

A Case of Sciatica and Back Pain

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Abstract: A case of sciatica and back pain is presented. Based on several characteristic symptoms – jesting, sinking in the epigastrium, dreams of unsuccessful efforts, offended easily, clairvoyance, doubtfulness of recovery – *Stannum metallicum* was prescribed with good results. *Stannum* is a remedy characterized by great weakness, especially of the chest and epigastrium; it feels the pressure of expectation; the delusion that he has an incurable disease is a peculiar symptom of the remedy.

Keywords: sciatica, back pain, sinking in the epigastrium, jesting, *Stannum metallicum*.

Case Note: *This patient is a medical school student. He was referred after multiple treatments for his back and sciatica failed. He'd gone to see many health care providers - naturopaths, acupuncturists, and chiropractors. All these were resorted to after having exhausted conventional medicine. He felt that his condition was worsening despite the treatments. A friend, a fellow student, referred him to me. The student volunteered some interesting comments. His observations revealed an important symptom relating to the homeopathic medicine that worked for this patient. He said, "John is a funny guy. In fact he's too funny. Don't get me wrong; he has a great sense of humor – very dry, but often it's a bit difficult with him because he is always pulling your leg. So if you ask him a serious question, you are always getting some joke or some other funny reference. I've never met someone who has so much difficulty just talking normally – everything is a joke to John."*

The patient presented in a very serious manner and asked at the beginning if he could lie down during the intake. He spent the bulk of the intake lying down. He also told me the bulk of his days at school were spent sitting down at the back of the class. He couldn't sit for very long as it would exacerbate his back and sciatic pain. His x-ray showed some disk bulging, but not severe degeneration. His delivery was rapid and he launched quickly into his story.

Male: 33 years-old

Friday, September 15, 2000

CC: Back pain & Sciatica

Subjective: "My major complaints are my back pain,

which I have had now for two-and-one-half years. In my second year of school I helped someone move, and I've had neuralgia down my leg since then. I've had a lot of treatments, but it hasn't improved; only gotten worse. I have a few disks that are bulging out. Gradually, since that happened, it's become a chronic back problem."

His family history revealed that his mother had a fused spine, and his father had major back problems.

"I think of it as a partly genetic thing – taking on the issues of my parents. Earlier, lifting and repetitive strain used to hurt me, and it has caught up with me now. It didn't start out as pain, just as neuralgia from my knee downward. Now I have back pain every day. The nerve pain is still there as well. (Left-sided neuralgia with paresthesia, like electricity running through the legs.) It throbs intermittently. It doesn't really hurt, but is constant and really uncomfortable. It is just as uncomfortable as having your legs crawling with insects, though it doesn't actually feel like that. Distraction and movement helps. Staying still makes it worse and morning is the worst time for the neuralgia. The pain in my back is more achy and nonspecific, not throbbing – pain that is always there in the lumbar area. Nothing helps except lying down on my back and complete rest. For school, I have to study lying down.

"I thought I'd have to leave school; it really scared me, but not so much now. It is really limiting because anything the old me could do I can't do now. It's like starting a new life. Playing ping pong hurts. I can swim, but sitting for even an hour can increase the nerve thing down my leg, and then I get back pain the next day. I usually don't sit for more than an hour.

"Mental emotional symptoms don't bother me anymore now. There's nothing I can do about it. I've just

learned to live with it. I went through some big depressions for a long time. I went from being completely normal to this constant back pain. I originally denied the pain; I was fighting with my back, saying, 'Don't do that now.' I can feel my anxiety around it now. During exams, the pain was so intense that it was hard to think.

"Some days, it won't bother me much and I can forget I have it if I'm lying down a lot, or if I go swimming or biking. It has really changed my life. I'm going to be an associate at someone's office and I haven't told him about it. It is a physically limiting factor. If I tried to work every day twelve hours a day, I'd have to get surgery or pain medicines. My back is really sensitive – even sitting will hurt it; so I have to be careful. I have to think about how I can do things differently. When I'm anxious about things, I can feel that I'm holding stress and tension.

