



The golden cure

Depression following redundancy from a career in finance indicated the remedy *Aurum metallicum*, writes *Marysia Kratimenos*

John was referred to me with depression and fatigue. No cause for the exhaustion had been found; it was presumed to be emotionally based. The anti-depressants he had been prescribed had not improved his energy level.

Conservative in appearance, dressed in a business suit and wearing polished shoes, John was polite, although quiet and formal in his behaviour. He answered my questions honestly and respectfully.

He had been unwell for two years before he came to see me. His problems had started after he had been made redundant from his job. Initially he had consulted his general practitioner, who had prescribed anti-depressants. These had caused such unpleasant side effects that

John had stopped taking them within days. The depression had intensified to the point where John was showing suicidal tendencies, so his GP arranged admission into a psychiatric hospital. Another anti-depressant was found that suited him better, but John was not happy taking the tablets as he felt “numb and drugged”.

He had worked in the finance department of the company for all his working life and was now in his late fifties. The decision to “let him go” had been made as a result of an economic down turn. At his age, he felt it would be nigh on impossible to find another job. He had big financial commitments and would not hear of his wife going to work. He was the breadwinner in the family. He felt humiliated that he had to turn to the state for support. He was riddled with guilt that he had placed his family in a vulnerable financial position because of his health.

Prior to his illness, he described himself as a perfectionist at work. He was extremely hard working and felt great loyalty to his company, so their “betrayal” was all the more difficult to accept. On hearing the news of his dismissal, he had suffered crushing chest pain. He thought he was having a heart attack, but all investigations were normal. Whenever he was “stressed” the pain would return, and it frightened him. Both his parents had died of heart attacks.

John described his childhood as happy, he “wanted for nothing”. He loved his parents dearly and described the day that his father died as the “worst in his life”. He said his parents taught him the importance of honour, hard work, financial security and duty in life. They attended church regularly, as

Aurum metallicum

did he and his wife and children. He was happily married with three teenage children living at home.

His health had always been good and he had enjoyed regular exercise in the past. He had no other medical problems. He ate a good diet and had no marked food preferences.

John was reticent about talking of his depression, blaming it on the redundancy. He felt worse at night and if he managed to sleep, he would have bad nightmares. He would wake early. He was afraid of death although he desired it. His worst fear, which he felt had been realised, was that of poverty.

As John was taking anti-depressants, I prescribed Aurum metallicum 6C to be taken daily. Certain medications can interfere with the action of high dose remedies, and in these cases I prefer to use low potencies on a daily basis.

John returned to the clinic six weeks after starting Aurum. There was a dramatic change in his mood – he was beaming! He said that his energy levels had increased so much that he was going to the gym daily. He felt truly happy in himself and was stunned that such tiny tablets could have had such a huge effect. He had agreed for his wife to go back to work to ease the financial problems until he found a new job. This was a major shift; he joked about having old-fashioned chauvinist values. His main objective was to stop the anti-depressants as soon as possible and his psychiatrist had agreed to this.

John has remained well over the last two years. He gradually weaned himself off the medication and occasionally has Aurum if his mood or energy dips, which

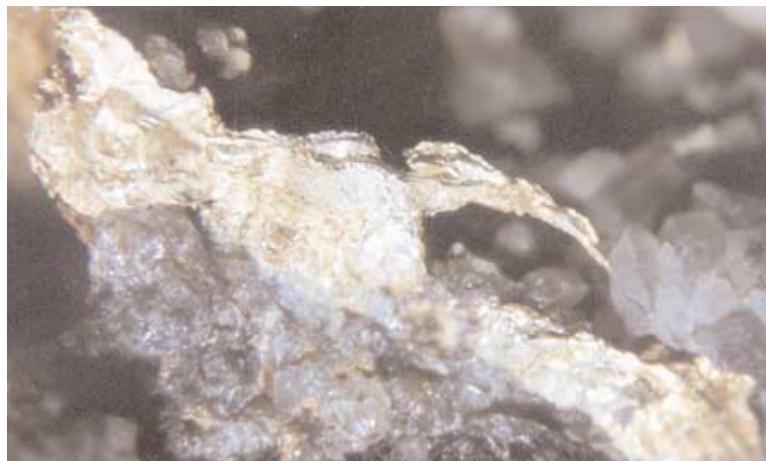


Photo courtesy of Hal Currie

Gold does not combine with other elements easily, so mining is relatively simple

is rare. His chest pain has never returned. He revels in the delicious irony that gold cured him and yet the striving for wealth almost killed him.

It was believed for generations that one could ascertain the medicinal qualities of a substance by close observation of its properties. The modern scientific mind scorns such superstitious nonsense, but in homeopathy many are exploring this avenue. At the very least it acts as an aide-memoire and helps to structure the vast materia medica.

