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Homeopathic approach to paediatric cases, with an understanding of paediatric psychology

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INTRODUCTION

We are all born with our own temperament traits, our raw material, our own kind of rock. Some of us are granite, some marble, some alabaster, and some sand stone. Our type of rock cant change but our shapes can be altered. So it is with our personalities. We start with own set of inborn traits. Some of our qualities are beautiful with strains of gold. Some are blemished with fault line of gray. Our circumstances, IQ, nationality, economics, environment and parental influence can mold our personalities, but the rock underneath remains the same.

Personality (Theodore Million) consists of ingrained, pervasive, enduring and habitual ways of psychological functioning that characterizes ones style. It is a tightly interrelated organization of attitudes, perceptions, habits, emotions and behaviors that characterize a person's distinctive way of relating to others and to himself.

Homoeopathy, a stream of therapeutic science and also an art deals with the above said personality in treating its patients from infant to old age. So it is worth while to know the psychology to know the personality in all age groups. But to know the child psychology is a towering job to be done by every homoeopath which helps us to root the mental symptoms in pediatric group especially while prescribing. This study done over here is to make the observation easier, to remember, apply clinically and practicable.

The collection of symptoms required for a successful prescription is not only tedious and cumbersome but requires combined effort of both

the physician and the patient and is more tedious in cases of children.

The child is like an animal. You never have to ask a horse or a dog where he feels pain because he will always tell by emotion so does the infant... J.T Kent. It is difficult to get symptoms in cases of children and only a shrewd and skilful observer can elicit the symptoms by keenly observing the emotions of children.

In the one side of the coin the parents can say about the physical general, particular symptoms but on the other side the genuine and pains-taking physician can interpret the mental symptoms by observing deeply the child in his chamber and the various life situations which the parents put in front of him.

Sometimes parents and especially the mothers, due to their ignorance of the mental symptoms in homoeopathy present it casually which misleads the doctor in selecting the similimum. As for e.g. A mother, during the interview replied that my child is sober. But through observation it was found that the child is hyperactive, and when a cross-question was asked regarding the attitude of the child towards the pet, mother replied "Oh! Though he is mild but brutal to the pet so much so that he pulls the tail, bits the dog mercilessly". This is one of the examples that can be seen in day to day practice.

Thus misguidance, misinterpretation and misconception of parents and least knowledge towards the importance of mental symptoms in homoeopathy and profound affection towards their child give a red alert to every physician to base their prescription on astute observation

which is highly essential for successful homoeopathic prescription.

Here when a physician is confusing with number of symptoms from a patient, by using Kent's evaluation of symptom, one can easily unlock to the problems of multiple symptoms of a patient. Kent's evaluation of symptoms constitutes of generals, particulars and common. He gave more weightage to mental symptoms in reference with physical general and particulars.

In practice also it has often been observed that mental symptoms are most helpful for obtaining a true cure. Most of the Homoeopathic practitioners give less weightage to mental symptoms which either palliates the disease or there is a failure. This is because of the difficulty in eliciting the mental symptoms from a patient.

Each mental aspect of a patient though seems to be unimportant and physiological for common people or even for the patient himself is very much important for a homoeopathic prescription by a homoeopathic physician.

There are 529 rubrics in Kent's repertory and many more sub rubrics. It is difficult to utilize the vast number of rubrics in practice though very much essential for a correct prescription. One can utilize these mental rubrics, if it can be remembered or comprehended properly. Many of these rubrics are of apparently similar. As example Audacity, dictatorial, egotism, impulsive, vanities apparently carries the same meaning and can be grouped under one rubric i.e. domineering. Similarly mildness, benevolence, rest desire for, sensitive, capricious can be taken as mild personality. Like wise the 529 mental rubrics of Kent's repertory can be put under different personalities so that it can be easily remembered and kept in mind and the only way to bring vast chapter within the working capacity of the average physician. While the patient is simply asked to narrate his life situation, his reactions to contradiction in the manner of open anger, suppressed anger, brooding, by weeping in privacy etc, the physician can easily assess

to which personality the patient belongs i.e. melancholic, destructive, introvert, extrovert etc. To probe for more details to mind symptoms, the physician should develop an appropriate repertoire of questions keeping in mind different personalities.

The observation should rightly start from the waiting room, consultation room, his response during interview, his body language, appearance, dress etc and it should be systematic lest important points may remain unobserved which will lead to a fruitless result.

To make this task simplified different authors attempted in different ways to typify the personality of children. To quote a few Douglas M. Borland's "children types include five varieties fat, fair type, skin type, nervy type, backward type, and warm blooded type", Bill Gray and J. Shore's pediatric types, Paul Herscuer's pediatric constitutional types, and some Indian authors "different axis" concept etc.

