



A HOLE IN THE CHEST

Covid-19 requires an answer from the heart

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SUMMARY: With the example of a man who feels the loss of his soul during long covid, it becomes clear how a SARS-CoV-2 infection can exacerbate latent, unsolved problems at the physical, emotional and spiritual levels, bringing them to the surface and thereby opening up a unique evolutionary opportunity for deep healing. Based on his own experience of the illness, the author describes which healing themes are important from a homeopathic point of view.

KEYWORDS: chakra, coronavirus, Covid-19, *Crataegus*, depression, evolution, isolation, life force, long covid, loss of soul, shadows, trauma, weakness





The heart chakra is portrayed as a twelve-petalled lotus flower, with each petal representing the essential qualities of this centre: love; harmony; empathy; understanding; purity; clarity; compassion; unity; forgiveness; kindness; peace and bliss

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LONG COVID

Fatally ill: It was 10.30 in the evening and my dinner guests had just left. I felt a stabbing pain in my left lung. Overcome by the pain I lay down and found myself struggling to breathe. I was so weak I could hardly lift my head off the pillow. I became icy cold with copious sweat and a rapid heartbeat. Anxiety rose up from the pit of my stomach. Is this it, am I dying? After a few doses of *Arsenicum album* I finally slept that night. I woke 12 hours later, very relieved that I'd survived the night but still struggling to breathe. I felt that there was a huge weight on my chest... and so weak. The hours turned into days, more remedies, small improvements. I had no appetite, no taste or smell, had sharp muscle pains and was just so weak. By the end of week three I felt mostly better but now really curious. What had happened to me? I'd had pneumonia before, and this felt somewhat similar. But lung tests came up negative. This was something new, something different. Over the following months I heard this story over and over again from patients and I began hearing about a novel coronavirus from China and this new disease that it caused – Covid-19.

Covid-19 spread fear and shock: The media became filled with fear, countries were locked down and people's freedoms taken away. Laws were passed to ensure that people isolated from each other, stayed inside and became increasingly fearful that any chance encounter with another person could cause their demise. Homeopaths everywhere searched for the genus epidemicus, arguing with each other why one remedy should be used instead of another. I found that almost all my patients responded well to a handful of familiar remedies, such as *Arsenicum album*, *Bryonia*, *China*, *Carbo vegetabilis*, *Gelsemium*, *Antimonium tartaricum* and *Lau-rocerasus*. Even though I had no genus epidemicus I was confident of being able to treat this new disease.

CASE: Colm*, my first long covid patient, 30 years old

* Name changed for anonymity

Six months after my acute episode I had a return visit from Colm, one of the first patients I had treated successfully for the acute symptoms of Covid-19. He was thirty years old, a serious triathlon competitor, and now he just shuffled into my practice room like an old, infirm man. He struggled to catch his breath and was exhausted by the 30 metre walk from the car park. He told me that "the heart had gone" out of his life. The journey we took together over the following six months was hugely instructive for me and was an inspiration for this article, a journey of deep healing. Colm told of his extreme exhaustion, his total lack of energy; he was sleeping for 15/16 hours a day; his blood pressure was dangerously high (220 / 135); he struggled to catch his breath,

needing inhalers frequently. Normally full of enthusiasm and brimming with optimism, he was now anxious, despondent, and resigned to the fact that he might not recover from his symptoms.

His symptoms responded slowly to frequent doses of *Tuberculinum bovinum*, *Phosphoric acidum* and *Crataegus* but he still felt overwhelmed. He felt that he was "fighting against the world"; "full of dread"; "crippled with anxiety and panic." Clearly, something more was needed.

