

# How I Can Solve my Problem?

35yr old lady born in a conservative marwadi family was referred for vaginismus by a gynaecologist for psychotherapy. She resides with her businessman husband, her 11yr old son, MIL, FIL and UIL. She works for a NGO and her work involves women related problems mainly abuse in women both domestic and sexual..

As a child she was quite obstinate and pampered, being the only girl in the family and only child to her parents. She was overprotected at the same time given some autonomy. She would fear dark and death. She was interested in studies and not the routine household work which her mother would ask her to do. This resulted in conflicts at home. She had to fight against all the odds to pursue her studies. She took up arts as she wanted to study the human mind. She was forced to marry when she was 18yr, but due to her determination, she convinced her husband and completed her graduation. Whilst she was studying she had to bear lot of difficulties at her in-laws as people would constantly question her about her fertility.

## *Can you describe yourself?*

I am confident, determined and dominating. I also get very angry if people don't do things which I want them to do. If my son doesn't do what I ask him to, I get wild, even hit him, which I regret later. I am very attached to my son, very anxious even if he comes 5 mins late or if he gets sick and same is for my husband. I fear to lose them. What people talk of me is very different to what I really am. People think I am a very positive and a strong person who can solve problems and is very helpful but I can't solve my own problem. You know

it's my ideal self.

## *So tell me about your real-self?*

I am confident, I do things my way but I feel weak, due to my anxiety. I can't solve my problem. I feel bad about my sexuality.

## *Can you talk more about your sexual life?*

I am very happy and contented with my husband. We had a normal sexual life after marriage. But since 5yrs I just go in spasm at the time of sex. I feel weak as I cannot satisfy my husband and my anxiety goes up. We have tried all different ways but of no use. I have tried to find the cause BUT.....(pause) .....a long pause as if she wanted to say something but didn't. BUT can't analyse it. I share a loving relationship...trust me I am not hiding anything. (pause)  
I am truly content with him. Since 5yrs he feels that I am not showing affection towards him, probably I am occupied with work and my son.

## *Can you describe your husband as a person?*

He is the best husband, excellent father ...he is understanding, mature, contented and successful. The session was ended and she was given SL and she was asked to refrain from sex till I allow her.

The three stage model in relationship counseling was followed-

### Stage one-Exploration

### Stage two-Understanding

### Stage three-Action

Next few sessions were of exploration; data was also collected from significant others. Therapeutic alliance with the client was built up with confidentiality maintained.

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In these sessions extra data which was gathered from significant others in her life was that she had changed drastically in last five years and they all blamed it to her working in this new NGO. Husband said that she had stopped showing affection towards him. But husband had no objection to her working as she enjoyed her work.

In this stage mainly *listening* and *non-judgemental empathetic* approach was used.

Very little of direct questioning was done.

### **Stage of understanding**

In this stage examination of the presenting problem was done.

One must try to understand from where this problem comes. Understanding must always start from childhood.

*Can you tell me what you understood about sex as a child?*

As I came from a conservative family I was not allowed to talk to boys and even look at the private parts. She also talked about overhearing talks from her aunts as to how painful sexual experience is.

Some of the myths she harboured then, were ..

- men are happy only if they have a good sexual life.
- don't show affection to a man, he will expect sex.
- having sex means having intercourse.

It was clear from the above myths she carried as to why she had started showing less affection towards her husband and why during the initial interview she told me that 'I am not hiding anything' (but they had a normal relation few years earlier).

She also felt weak as she believed that she couldn't keep her man happy as happiness meant sex.

Basic knowledge about intercourse was given and was helped to eliminate some of her fears and feelings related to it. Now we decided to go to the next phase and she was advised now not to refrain from sex but just to be intimate with her husband without intercourse. To this

advice she got very anxious and after a lot of hesitation she took an appointment for the next day as she said she wanted to tell me the cause of her problem.

The next day she was not comfortable, and first thing what she said was that nobody at her end was aware about this appointment. She requested me that what we talk should not be discussed with her husband.

Five years back when she was alone in the house her uncle-in-law tried to rape her. (See, my Q has been answered)

This had a great impact on her mind after which all her complaints like going into spasm, not showing affection towards her husband had started. She couldn't talk about this to anybody. When her husband would approach her she would get images about the abuse and hence she was going into spasm. After which she had decided to work for women who have been abused sexually. She was very sensitive towards them as she had gone through the same phase in her life.

Prescribed –*Causticum 1M* (1 dose)

Symptoms considered for prescription.

- £ Ailments after being raped
- £ Anxiety family about
- £ Determination
- £ Dominating
- £ Anger violent
- £ Revolting
- £ Sensitive to the suffering of others

### **Stage of action**

- 1) She was given vaginal exercises.
- 2) Her myths were cleared with her husband's assistance.
- 3) Self-talk assignment –to talk to oneself and question- was I at fault? ( for making her realize that she was not at fault, thus restoring her self-esteem)
- 4) Exaggerated role taking-*what if it happens?*  
What if your husband knows about it. This was discussed and she was encouraged to reveal it to her husband. Husband was very much angry at the uncle and decided to shift him to Surat. Now the patient was

comfortable with her husband and also at home.