"I become really impatient waiting in a car. I don't like being stuck in places, especially cars, which never bothered me before. It has definitely been a pretty large shift, since it has happened. I have to move, but I can't lift. It's like a nightmare because I've become more dependent on other people. I'm okay with it, but it was nice to have more freedom. Sometimes, instead of being excited about new things like moving and starting a practice, this back thing is like a cloud that hangs over everything. It will affect how quickly I can work, how efficient I am. It is always hanging over me.

"For about three or four months, I have had this lump in my throat that I can't swallow. There is something wrong with the swallowing mechanism. I was having some problem with my lower esophagus, like heartburn. If I ate a lot and then lay down, I would get heartburn; I could feel it coming up about half way to where that lump was in my throat. The heartburn is rare; it is more a lump sensation and incomplete swallowing. The lump isn't painful, but if I swallow, it just feels like it comes back. It is strange but not unpleasant. I have had some chiropractic work done, which has helped somewhat, but it's still there. Using an inversion machine, I started hanging upside down. I overstretched the ligaments of my knees, hips, and back, and now all my joints are completely lax. Once my knee even dislocated. Ever since then, I've had mild arthritis symptoms. My hips, joints, knees, and back got a lot worse for about three months after that. I still have that overstretched feeling.

"My eyes get sore – eye strain that I've never had before. The muscles around the socket ache and become sore. It doesn't affect my vision, but when I've been reading for half an hour, I begin to notice it. I have a little arthritis in my finger, the same kind of nondescript achiness. I overused them doing massage seven or eight years ago. The joints started getting inflamed; so I had to stop. I also can't play guitar anymore be-

cause of it.

"Here is an issue that is normal to me, but not to others, because I'm a twin. When I was a child, I always needed my twin brother because I was shy. There was a total identification with other. In facing new situations, we always had each other, a kind of co-dependence. We used each other for support. We resented each other, but we were scared of being away from each other. I still have that dependent need to identify with someone else. I usually need one other dependent person in my life. In both my previous relationships, I've transferred the dependency I had with my brother onto them. That dependency comes out, in child-like ways.

"I overworked at school. I can't do anything less than what I'm capable of doing, especially if it affects what I choose to do. I can't do a sloppy or careless job. I studied way too much. I'm always curious to know how things work. I'm almost ridiculously detail-oriented. I have to know something completely – it's like an obsession. If I was studying for something, I did it because it was useful and it made me a better person, but I also didn't enjoy the pressure on myself. I graduated with highest academic honors. I didn't do it for the recognition; I did it because there was no other way I would have done it, even without grades. If someone asks me to do something, I'll do as thorough and complete a job as I can. I take the responsibility seriously, but I hate being serious about things. There are people who are in charge and who take themselves seriously and I don't like that seriousness. The world in general is way too serious. I'm not really serious in my interactions with people. I joke around. If I'm in situations where I can't express myself, I don't like it. In the past, my brother and I were goofy together to disperse the stress and tension from family life. We developed a sense of humor that totally deflects that anger. We used humor as a way of deflecting what was coming. We would totally change the mood. My dad had a rage that really frightened us.

"As long as I can remember, I've had a weak feeling (points to epigastrium), like getting hit in the stomach. It feels like you just heard some really bad news. It is a sinking, physically uncomfortable feeling, but not painful. It is just a feeling of weakness, a draining there. I've had it throughout my childhood and teens. As a child and teenager I was scared of a lot of things. I can feel the weakness there. With it, I also experience something that is like a weak feeling in my legs, like if you hear bad news. With that sensation is a feeling of powerlessness, like I'm all alone, and there is no one to help me. That feeling of weakness, both physically and emotionally, feels really vulnerable and powerless. It has become a part of me. I've had this weakness, powerlessness, and vulnerability in the face of my stepfather's rage. He used to yell at me a lot. If