THE HEART CHAKRA

I have long found inspiration for both my personal and professional work in the Indian Tantric system of the chakras (Sanskrit = wheel/vortex of energy). The ancient Tantrikas had a deep understanding of the energetic nature of life and developed a comprehensive map of how this worked, thousands of years before Hahnemann developed his understanding of the vital force. In this tradition seven main centres are aligned along the body's central axis from the crown of the head to the base of the spine; spinning from the intersection of two opposing currents of energy (from above and from below). They are centres for the reception, assimilation and transmission of life energies. Taken together, these provide a map of consciousness, like stepping stones from matter to spirit and from spirit to matter. They hold the master programmes that control our lives, physically, emotionally and spiritually, our health and disease determined by the balance or imbalance of their energy. Our remedies resonate with these centres and when prescribed homoeopathically bring these back into balance.

The heart chakra is considered to be the place of balance, where opposites are integrated, where we love beyond the self, our social identity, where love and harmony reign. On the physical level this centre also controls the thymus gland (immune function) the circulatory system, heart, blood, lungs, chest, back and shoulders – clearly the target areas for this new disease. When Colm spoke of the heart having gone out of his life, I asked him to focus his awareness on his physical experience of this. He described a sensation of a jagged hole in his chest. Inviting him to explore this place, breathing into it, letting his

The teaching of the chakras originates in the Hindu Vedas and Upanishads, ancient Indian philosophical texts from several thousand years ago. To this day chakras play an important role not just in tantric Hinduism and yoga but also in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), various meditation practices and Ayurveda.

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LONG COVID

awareness drop deeper into his experience, envisioning the sensations present, tracking these, he felt himself spiral downwards, drawn to an image that became clearer as he approached it. The image was of a young boy that Colm recognised as his 8-year-old self, lost and confused. Their mutual recognition brought a sense of peace to both my patient and his younger self.

On returning to ordinary consciousness I instinctively felt drawn to share with him the traditional themes of the heart chakra. This is portrayed as a 12-petalled lotus flower, with each petal representing the essential qualities of this centre: love; harmony; empathy; understanding; purity; clarity; compassion; unity; forgiveness; kindness; peace and bliss.

While sharing these themes with him, he broke down in tears. "This is the life that I have always craved but have been unable to live."

LOSS AND RECOVERY OF THE SOUL

Over our next few sessions Colm revisited this inner place of deep loss. He described his family and professional life as "painful and full of conflict." He had been bullied by his older siblings when growing up; repeatedly passed over for promotion at work and been scapegoated by his colleagues. He had lived a life isolated from his peers; felt that they projected their aggression onto him. His hobbies and interests left him further isolated. And his infrequent romantic relationships were "co-dependent, lacking boundaries and full of grief."

He told me that his father had left the family when he was eight years old: "he took a piece of me with him when he left." Colm still couldn't accept what happened and has had a very troubled relationship with him ever since – a classic case of what indigenous healers refer to as "soul loss" – a loss of an essential part of him due to trauma, in order to survive the pain.

Over the following six months the journey we made together was a profound soul retrieval. Colm realised that he had spent so much of his energy projecting his problems onto others. Instead of exploring and healing his own suffering and grief, he had projected these onto his family, friends and colleagues. Today, he has completely recovered his physical and emotional health; "come back" to himself and completely transformed his relationships with others. But even more importantly, he has found a sense of purpose and a place in the world that had eluded him prior to his illness.

HEART CHAKRA SOUL LOSS

Over the months Colm's presenting symptoms become commonplace in my practice. They have even been given a name: "long covid". Dozens of patients presented with similar symptoms: exhaustion; heart and circulatory issues; respiratory difficulties; exhaustion; relapsing symptoms. Anxiety, depression and distress from social isolation features hugely. There were many different remedies indicated and used effectively for these

patients but the common thread with all of them was that their symptoms were all related to the heart chakra.

Understanding patients' symptoms through the model of soul loss has become central to my practice. For my patients' deepest healing, their soul healing, these lost parts need to be recovered and returned (soul retrieval) – this is the true healing through Covid-19, deep heart chakra soul retrieval.