The ancient myths and legends also help to glean a deeper understanding of the remedies. Jung regarded these as a reflection of the collective subconscious thought, and commenced work on archetypes, which continues today in homeopathy. The remedy pictures or essences are merely archetypes.

Aurum metallicum is pure gold; a soft malleable metal which is found in many parts of the world. It does not combine with other elements easily, so mining is relatively simple. Gold nuggets can be panned from many riverbeds.

Gold has been used medicinally since ancient times, originally as a

treatment for syphilis, and more recently in injections for rheumatoid arthritis. Syphilis is a very destructive disease, which may lie dormant in the body for years, before leading to aggressive heart, blood vessel and nervous system disease. The diagnosis of syphilis usually evokes fear in the patient, as in generations past it was incurable. Aurum has these fears in its remedy picture, as well as the destructive nature, both in the physical symptoms (early heart disease) and the emotional picture (violent anger and suicide).

Gold is a precious metal reputed to strengthen the nervous system, purify the physical body and balance the mind. It allows one to accept love and aids personal illumination. It is the Sol of the alchemists, sol being the sun. Gold is the metal of the sun god.

The Ancient Egyptians mined huge quantities in Nubia (modern day Sudan). Africa has immense gold reserves and is the site of the fabled mines of King Solomon. The Egyptians used the gold to decorate the temples of the gods and the tombs of the pharaohs, who were believed to be the reincarnation of the sun god, Amun Ra. Alongside the Valleys of the Kings and

Queens a special village of craftsmen was created, the Place of Truth. These men and women fashioned the elaborate tombs and offerings to the dead. It was rumoured that these people were able to create gold from base metals, a legend that has been perpetuated in alchemy, a science that originated in Egypt and is the origin of modern day chemistry.

The Egyptians were deeply religious and spiritual people, well versed in magic. Christian Jacq, a French Egyptologist, explains the deeper meaning of the process of transmutation in his fascinating series of books, *The Stone of Light*. He explains that this is actually a spiritual transformation, rather than a physical; the process of illuminating our base qualities and attaining enlightenment. The Philosopher's Stone, which is fundamental for the transmutation according to alchemic tradition, is emerald green – symbolically the colour of the heart. Aurum is an excellent heart remedy, and the Aurum personality is often described as having a heart of gold.

Gold has always played an important part in religion and spirituality. One only has to look at churches, mosques and temples to see huge amounts of

gold offered up to God. Gold does not tarnish unlike many other metals, symbolising its purity and incorruptibility. It is a regal metal, one that is used to symbolise love and fidelity in the wedding bands. So it is with the Aurum personality, often deeply religious and profoundly spiritual. Aurum is the patriarch of the family, the king of the castle. Aurum is honourable, trustworthy and proud.

In Greek society gold was regarded as a symbol of power and wealth. The myth of Midas is a potent reminder of the danger of the love of money; the king Midas wishes that all he touches may turn to gold and this leads to his death from starvation. In his quest for material wealth, he has forgotten the importance of the necessities of life and the simple pleasures. The shadow side of Aurum is that materialistic tendency, the avarice and the fear of loss of wealth and position. The story of gold is punctuated with these characteristics.

This is also reflected in the Judaic and Christian faith. When Moses ascends the mountain in the desert of Sinai to commune with God, he is given the Ten Commandments,

which are placed in a golden arc. When the Israelites broke the law by worshipping a golden calf, Moses broke the tablets and God sent a plague as punishment. Remorse followed the outburst of anger, an Aurum symptom. Moses returned to the mountain and on his return was bathed in such a strong golden light that no one could look upon him. This golden aura is regarded by Buddhists as a sign of divine enlightenment. The name Christ is derived from the Greek meaning the golden one. Saints are traditionally depicted as having a golden halo.

The Aztecs regarded gold as the symbol of their sun god, Huizilopochtli, and crafted beautiful gifts as religious offerings. Their culture fell as a consequence of the Conquistador's greed. Cortes took the Aztec king, Montezuma, hostage promising to release him in return for a huge room full of gold. The natives were surprised, as gold was so abundant that it had little value to them. Believing Cortes to be the reincarnation of their god, Quetzalcoatl, they were lulled into a false sense of security. They gladly complied with the request and apparently provided the Spaniards with several tons of gold. Cortes betrayed them and had the king murdered. The gold was melted down and transported to Spain, where it now decorates the Catholic churches. The Aztecs never recovered from this betrayal, their culture was decimated and thousands perished. Likewise the Aurum archetype is devastated by betrayal and can lapse into a suicidal depression. John's story clearly demonstrates the Aurum personality and the type of problems experienced.

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The Inca mask reflects the importance of gold