he was yelling at you, you just had to stay there. That anger would really terrify me. I would lose any sense of myself; I couldn't think for myself. I'd forget who I was. I couldn't say anything. I would dissociate completely from who I was. Anything I would say I would totally devalue. It was such a profound insecurity that I didn't trust my thoughts. I was washed with doubt that I had any identity. If I expressed it, I would be totally crushed by his anger. That totally shattered me. That feeling was with me most of my life, although not so much now. When I feel it now, it doesn't bother me. In the past when that state would come, I did a lot of meditation. I've done about 7 or 8 of these 10 day meditation retreats. The first time I went, I experienced a black sense of losing myself and fear came over me. I thought I was going to go mad. It was physically moving me around. I felt like my body was twisting around. I could feel this stuff coming out of me, this whole cloud of stuff rising out of me. It would pull me in if I identified with it. If I put myself in it, it was like a garment I could put on. After that, I felt a lot of that energy leave me. Most of it went away, but there's still a little left.

"Spiritual, metaphysical and psychic stuff has always been interesting to me. It is a major focus in life. I can feel others' energy. If someone is upset, it affects me because I take it on. Even if someone is hiding it, if they're going through some heavy stuff, I'll pick it up. You can't hide something from me because the more you try to hide something, the more I'll see it.

"I'm very sensitive to criticism and I avoid conflict at all costs. What I learned about conflict, I learned from my father, a raging person who, if you stood up to him, would crush you. If someone challenges me in an angry way, I can't even think. I don't defend myself. I kind of lose it. If that were to happen now, I'd really feel it on the inside. I'd not get angry and yell at them, even if they were chewing me out. I'd have a hard time dealing with it or I'd think of things later. Even in school, I didn't speak up because of a fear of persecution. I don't like to have people's attention on me; it makes me uncomfortable. If I'm talking to someone, I don't share my opinions because there is a fear of persecution, that people will judge or criticize me. It's a big fear. Even if they don't say anything to me, I avoid saying things or expressing my opinion for fear of being judged or criticized. If I'm doing a presentation, I agonize over it, trying to know every detail. If I say it aloud, I'm vulnerable to being criticized. I have to be totally prepared. For my thesis presentation, I memorized everything I had to say. I practiced it 15-20 times. I'm afraid of wasting people's time. I assume that other people will laugh and say, 'What are you doing wasting my time?', like my father would. It does affect the way I prepare things. I stay in the back, in the corner and never say anything.

"I had repetitive dreams after engineering school. That was one of the toughest degree programs – I hated it. I never went to class and got all my notes from a friend. We didn't go because we were in the same class, and we were embarrassed about being in the same class. It was so much work – brain-teasing, nightmarish stuff. I had to know it so well just to get fifty percent. With all this stress about exams, I had repetitive dreams that I would have an exam the next day that I would not be prepared for and I was going to fail. I definitely didn't push myself in engineering, but I studied hard. The total compulsion to learn everything in such detail and so thoroughly came from engineering school.

"I've had dreams of slices of the future. I've been to these workshops about career change workshops, and in the class I decided to come here. I had a dream about sitting at a table, surrounded by people, knowing what I was going to do with myself, and feeling totally elated, totally awesome. I've had similar dreams like that, of the future. I've had some bad ones. Once before asking someone out, I dreamed that she'd turn me down. When I called, she did exactly like in the dream. Usually before a new relationship, I dream about it. Sometimes, with significant events in my life, I've known they are coming. I'd be happy beforehand.

"I've had lots of flying dreams. I couldn't get much height. In my childhood, I'd have these dreams where I was running and my feet would slip, and I couldn't run. I had to grab onto the grass and pull myself along. I also have dreams of being in a car that I can't stop. I can never reach the brake or it doesn't work. I have dreams where I don't have total control. In the more interesting dreams of flying, I can actually control them. In the dreams, I'd be flying around a house and it took a lot of concentration. My body was big and horizontal, and it took a lot to orient it to flying.