The attempts are no doubt very much helpful for reaching but doesn't correspond with classical personal typing of standard psychological books. In this study an attempt is made to study some polychrests fitting into classical classification of personality typing of Kaplan and to prescribe depending upon this personality typing.

As defined by Gordon Allport "Personality is the dynamic organization within the individual consisting of his psycho-physiological systems which determine his/her unique adjustment to the environment".

Personality consists of temperament, character and learning attitude. Temperament reflects biological contribution, character reflects social and cultural contribution to personality whereas learning attitude is the reflection of inherited temperament and acquired character derived from social and cultural surrounding.

Personality is both complex and unique in each individual and differs greatly from one another in multiple compartments or behavior and each expresses only one of many potential life styles. Personality develops through interaction

of hereditary disposition and environmental influences to determine the particular behavior.

Genetic difference accounts for about half of the variance of personality trait. Of the remaining 50% of the variance 25-30% are due to non-shared environmental effect i.e. experienced unique to the individuals and 15-20% by measurement error. It has been observed that environmental factors shared by siblings reared together have little or no effect on basic temperament traits but do influence other aspects of personality.

Temperament as described by Alexander, modern concept of temperament emphasizes its emotional, motivational and adaptive aspects of human being. Temperament is conceptualized as heritable biases in emotionality and learning that under lies the acquisition of emotion based automatic behavior traits and habits observable in life and relatively stable over one's life span.

Temperaments are heritable, observable in childhood relatively stable in time moderately predictive of adolescent and adult behavior. The 4 temperaments described below shown to be universal across different cultures, ethnic groups and political systems in five continents

The ancient 4 temperaments are known in modern terms by Kaplan are: -

Former	Now	Associated with basic emotions
Choleric	Novelty seeking	Anger-Behavioral activation
Melancholic	Harm avoidance	Fearless-Behavioral inhibition
Sanguine	Reward dependence	Social attachment
Phlegmatic	Underachieving	Spirit- Partial reinforcement

Each temperament includes certain characteristics as described by Kaplan. Each of these individual characters under one type of temperament is repertorised and five highest ranking drugs pertains to each type of temperament is determined.

NOVELTY SEEKING: - Comprises of Impulsive, hyperactive, irritable characters.

The five high ranking drugs covering the above characters

Tub., Tarentula, Hyosyamus, Stramonium, Medo

The peculiar differentiating points are as follows:

Tuberculinum :- Is hyperactive due to his mischievous temperament and with inner desire to tease others.

Verat.alb :- Hyperactive is purposelessness without any bad motive.

Tarentula :- Hyperactive but due to his foxy nature he escapes others attention

Medorrhinum :- Bipolar, sometime restless and sometimes sluggish.

Stramonium :- Hyperactive is accompanied with seriousness and to damage others.

Hyoscyamus :- Hyperactive but has some foolish and comic gestures.

HARM AVOIDANCE :- Comprises of fearful; shy; fatigable characters.

The five high ranking drugs covering the above characters

Nat.mur, Ign, Aur.met, Puls

Nat mur :- Perfectionist - wants things in order but shy and introvert.

Ignatia :- Highly sensitive so tries to avoid any contradictory thing.

Aur.met :- Wants to top in all respect. In case of failure there is tremendous depression up to the extent of suicide.

Pulsatilla :- Absorbs sympathy forsaken feeling and want of affection.

Reward dependence: - Comprises of Sentimental, open, warm, affectionate characters. The five high ranking drugs covering the above characters

Drugs- Phos, sulph, Nux.vom, Lyco, Carc

● **Phos** :- Likes and gives sympathy, gentle.

well behaved, extrovert, sociable.

Sulph:- Happy go lucky child, recklessness without fear to superiors, leads amongst his groupmates because of excessive cunningness, self centered.

Nux.Vom :- Industrious for reward Ambitious, Self willed, lively but not envious, irritable, sensitive to external impressions.

Lyco :- Lack of self confidence so for rewards nervous and stage fright, cranky

Carc:- In all cases maintains to be fastidious, top polite, passionate.

PERSISTENCE: - Comprises of Lazy, underachieving, under activeness.

The high ranking drugs covering the above characters

Drugs for them (Calc., Silicea, Bar.c, Bufo)

Calc:- Under achieving but plodding to learn, physically dull but achieves things by persistent effort.

Silicea:- Refined personality, gentle when healthy, irritable with slightest ill health.

Baryta carb:- Genetically under achieving know his standard so no interest to learn.

Bufo:- Baryta.carb mentality + hypersexuality even if in children..

CHARACTER:

In contrast to temperament, which is mostly inherited, character is less heritable and is moderately influenced by social learning, culture and random life events unique to the individual.

