Leonurus Cardiaca (Motherwort): ‘Mother and Child Reunion’

By Joy Lucas

Leonurus cardiaca was the first remedy chosen in the proving project I launched in January, 2006. This project is about proving existing remedies in our materia medica—ones that have had either no proving at all or only a scant proving. If we are to use our materia medica efficiently then it seems feasible that all our remedies should be thoroughly proven and reproven.

I wanted to take this opportunity to look, in more detail, at the dreams and main sensations that emerged from this proving.

There are three circles that encompass Leonurus. Its common names are ‘motherwort,’ or ‘lion’s heart’ and its alkaloid is named Leonurine, which is one of its active and most significant ingredients.

MOTHERWORT

I believe this name has its origins in the Chinese variety of Motherwort and is called Yi mu cao, which means ‘benefit mother herb.’ Historically, this herb was used to treat menstrual disorders, to expel dead fetuses, to aid recovery after childbirth, but also to aid miscarriage in unwanted pregnancies. Clarence Bartlett relates a story in the Medical Advertiser of attempted abortion using this remedy (it failed). The symptoms we have in our materia medica come from this involuntary proving.

The flower also symbolizes concealed love. Whether this refers to the deep and cavernous love that a mother has for her child, a love that is so unfathomable that its secrets are concealed or whether it represents a more clandestine love between people that needs to be concealed and kept secret, is not clear. This plant is part of the Labiatae family—a very ‘sexy’ group of remedies, so I will leave you to make your own conclusions and studies on that.

LION’S HEART

The name has connotations of being brave, fierce, protective; wanting excitement and adventure? Is this useful to our understanding of this remedy? Leonurus has a stronger name connotation to lions than ‘mothers’ and so a more literal understanding of Leonurus cardiaca could be ‘brave heart.’ Lion’s tail is another common name used to describe the shaggy shape of the leaf. I do not want to allude to the idea that only male lions are brave—quite the reverse—but it is interesting that convention has ‘allowed’ for both genders to play a role (that can be readily exchanged).

Cardiaca obviously refers to the benefit this plant has for heart ailments (hence the name Lion’s Heart), although ‘cardiac’ also relates to the upper part of the stomach where the stomach is connected to the oesophagus.

To bring the emphasis slightly back to ‘mother,’ there were many references throughout the proving that alluded to mother/parent concerns, such as ‘extreme concern regarding children,’ ‘much more enjoyment spending time with their children,’ ‘social and political issues regarding the treatment of children,’ ‘a sensation as if cradled and rocked,’ ‘a feeling of being a better mother,’ ‘feeling extra protective with children.’ There were also sensations of energy within the uterine region and as if a foetus was kicking, and a number of dreams that involved children, especially the protection of them.

LEONURINE

Leonurine is a plant alkaloid that depresses the central nervous system and lowers blood pressure as well as promoting euphoria and a hypnotic state when smoked as ‘wild dagga.’ The allure of wild dagga has been known for centuries. As well as the dreamlike euphoria and relaxation it induces (usually smoked), the down side is memory loss, poor attention span, anxiety, paranoia and incoordination—these symptoms could be attributed to a serious lowering of blood pressure. Leonurine also induces uterine contractions as well as inhibiting them and begins to explain why this plant is also known as ‘motherwort.’

Leonurine can excite as well as depress, provides adventure then discouragement, extreme highs and then deep lows. This suggests both a perilous state and a protective one.

There is mention in the old herbals that the plant has a relationship with ‘wicked sperys’—this can be interpreted as being protective against wicked spirits or casting mischievous spells in the form of wicked spirits. Wild dagga has been grown in areas prolific with snakes as protection from them and their bites. It seems that a number of provers evoked these spirits in a variety of ways. There is likely to be some debate as to the understanding of the nature or intention of the alleged ‘wicked spirits’ connected with this plant—but certainly there was an ‘accident prone’ symptomatology for many provers. There were a relevant number of references to being ‘set-up,’ ‘being tricked,’ ‘feeling like a wicked witch,’ and use of the word ‘wicked’ throughout the provings. This relates directly to both the mischievous and yet protective nature of this remedy, stirred by a need for adventure and excitement that is in stark contrast to the intense sleepy and fatigued state that developed for nearly all provers.
I am Sleeping Beauty controlled by the enchantment of some wicked fairy but condemned to sleep instead of dying.