"I'm not afraid of dying at all. I'm more afraid of living to an old age. I'm not afraid of death because I know what is beyond. I think death is the greatest adventure we go through. If I could sacrifice myself to save someone else, I'd do it in a second. Living to an old age and dealing with my degenerative spine and joints is much more terrifying. Even as a young child, I knew I'd be the first one to die. If someone told me now I'd live to be 80, I'd be depressed about it. When my hair started falling out, I got so anxious. If there is anything that is changing and I don't have control of it, I get so totally anxious. The anxiety moved to my head; wind on my scalp would actually hurt my scalp. If I'm anxious about something, that area will become hypersensitive. It happened with my back and the paresthesias. I learned to keep an awareness of these parts during meditation. But with my leg thing, I'd keep my awareness on it all the time, and I felt it all the time, which totally made it worse. I've seen all these alterna-

tive healers and clairvoyants. I used them wrong – I used them with that energy of ‘fix me!’ Desperate energy. Part of my problem was worrying so much about my physical condition and wanting someone to fix it.”

Generalities

“I tend to be chilly. I can’t get too hot. Even when it is hot, I like it. My feet are always cold to others. If I touch my girlfriend, she says my feet are cold. I can walk around in the winter and my feet are cold, but it doesn’t bother me. I don’t like it if my trunk is cold. I’m definitely a cold person.

“I like salty tastes more, or sweet. I often crave sweet things. I have to have something sweet during the day. I don’t get thirsty very often, probably a 4-5 or 10.”

No perspiration. “I used to go running all the time and sweat heavily, but don’t perspire now.”

Sensitivities?

“I’m really sensitive physically to touch; I always have been. I’ve never cared how things look, but if my clothes or my bed aren’t comfortable, or if I have pain, I don’t like it. I’m sensitive to touch mostly. I am more concerned about being physically comfortable. I could live in a complete ransacked mess visually; I don’t care. Of all the senses, I notice my bodily discomfort the most. When I notice pain or discomfort, I want to change that right away. My physical comfort is prominent. The pain of a broken leg is no problem; I worry more about pain that will be there forever. I’m not a complainer. I also have acute hearing.”

“I always mumble, don’t enunciate very well. If I get emotional or something, I’ll feel a wave of energy, coming up, then I’ll feel a block in my throat – the choked-up feeling. If I yell, my voice will crack and then be really sore the next day. My throat has a very low tolerance for heavy activity.

“I have a fear of being in front of others, being persecuted or attacked, although it has never happened. I also fear being in a position where people are judging me. I have a fear of being totally disabled. I also used to have the fear of what I look like with the hair loss in terms of judgment from other people. I was suicidal in my twenties when that happened. All I wanted to do for months was kill myself. I was planning it for months. I thought my life was over. They were like fantasies; I would never have done it. I’d have wanted to go to a big city, like New York where you’d be swallowed up, you’d disappear. I thought about it all day for months. I climbed out of that hole, though it was an insecurity at a young age.”

Analysis: Given the main symptoms in the case: jesting, sensation of blows and sinking in the epigastrium, sore throat from yelling, the repeated dreams of unsuccessful

efforts, offended easily, clairvoyance, and his doubtfulness of recovery, the prescription could be *Stannum*.

Plan: *Stannum* 200C, two doses, 24 hours apart (Patient took the first dose on 9/15/2000).

Stannum 30C (to hold onto for acutes).

Saturday, January 27, 2001

“My back is a lot better. It does act up when I sit for a long time or have to do some manual labor for a couple of hours. At those times the symptoms are the same as before and include aching pain in the back and neuralgia in the left foot area. It has been consistently better and more manageable since I took the remedy. There have even been days when I forget that my back is messed up and I feel almost normal. We’ll see what happens as my life gets a little busier and I have to sit more. I’ve had no more dreams involving my back.”

Eyes? No more real problems. “I experience minor soreness only after hours of reading.”

Arthritis? “It still acts up in the fingers and the knees, but only when I really overdo it. My fingers still act up with the usual stresses; so no real change there. My hip joints still click and pop like they did before, with some minor pains, but not as much.”

