

# From Savage to Civil: A Dramatic Case of *Tarentula Hispanica*

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**Abstract:** A case of a hyperactive child with behavior disorder is presented. The patient's characteristics – hyperactivity, violent anger, destructiveness, cunning, love of music, and feigning illness – all pointed to *Tarentula hispanica*, which was prescribed in two 200C doses. The transformative effect was profoundly positive, demonstrating the powerful and incomparable effects homeopathic medicine is capable of producing in ADHD children.

**Keywords:** ADHD, violence in children, *Tarentula hispanica*

Violent children can be awfully difficult to live with and next to impossible to educate. Such a child, a girl of four, was brought in by her grandmother, who said her granddaughter was unable to focus on anything, not even television or movies. Now, the run-of-the-mill hyperactive children with poor attention routinely cannot or will not focus on what their teachers and parents would like, but invariably they possess an uncanny ability to lose themselves in one-pointed attention in television, movies and Playstation© type computer games. Not this child.

Her grandmother said she was unusually violent and would tear up books and anything else that took her fancy, such as papers and virtually anything that she could tear or otherwise destroy.

"She'll take scissors and cut off her two year old sister's hair," she said. "But that's not all. She has cut the cords to TV sets, DVD players, even the xBox. Almost all the shoestrings in the house she has cut apart, although so far she has spared her own shoelaces." She might have been destructive, but she was not stupid.

She was also constantly running about in a wild fashion. As she ran about the house she would violently push chairs and tables, sometimes knocking them over.

The child loved music and loved to dance. She could dance for hours. How significant was music for her? I asked.

"She will seek out music," the grandmother said. "She insists on going to sleep to music."

Sleep, or the lack thereof, can provide important clues to the state of the patient and help to decide the correct homeopathic medicine.

I was interested to know if any of this whirlwind, frenetic activity persisted into sleep. "Her sleep is wild," said her grandmother. "She's more than restless. I would say she throws herself about the bed. The

covers are a total mess by morning. I've noticed too that as she is falling asleep her body often jerks. It can continue while she sleeps."

Ana had a huge temper too. "She'll kick, hit, slap and scream," said her grandmother. "She often says, 'I hate you! I hate you! Leave me alone!'" When angry, her physical strength increased enormously.

She enjoyed smashing things to bits. She wrote on walls and then would break her crayons. She had broken most of her toys. She threw sticks and stones at dogs.

In perpetual fast motion, she was never still. "She's always busy," said her grandmother.

She had another peculiar quality. She was cunning. "She's very sneaky," said her grandmother. "She sneaks candy or anything else she wants. We have to keep a lock on the refrigerator." She was clever enough to get what she wanted even when her grandmother didn't want her to have it.

Her mother was severely ADD (attention deficit disorder) and was dysfunctional to the point that she allowed the grandmother full rein with her child. According to the grandmother, her daughter, the child's mother, was incapable of looking after herself much less her own children. So it was the grandmother who brought the child and reported the history.

In homeopathy it is always advisable to find out as many aspects of the patient as possible, not just those negative ones that brought them in the first place. Did she have any positive qualities? I wanted to know.

"Well, yes. She likes to wash dishes and does her best at it. She also likes to fold clothes and to vacuum the floor."

After a pause, the grandmother said, "One other thing that's curious. Even when she is quite well she'll often say, 'I need to go to the doctor.'"

Indeed, that was curious. If an adult did that it would

be considered a sign of hypochondriasis, if not neurosis. But can a physically healthy four year old be neurotic? Perhaps.

But as the old refrain goes, 'Ours is not to reason why...'; so the homeopath does not speculate too long on the 'why' of illness, but rather stays with the concrete, the indisputable; i.e., the symptoms themselves.

We knew the child was cunning. She might have thought it cute or simply interesting to ask to go to the doctor. No matter, it was a form of feigning illness. I decided to use it as a symptom.

I needed a medicine that was wildly active, violently angry, and extremely destructive.

Looking into the Repertory the following medicines appeared: *Apis mellifica*, *Belladonna*, *Hyoscyamus*, *Nux vomica*, *Stramonium*, *Sulphur*, *Tarentula hispanica*, and *Veratrum album*.

