

## **Men get emotional too!**

The following is based on an interview with Mike Bridger, a homeopath who has practiced for many years in both London and the West Country. He says that over a third of his patients are male. He considers they are just as liable to mental or emotional conflicts being causative factors in their illnesses although they are less ready to recognise the links.

"Men are less open to homeopathy to start with but I enjoy treating people with this attitude rather than treating the already converted. "

Mike has also noticed that in his clinic he has seen more men than women suffering from M.E.

"Of course I can't generalise because this is only my observation in my clinics. A large majority of my M.E cases usually start to develop symptoms at the time they are having problems either at work or in personal relationships. I know we're not meant to say it but, I have hardly ever failed to get an M.E. patient better yet. I always tell patients with M.E that treatment will be slow and there will be ups and downs but that they should notice an improvement in two to three months. I make it clear that there is no point in starting treatment if they're not prepared to give me a year to pretty well resolve their condition. Actually, I regard that as a pessimistic prognosis but it gives me time particularly in those cases when homeopathic treatment, which requires utilising energy, is likely to be slow for patients who've gone into virtual negative equity in relationship to their energy."

Mike has some ongoing cases who have suffered for years, in one case eighteen years, of M.E. who within two months say that not only are they already feeling better for long intervals but also better than they have ever felt in their lives.

"Men are more reluctant to talk about seeing a homeopath so less likely to tell people about successful treatment. I think this is their general attitude to being sick rather than a negative attitude to homeopathy. Men are still burdened with the kind of upbringing that says you shouldn't be sick and if you are keep it to yourself so they tend to be secretive if they feel weak and vulnerable. "

He says he is always very careful about his choice of remedies in M.E. particularly with some well known remedies which, although seeming to be indicated do not cover the weakness and in the early days of treatment seem to bring on prolonged healing aggravations without the expected improvements afterwards.

"The patient just doesn't have the energy to get better so I tend to think twice before giving certain male remedies like Phosphorus, Sulphur, Lycopodium and even Silica. The Kalis and Acids predominate, raising the energy and clarifying the symptoms. I find "organ remedies" or as I prefer to call them "system remedies" invaluable such as Alfalfa, Avena

sativa, and Echinacea."

"The other observable phenomenon is that where an acute illness such as flu, gastro enteritis and the like appear, this suggests a very good prognosis. When I see this I treat it knowing that we're on the way to cure."

"M.E. is essentially an overwhelmed immune system. If my clinic is the rule and not just an exception, then the predomination of male patients might illustrate both the increased social pressure on men at work and the increased confusion of identities that they are subject to in their more intimate relationships. Enough, in fact, to place them in a position where they are unable to react effectively to any more stimuli. They feel impotent."

"This confusion of role may be parallel to an increase in the number of male patients I have seen with sexual dysfunctional problems. Homeopathic treatment can strengthen the man's ability to define his role and increase self-esteem. This is a major causation factor in male impotence for example. Whether this also explains the alarming increase in the last few years in prostate and testicular cancer is a supposition worthy of consideration.

"I am always careful of saying this kind of thing because people like to translate it as if they are exclusive causes which they clearly are not but perhaps we can say that susceptibility might be increased. We also have to be aware of the decisive part played by the alarming increase in hormones and hormone mimicking chemicals in the water we drink and the plastic covering our food "

"There is a mistaken notion that somehow men are less emotional and/or less capable of expressing feelings than women. I speak as a male practitioner but I find it relatively easy to read and observe the emotions of my male patients although there is a different coding system from that of women. It's true that it is less obvious in its expression but certainly as deep and in need of nourishment as women's."

Mike Bridger is a homeopath of 19 years experience who is a director of the Contemporary College of Homeopathy in Taunton and he runs the Orion Advanced Training Course for homeopaths in London.

If you would like more information about Homeopathy or would like to know how to find a good professional Homeopath in your area, contact the Society of Homeopaths at:

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