Character is the conceptual core of personality involves higher perceiving functions regulated by hippocampus and neocortex. The major character traits have been distinguished as Self-directedness, Cooperative, and Self transcendence. The outline of three characters is as follows-

SELF DIRECTEDNESS-

Is characterized by- Responsible, purposeful; resourceful, self-acting, disciplined.

Drugs for them : Puls, Carc., Kali.carb, Nat.mur, Aur.met

Kali carb:- reserved, squariness, workaholic.

COOPERATIVE-

Is characterised by -Tenderhearted, Helpful, compassionate, principled

Drugs for them Ign., Puls., Nat.carb, nat.mur., Carc., Nux.vom

SELF TRANSCENDENTAL-

Is characterized by - Intuitive, Spiritual, idealistic attitude.

Drugs for them : Lach.; Sep., Plat., Lyco., Caust

Caust:- Sympathetic, introvert, brooding, cautious

Sep:- Indifferent, greedy, lachrymose, unsociable, depressive.

Plat:- Haughty, egoistic, unsociable, religious

Lach:- Jealous, intelligent, wisdom like a serpent.

LEARNING ATTITUDE:

The third aspect of personality is **learning attitude**, develops with the background of inherited temperament and childhood experience of culture of family, parents attitude, social background. They are described as follows

The **learning attitude** can be grouped into investigative, artistic, conventional types. The characters belonging to each type are as follows: -

Investigative	Artistic	Conventional
Intellectual	Introspective	Mechanical
Curious	Imaginative	Asocial
Energetic	Expressive	Careful
e.g. Scientist	e.g. Artist	e.g. Engineer, Clerk

ARTISTIC: Is characterized by Intropective, imaginative, and expressive.

Drugs for them: Puls., China, Ign, Stram, Can.indica, Cocculus

China:- Unsociable, disobedient, tacti-

turn, no concern for others feelings, oversensitive to noise, lack of self confidence.

Stram:- serious and causes violence

Can.indica:- Excessive loquacious, exuberance of spirits, uncontrollable laughter even at trifling words spoken to him.

Cocculus: Capricious, profound sadness, time passes too quickly, dwells over past disagreeable occurrences.

INVESTIGATIVE: Is characterized by Intellectual, curious, and energetic+.

Drugs for them: Lach, Choco., Aur.met, Lyco., Carc., Sepia, Sulph

CONVENTIONAL: Is characterized by Mechanical, asocial, and careful.

Drugs for them: Bar.carb, Iodum, Ars.alb., Puls, Bufo

Iodum:- Intolerably cross and restless, desire to kill during rest, aversion to company.

Ars.alb:- Anxiety about health, fastidiousness, agonizing fear of death.

The rubrics given in repertory under mind chapter can be grouped under four types of temperaments, three types of characters and three features of learning attitude, which constitutes the personality of a patient. Remembering these features the physician can at a glance directly take up the mental symptoms by observing patients manner of talking, his mode of answer, his promptness towards question, his attitude towards physician, behavior etc and also asking a few questions upon his career, atmosphere in his working place, family life etc.

As example

Sulphur patient possesses the following type of personality

Temperament	Novelty Seeking
Character	Self directed
Learning attitude	Investigative + Artistic

Baryta carb patient possesses the following type of personality

Temperament - persistence - Phlegmatic
Character - Cooperative - Learning attitude
Conventional Aurum met patient possesses

the following type of personality

Temperament	Reward dependence
Character	Self transcendence
Learning attitude	Investigative

So by comprehending the above features of personality it is easy to probe into the mental symptoms of a patient which determines the essence of prescription.

Personality is the inner essence of the man, according to which the physical body is molded in the person, both in health and in disease state of the individual. To cure a disease this inner core is to be probed to rectify the defects in the body. This inner core is nothing but personality, which can be explored by the above-mentioned approach.

Inference and conclusion

Kent in his evaluation of symptoms gives more weightage to mental general symptoms where as Bonninghausen is of the view to consider mental symptoms for final selection of the drug. Whatever the fact may be while dealing with the pediatric cases the crux of pediatric case taking is to observe the behavior of the child which includes temperament, character, and learning attitude (Kaplan), is more authentic source than mother's information. But what is to be observed in the child is to be kept in mind so that nothing should be missed to reach the simillimum.

So consideration of Kaplan's personality which comprises of different temperament, character, attitude, of the child is a dependable way to elicit the mental symptoms. Medicine prescribed basing on these characters is found to be effective. As the child grows very fast from his infancy to school going age, the personality of the child varies in a greater or lesser extent with growing age, family culture, social surrounding etc. But by and large out of many personality characters described in above study some of them will definitely be suitable to any age and paves the way to select the correct remedy.