valuable as occasional aids; they make a breach in the fatal "diabolical circle" in which the patient is a captive.

But when the treatment is directed from the beginning toward the comprehension of the entire organism ("treatment of the whole"), one will be able to achieve a cure and make it permanent. This is only possible by means of *homœopathic remedies prescribed according to the law of similars of Homœopathy*. Some of the remedies will be mentioned below, naturally not in their entirety, but only their effect upon the psychical constitution.

*Lycopodium* is known as an outstanding liver and gall remedy. The lycopodium person is keenly intelligent, but of slight physical strength. He has a high opinion of himself, but lacks self-confidence. He is afraid of not being successful in his work, of not making an impression, is timid about speaking in public. On the one hand, he is violent, tyrannical, brooks no contradiction; on the other hand, he is sad, lacking in courage, without energy, withdraws into the role of misogynist.

*Gelsemium*: A person with great mental weakness, nervous, depressions, great mental excitability, trembling, fearful. Stage fright (timidity and fear of public appearances) causes diarrhea in his case. Palpitation of the heart with the feeling that the heart has stopped when he is not moving, insomnia, trembling with the feeling of weakness. Worse when thinking of his excitability.

*Barium carbonicum*: A person with hardening of the arteries, slow

mentally. In the development of retarded children, dull, slow in comprehending and retaining. Very shy, especially toward strangers, lack of self-confidence, distrustful of others. Hides when visitors come. An extremely conscientious person, full of groundless worries.

*Pulsatilla*: A preferred remedy for the female sex. Mild, gentle, affectionate, modest, excitable, easily influenced, timid, undecided, inhibited toward the other sex, moody and changeable, in need of comfort, tearful, melancholy, tears flow easily, but are quickly dried.

*Calcium phosphoricum*: Children and adolescents with tubercular tendency. Nervous, excited, restless, intelligent, but inattentive in school. A sensitive person, easily frightened by harsh words; lacking in self-confidence. Feels at a disadvantage towards others as far as his mental powers are concerned, all the more so when he tries hard to concentrate.

*Argentum nitricum*: A sufferer from psora. Premature, always in a hurry, hasty, thinks he is late, always wants to be through before the work is begun. Has the need of rushing into work, to forget himself in it, so to speak. He tries to conceal his inferiority complex, to compensate for it through feverish activity. In case of certain excitements, for example stage fright, suffers from characteristic diarrhea, also in case of fright.

*The Tuberculinum-Remedies*: Especially Tuberculinum Marmoreck and Tuberculinum Koch, have in their symptom picture "loss of self-confidence". Hence these nosodes are good basic remedies for all types of inferiority complex.

*Ambergris*: Very fearful, fears company, because the presence of other people neutralizes all his abilities. Restless, in a hurry, hasty; anxious, desperate, melancholy.

*Angustura vera*: Undecided, dejected, discouraged, timid. Ventures to undertake nothing from lack of self-confidence. Underestimates his own abilities, overestimates those of others.

*European cyclamen*: Changeable in mood; pleasantly excited, then sad again, tearful, apathetic. Overly conscientious, tormented by reproaches of self which are invented; also a victim of feelings of inferiority complex.

*Silica*: The great physical weakness and clumsiness in mental work spring from the lack of self-confidence and extreme irritability. "Restless, nervous, anxious, but especially easily started—irritable, quarrelsome, can stand no contradiction. Gentle, yielding character, but also obstinate, stubborn, inclined to melancholy, discouraged, tearful." (Stauffer).

—*The Layman Speaks, Jan., '60*