COVID – THE NON-SPECIFIC AMPLIFIER

There is still much debate about whether the SARS-CoV-2 virus (the trigger for Covid-19) is a novel virus but one thing that has always been true is that life as we know it would be impossible without viruses. Although feared as agents of disease, these have been shaping evolution from the beginning of time. What has not been clear up to now is the role that covid is playing in our continued evolution.

One of the central themes that I've noticed, working with my long covid patients is an exacerbation of the latent, unresolved issues that they carry with them: physical, emotional and spiritual. Unconscious, shadow personality issues are being revealed; deep-seated griefs and hurts are exposed; unaddressed relationship issues arise; old, suppressed physical conditions return; even some of my patients' old physical scars have opened up again. All that has previously been hidden or suppressed is being revealed, offering us a unique evolutionary opportunity for healing.

THE SHADOW OF THE HEART

More than a year after my own recovery the world is a different place. My homeopathic practice and teaching have been exclusively online, with hardly any contact with family and friends. Many friends and family members have become sick, some have died. Others have had serious mental health issues; many have had breakdowns. Social, economic and political divisions have been massively exacerbated; unvaccinated people have become pariahs. Opinions have become extremely polarised; open discussions censored and taken offline. Hearts have hardened in judgement and criticism of those with different opinions than the prevailing narrative; whole swathes of the population are being othered, turned into scapegoats and separated from jobs, opportunities and even access to restaurants, pubs and public transport. Both vaccinated and unvaccinated alike have become entrenched in their positions and embattled with each other. Families have become divided, and relationships broken.

In short, Covid-19 and the worldwide political and pharmaceutical fight against this disease has become the magnifier through which so many darker aspects of human life can now be seen clearly. Whether we have been infected by this disease or not, we have all been impacted by the damaged shadow heart energy it carries and by the fight against it.

Our politicians have repeatedly told us that "we are all in this together". However, the reality is very different; our human population has become more polarised and divided than at any

other time in recorded history. We urgently need another response, a truly homeopathic response. Covid-19 demands a response from the heart.

THE HEARTFELT RESPONSE

The ancient Tantrikas identified imbalances of the heart chakra in terms of blocked or deficient function and excessive function. Patients with deficient function present with isolation, aloneness; anxiety, depression; hard-heartedness, unforgiving and lacking in empathy. Patients with excessive function will typically have problems with boundaries, becoming over-dependent on others for approval and acceptance, becoming overly critical and judgmental of those with different opinions.

And of course there are also the physical symptoms of heart chakra imbalance: lowered immune system function; heart and lung issues (especially heart palpitations), poor circulation, high or low blood pressure and respiratory and breathing difficulties. With such high stakes and a global epidemic of such extreme heart chakra imbalance, I have found it necessary to urgently upgrade my practice skills and my personal and professional response to these challenges.

I have prioritised my own physical, mental and emotional well-being during this time; deepened my spiritual practice; done extensive personal soul retrieval work and rearranged my patient appointments to accommodate these changes. Like most homeopaths, my priorities had been my patients and my health had suffered – I myself got covid!

I have also realised that the law of similars that we use to prescribe our patients' remedies needs to be expanded. We as practitioners need to do more than simply prescribe remedies for our patients. We also need to be able to resonate with their deepest suffering; to have the sensitivity and the courage to be with them in this; to journey with them to their place of deepest soul loss. Only then will we be able to facilitate the profound healing that is so urgently needed at this time.

THE GIFTS OF COVID

The following healing themes have emerged from the many patients who have journeyed with me through long covid in the last year. Many of these people have referred to these as the gifts of covid:

- The need to feel and practice unconditional love and acceptance
- Necessity for self-care: to take responsibility for enhancing their immune system; develop healthier lifestyles, spend time in nature; to slow down, take more time for reflection
- Emotional release of grief
- Cultivation of intimacy – emotional, sexual, spiritual
- Conscious relating; loving connections with friends, families and lovers
- Shadow work: withdrawal of negative heart-based projections onto others
- The healing power of self-less service; giving and receiving generously
- Reclaiming rejected parts of the self
- SELF-ACCEPTANCE



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