Weakness in epigastrium? “I don’t feel it anymore. There is a new kind of sensation there – it doesn’t feel weak any longer. The nature of the energy there has definitely changed. There is a new energy at that spot which is uncomfortable when I put my awareness there – an intense energy. It feels like a vibrating ‘cloud’ of energy, which feels penetrating sometimes, and a little uncomfortable for that reason. But that old sinking feeling that I described to you isn’t there anymore.”

Sensitivity to criticism? “Some students said stupid things to me and I felt bad for a little bit, but it doesn’t bother me like before. So I would have to say that it has improved. I am not as affected by it and, if I am, it goes away quickly because I know it’s a waste of time to get upset over it.”

Sensitivity to cold? “Strange as it may seem, in this cold climate I am doing OK. I have adapted nicely. I just dress warmly and don’t think about it too much.”

Dreams? “I have not been really keeping track of them, but I have had a few notable ones. I did have a quite lucid-type dream a few weeks ago that my parents died and I started to react (in the expected horror-type shock response), but I knew that it wasn’t real.”

How are you mentally and emotionally? “Generally I am very even emotionally. If I have a strong emotion come up, I know that it isn’t worth trying to change in any way, and I can just sit in it until it fades away. I will often catch myself letting go of the need to take such emotions so seriously, and letting go of the drama involved. I’m not so much dependent on other people to feel good about myself in any way. I don’t really

care so much what people think of me and don't try to get people to like me. That's a nice change because I feel much more freedom to just be myself. There have been some pangs of the old loneliness that I used to feel at times, but I don't mind it so much. I don't worry about life and making money and stuff, even though I should. I'm very broke and going deeper all the time, but I'm happy to have an office and to be seeing patients. I know that I'll be doing well within six months. I do still get the usual frustration when things don't go smoothly for me. I can get angry and frustrated with the uncooperative and mundane things in day-to-day life (like missing the bus or forgetting something at home), but not as badly as before though. In general, life is good. I still don't like being bald, and when people bring it up, my scalp hurts from being self-conscious about it. If I had to say what my biggest 'problem' was, it would be my tendency to worry about being physically uncomfortable – I mean my back. When I think about it and worry about it, I know that I'm tightening up my back and I can feel myself tightening up inside (mentally and physically). I recognize this pattern, but when I'm stressed, it takes me over for awhile."

Assessment: It looks like a good response. The chief complaint, back pain, is markedly better along with the sensitivity to criticism and the weakness in the epigastrium. There are various other improvements more minor in nature which also suggest a good reaction.

Thursday, February 08, 2001

"I pinched a nerve in my back about a week ago. It has been hard to sleep. My back in general is better. The nerve thing is pretty bad, but my back pain is pretty mild. I noticed when my nerve is acting up, my old pattern comes up again too. When my back is okay, my mental-emotional state is calmer too. When my back acts up, I can't sleep, I can't relax and I avoid sitting. I have stress and tension. If I have to do something physical, I hate doing it; I get angry. Everything I do makes it worse, and I feel I have to have no responsibility to do stuff. My whole mood changes. It is quite a shift. There is a strong tie-in when I'm physically uncomfortable; I don't suffer with it well. Some can handle so much pain and suffering; they can tolerate well beyond what I can. I'm a wimp. The nerve pain came on after exertion, after having to move. It doesn't really consume me. I don't show any outward changes in behavior; I don't show that I'm in a bad mood."

Baseline: "The percentage of back improvement is about 70-80%. It is nice and manageable. It will still flare up just a tiny bit if I do things I knew I shouldn't.

"Percentage of leg pain improvement is 70-80%. Even if it is acting up a little, it doesn't bother me as much. My mental-emotional reaction is not as strong

either –I don't really care about it as much."