Finding these medicines was a good first step. Now, the problem was how to eliminate those medicines that couldn't possibly help. As always, the homeopath looks to a distinguishing feature. This child was sneaky; so I decided to search for that.

The word 'sneaky' is not in the Repertory but 'cunning' is. There are fifteen medicines under that rubric. Even after including 'cunning' the previous eight medicines remained active candidates.

What else could be done to winnow out the one, most similar medicine? The strong desire for music had to be taken into account. With that symptom, suddenly *Tarentula hispanica*, a poisonous spider, was in first place.

But there was more. This child asked to go to the doctor. And there was nothing physically wrong with her. I looked up "Feigning illness" and there again was *Tarentula hispanica*.

I again searched the Repertory and under "Destructiveness, cunning," was a single entry: *Tarentula hispanica*. This homeopathic medicine, containing venom of this poisonous spider, is described in *Homeopathic Materia Medica* by William Boericke, M.D., in part, as follows:

"Extreme restlessness; must keep in constant motion... Sudden alternation of mood. Foxy. Destructive impulses; moral relaxation. Must constantly busy herself or walk. Sensitive to music. Ungrateful, discontented. Guided by whims. Better from music."

It seemed the perfect fit. But what about "Sudden alternation of mood"? Of course, when she wasn't running wildly, throwing fits and breaking things, she could wash dishes, fold clothes and use the vacuum. Quite a turnaround from the wild, destructive side.

She received *Tarentula hispanica* in the 200<sup>th</sup> dilution. I often start with a 200c potency.

Seven weeks later I received the following report: "She has stopped growling," said her grandmother, much to my surprise as I was unaware of that peculiar symptom. She was no longer having temper tantrums, but still could not focus when being read a story or watching a movie. She was still tearing up books, but no longer scribbling on them, and she was not tearing up papers. Within the first two weeks she stopped cutting various things with scissors. She still loved music and dancing.

For two weeks she stopped running about wildly, but that had begun again. She was no longer slapping people and not flailing her arms as she had been.

"She still screams," said her grandmother, "but not nearly as often. No longer writing on walls, but still breaking crayons. She had broken no more toys.

She was still throwing sticks and stones at dogs and kicking at them. Still very busy. Still jerking on falling asleep and during sleep. She still asked to go to the doctor when not ill.

One day her grandmother heard her say to her little sister, "Somebody needs to shoot you." She continued to tell various family members, "I hate you."

There was a new symptom: she was putting all sorts of indigestible things into her mouth and chewing on them. In the Repertory, Generals, Food, desires indigestible things: *Tarentula* is in grade 2. As this particular symptom was not there before, it could have been a proving symptom.

Though greatly improved, I decided to give her a second dose of *Tarentula*

*hispanica* in the same 200<sup>th</sup> dilution not only because she had a way to go but because the running wildly about had resumed after an initial improvement.

There were no further reports from her grandmother, but nine months later her little sister came in for treatment for seizures, and she came along.

She had been perfectly fine for months. Her former behavior had ceased entirely. No anger. No meanness. No chewing on things. No longer sneaky. Not running about wildly and no destructive behavior. "Her concentration is a hundred percent now," said her grandmother.

And all this with only two doses of *Tarentula hispanica* and there had been no other intervention either chemical (pharmacological agents) or psychotherapeutic.

Usually children with these sorts of extreme behavioral problems are treated either with a pharmacological agent to calm them down, psychotherapy with an aim to behavior modification, or a strict diet that excludes food dyes, sugary foods and any food they might be allergic to. All such treatments can be effective, but

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none can cause such profound changes as we witness with the correct homeopathic medicine.

In the experience of most of us, it is unusual to have such a complete, drastic turnaround with only two doses of medicine, but such results buttress the idea that the *simillimum* (not just a *similar*) can have utter transformative power.

*About the author: Dr. Robinson is a former editor of the "American Journal of Homeopathy" and a long time teacher. He currently teaches ongoing seminars in El Salvador and Guatemala, now in their fifth year. In November, 2008, the fourth annual Congreso Homeopatico de Centroamerica took place in San Salvador. ATH*

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