5) Empty chair technique- there the patient was made to sit on one chair and a chair was kept opposite to it. Now the patient is asked to imagine as if her uncle-in-law was sitting in her chair and she was supposed to express her emotions. She expressed anger and disgust towards the chair.

5) Relaxation technique was taught to her where one relaxes the whole body ( muscular relaxation) one by one starting from the head going to the toes. This would relax her mentally. After she was comfortable with it she was advised to do it before she had an intercourse.

6) Systematic desensitization- this is mainly used for avoidance behaviour. It was introduced as she would

get images about the abuse when her husband would approach her which resulted into spasm. This helped her to get rid of the image. After which she managed to have an intercourse with her husband. This condition has not completely cured as sometimes she still goes into spasm, though she is living happily with her husband now and she is also off therapy.

7) *Causticum* came to my rescue after I had found the ailments from. After *Causticum* her anxiety went down tremendously hence therapy for anxiety was not done. *Causticum IM* was repeated every 15days and the potency was stepped up to 10M while she was doing systematic desensitization.



## The Suspicious One

A lean, thin, emaciated Maharashtrian female of 38 yrs came to my clinic with her husband. Initially when her husband was narrating her symptoms she was just staring at me with an expressionless face.

I asked her what the problem is. (This one question broke the dam and started a non stop narrative)

She said "I hear my neighbors, my family members all speak bad about me". I feel everybody laughs at me and feel I am not good and work like a maid servant. I always have work on my mind so I don't eat, don't sleep till work is over. Whenever I see my friends and feel that they are chatting, I feel I must go, but as soon as I go they stop speaking and start laughing, so I am sure they speak bad about me. (Tears in her eyes). But I have the power, God is with me, so although I am weak its influence makes me strong.

Doctor: How is your relation with your family members?

Pt: My husband is too nice and I know that he is not happy as I don't eat, don't take care of myself. My FIL also takes care of me. He keeps taking me to different doctors so I can become fine but nothing is helping.

Doctor: Since when have you started feeling this way?

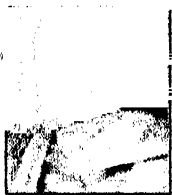
Pt: Since 5-6 months after we had a function at our place.

Doctor: What function?

Pt: My sister in law's marriage.

Doctor: What happened during that marriage?

Pt: Everybody in the family would get ready and enjoy the functions. The function was in my house so I had lots of work to do, I was always busy with work so everybody looked nice but I was busy, didn't get ready. My sister-in-law who got ready and for whom I had done everything started laughing and said that bhabhi you look like our servant. I felt so bad, so much I was doing for her which she didn't appreciate, but rather humiliated me in front of so many guests. I really felt bad. Now I don't care for her and when she comes to my place I don't speak properly with her. Now all has



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ended and I feel bad and wish I can humiliate her and make her feel bad. I wouldn't allow her in my house but I can't do it because of my husband as he wouldn't like it.

Doctor, do something, I have taken psychiatric medicine but I feel drowsy and sleepy whole day. When I get up, I hear someone speaking. I am so tired of people (And she cried).

**PHYSICAL MAKEUP**

Lean, dark, tall

**THERMAL:** Hot. Headache < Sun.

**TONGUE:** Dry, pointed with dark brown patches.

She was on antidepressant and tranquilizers due to which the whole day she would sleep and would wake only to have bath and food.

**RUBRICS SELECTED**

- RM 1110 Loquacious
- RM 0296 Delusion, imaginations, voices, hears
- RM 0294 Delusion, imaginations, superhuman control is under
- RM 0284 Delusion, imagination ugly is
- RM 1058 Ailments from mortification, humiliation
- RM 1077 Malicious
- RM 1047 Fear humiliated of being
- RM 1019 Weeping
- RM 0714 Pain head < sun exposed
- RM 0110 Suspicious

**REMEDIES ON REPERTORISATION**

*Lach 15/8, Lyco 14/6, Bell 13/7, Acon 12/6, Bry 12/6, Stram 12/6, Sulp 12/6, Ars 11/6, Cham 11/6, Phos 10/6, Verat 10/6, Puls 10/5.*

**FOLLOW-UP**

| DATE     | COMPLAINT  | Rx               |
|----------|--|------------------|
| 4/11/04  | Very upset   | Staph 1M- 1 dose |
| 11/11/04 | Appetite good. Cooked morning food. Mood still occasionally relapses.  | Lach 1M-1        |
| 18/11/04 | She has started going out, sits with her friends and feels fresh. Husband said she has become less irritable and now feels good and is happy. She asked her sister in law to come home as she had not called them for dinner after marriage which is a custome, she also gave gift to her. | SL               |
| 26/11/04 | "I want to do job, madam can I resume my job?"<br>Weight gain 2 kg<br>Sleeps only at night, throughout the day does all the household work.  | SL               |
| 3/12/04  | I think I should stop the treatment as I am feeling very energetic, and great. Thanks a lot. I think all the things which I said were wrong and were bad on my side, it is me who took everything wrongly and negatively, I didn't know a medicine can change a person's mind.             | SL               |

**The older we get, the fewer things seem worth waiting in line for.  
Some people try to turn back their odometers. Not me,  
I want people to know "why" I look this way.  
I've traveled a long way and some of the roads weren't paved.**