Dreams? "I had another one where I was flying around last night. It was carefully controlled flying. I could only fly upward; for instance, flying up a set of stairs. Throughout the week, because of the nerve sensation, it felt like my leg was being electrocuted. It wakes me up. I'll wake up for an hour, then when I go back to sleep, I feel like I'm not sleeping because my physical restlessness is affecting my dreams.

"Arthritis is about 20% better. It has all been pretty manageable and hasn't flared up at all. It's definitely better. My hand used to flare up with writing.

"Sensitivity to reprimands is definitely better by at least 50%."

Say more? "I don't really care so much what people think of me and don't try like I used to to get people to like me. That's a nice change because I feel much more freedom to just be myself. I'm just not so worried about people liking me. On the inside, I'm not acting any different; not really an issue any more. It will flare up occasionally, but I just kind of laugh at it.

"I think the medicine helped my relationship with my twin brother. Sometimes we don't feel like talking to each other. After the second dose, we were talking more.

"I don't notice any change in joking/seriousness. I have fun with patients, but I'm more interested in getting the job done than getting them to like me. I think the joking is tied to my getting people to like me. I do notice less of my joking in my professional life.

"I think my feeling that my back pain would never really heal has changed. I don't have the apathetic feeling about the future, but I would be very surprised if it went away completely. My justification for worrying about it is the condition of the disks. The x-rays don't show much pathology. Maybe it's all just my delusion, but there is physical pathology and, given my symptoms and the duration of this condition, I would imagine it must get worse. I have anxiety that things will get worse. That is my operating mode, but I don't have as strong a reaction about it being a problem in the future.

"My throat still chokes up, but the character of it has changed a little. It feels like the bottle-neck may not be so tight. It is a subtle change."

Ever had any lung problems? "I've had pneumonia quite a few times. I was the only one in my family who got it; my twin brother never did. I got it about three or four times before adolescence, a few times in my teens, and the last time about ten years ago, after being in a smoke-filled room."

Assessment: The patient had good changes in most if not all symptoms. Of course, most crucial were the changes to the back, leg, and sinking in the stomach. It is also noteworthy that the patient noticed shifting

in his throat, sensitivity to mistreatment, sensitivity to pain, and very importantly, he mentioned that the lock-jaw incident resolved very quickly after a repeat of the prescription. It was a good result. In addition, between this follow-up and the last he had a bout of TMJ. He could hardly open his jaw. I told him to take a few doses of 200C of *Stannum*. He said the TMJ resolved within a few days. At this visit he had some relapse of leg pain; so I recommended a dose of *Stannum* 200C, or 1M if the 200 didn't help enough.

Thursday, February 14, 2002

Brief Phone follow-up

"A couple months ago, I took *Stannum* 1M. Things have been better since. I'm better in general. The nerve thing is still there, but mild; it flares up every now and then. My back pain is a lot better. I can work most of the day without my back hurting much. I was used to it for so long; it surprised me that I could work all day without it hurting. I'm still cautious about it, I still don't like sitting for too long. I've sat for four or five hours at a time at work, because I'm not worrying about it. If sitting somewhere, or doing something I don't enjoy, with my mind going to the idea of it, I'll start stressing about it. Not that it will get worse. I have this idea that there is a limit to how much time I can sit without it getting worse. I begin to think that the longer I sit, the worse it will get. This is a reaction from how it used to be, an old habit; it is less and less true. I can sit in the car driving for hours and I'm okay. If I'm sitting in a chair, and it is uncomfortable and I lean to the side, sometimes I'll get numbness and tingling down my legs.

"The hollowness in my stomach is all gone; that's the biggest thing I've noticed. At one point, I was having the beginnings of GERD, but that is gone. It was there when you took the case, but it's gone now."

Tracking the Changes

"Percentage of back improvement is now about 80-85%.

"Percentage of leg pain improvement is now about 85% better or more.

"I haven't noticed arthritis so much. It is now about 70% better.

"Regarding sensitivity to reprimands, I'm not in that situation so I don't know, but probably about the same as last year.

"With regard to my feeling that the back pain would never heal, I still realize that I have to be careful. I couldn't imagine it being normal again. I realize I have to be cautious and reasonable with what I do with it. I don't lift anything heavy and I avoid stressing my back out because it is reasonable to be that way. I haven't had any major flare-ups except for months before the *Stannum* 1M. Once I took it, it has been much better.

I had dreams where my back was normal and I was jumping around. I've also had dreams where I had to be cautious with my back. I had dreams a few nights ago where I was flying around with great skill, but I had to be careful coming down for my back. If I am going to jump off a porch, I have to do it carefully."

Dreams changed since before medicine? "I've had some fun dreams where I had super flying abilities, unlimited flying abilities, where I could go wherever I wanted with great control. These are better than ones I had before; in these I have super powers. Not every time though; in one last night I was being chased. I could barely run. They were shooting at me. They were laughing at me; I had no super powers and I had to run. My super powers forsook me; I was left a normal slow runner in my dreams. I can't say I notice a change in my dreams. I don't remember what they were before the medicine.

"My throat is a lot better."

Conclusion: This is the only case of *Stannum metallicum* I've had. I'm a long time student of Massimo Mangialavori. He did a whole week on the differential of what he calls the "Alchemical metals" and some of their salts. He references the knowledge of the alchemists in understanding each of seven metals: *Aurum*, *Mercury*, *Plumbum*, *Stannum*, *Cuprum*, *Ferrum*, and *Argentum*. The seven metals were associated with seven planets and their archetypes. *Stannum* was associated with Jupiter.

Some ideas of Massimo Mangialavori's ideas about Stannum:

Fundamental weakness (weakness, sinking, etc.) that the patient is trying to overcome or minimize – often the patient is in a struggle to deny or overcome his weakness.

Often feeling great pressure or expectations on themselves – sometimes this comes from the family of origin. When decompensated, they can feel crushed by their inability to perform.

Stannum's relation to Jupiter is related to the word Jovial. A positive side to Jupiter is an ability to detach and see the humorous side of things.

Stannum metallicum the metal: The metal is soft and malleable, yet it resists corrosion. It has mostly been alloyed with other metals or used to plate other metals. This lends it the ability to resist oxidation. Due to crystals inherent to its makeup, a bar of tin being bent will make a strange crackling sound known as a "tin cry."

Stannum in homeopathy: *Stannum* appears to have an affinity for the lungs, nervous system and the physical structure of the body. Many very serious diseases have been cured with this remedy. In Massimo's review, he

cited two of his cases, one of a man in a wheel chair with a demyelinating disease (who was able to walk after several months of treatment with *Stannum*). The other was an arthritis case. Hahnemann's proving in *Materia Medica Pura* gives many characteristic symptoms. There are many symptoms of weakness throughout the proving, with special emphasis on the chest and epigastrium, though there is general weakness. There is also weakness of speaking and the throat.

There is an important symptom listed for *Stannum* – delusion he has an incurable disease. I believe this is an important self concept that is reflected in this case. It may also be important in general for this remedy. I only saw this one patient; so it needs to be confirmed by other cases. In this patient, he was always a bit skeptical. He never seemed quite able to consider the possibility that his disease might be curable, even despite

significant improvements. He was always expecting that eventually it would come back.

In general, *Stannum* is not a small remedy; there are many important symptoms to help us recognize it in clinical practice. Hopefully this case will help to underline some aspects of this important medicine.

About the author: Tim Shannon, ND, is in private practice in Portland, Oregon. Dr. Shannon specializes in the treatment of mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders. Typical issues treated are: ADHD, OCD, PMS, Autistic Spectrum, Depression, Anxiety, Eating disorders, PTSD, Self-harm, Bi-polar states, and PMS. Dr. Shannon is adjunct faculty at the National College of Natural Medicine and lectures to the local community on a variety of mental health complaints. He treats patients in person, by phone, and with Skype (Videoconferencing). A.F.H.

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- Hand potentized ø through 30C or X
- 200C - CM on our Potentizer
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