THE STORY

My name is Rose Dawn Briar and I am bored. I mean really bored. My life is nothing, no history, no future, except for my children of course but they have their own life to lead and I feel I am losing them. They live with their father, Philip, who took them from me claiming I wasn’t fit to be a mother to them. I love them so much, I miss them and I want them here, now. I feel dead inside like I could sleep forever. Most days I cannot even get out of bed because I feel so sluggish as if I have been drugged. I fall asleep when I am eating or playing computer games and half the time I cannot even string a sentence together and I cannot complete the simplest of tasks. It is as if a spell has been cast over my life and I have no control over my destiny. I cannot wake up. My doctor has diagnosed chronic fatigue syndrome (as if that is supposed to comfort me).

So I am Sleeping Beauty controlled by the enchantment of some wicked fairy but condemned to sleep instead of dying by some do-good doctor. I would rather die! I don’t want to be awakened by a kiss, although that would be better than nothing, I want adventure, excitement, travel, love and most of all my children. I am planning on kidnapping them.

My mother-in-law, who is a complete Ogress, takes care of the children most of the time and somehow I have to trick her into giving me back my children. I have utter contempt for her, she is so wicked and controlling. When I have to communicate with her I am always impatient and snappy and could easily pick a fight. I have to get my children away from her. She is planning on investing a lot of money on their behalf and could easily pick a fight. I have to get my children away from her. She is planning on investing a lot of money on their behalf so they can be sent away, a long way away. I have to stop this. Maybe I could find refuge at a ‘drop in center’ for mothers and children, where we could hide away. I am constantly being poured onto the school building. Everyone is in fancy dress saying “Get away, I have a ticket!”

But now, suddenly, I feel distant again. I cannot feel what I am doing. I am being unplugged again and need to sleep. Sometimes when I sleep I feel I am detached from myself and actually standing outside of my own body — this is quite a nice feeling sometimes but it is a fleeting sensation and never lasts long. I will be back but now I am going to sleep and dream.

LATER

I have really bad dreams a lot of the time. Not nightmares, but mostly quite frightening but sometimes I am elevated to another realm, one that is high and rapturous but these make my heart beat fast and strangely cause me to wake up in fear and anticipation, almost as if a defibrillator had been used to wake me from flat lining. Just now I dreamed I was a criminal and had been arrested and taken to the local police station. I was having a big quarrel with the police because they had arrested the wrong person. This is partly true because I used to be a trainee policewoman but I couldn’t take the injustice. I always felt I was being set up by my colleagues and made a fool of. I felt ineffective against this prejudice and this contributed to my own sense of failure. It was a different kind of prison I was in. Then I had an accident, fell through a roof when chasing some criminals and I never really recovered from that. It was the beginning of the end for me.

I just drifted into a short but deep sleep again. I dreamed of myself as a child, playing in the attic where all my old toys were stored. I often dream of babies being born (I would have loved to have had more children) and when I was 4 my younger sister was born.

She was sick all the time and I often dream about looking after her. I wish she was here now but she died in a fire. I can sometimes smell her death, smell the burning mattress where she lay asleep. The fire in her room had started a blast up the chimney, it all caught fire. Where was everyone, why wasn’t she saved! Oh God, help me someone please get away from this torment! I am living my life in a terrified state, unable to keep the threatening encounters of life away. I am constantly followed wherever I go with a sense of impending doom. There is so much danger around me but I cannot respond because of my fatigue. I am safe when I sleep but most days I feel I will never wake up again.

The phone is ringing and I am dragging my body to the noise. It is hard to focus on getting there, I feel so detached from the persistent ringing. “Hello……. no, no, no no!”

Now I am screaming, there has been an explosion at my children’s school. I have to get there. I am running, painstakingly moving through air as I travel in this frightening journey towards the school. I feel no fear, I feel nothing but I know I am screaming. Was it a bomb? Was it terrorists? Are they being held as hostages? Are they dead? Is anyone alive? Can I save them? I begin to feel invincible as I race. I will save them. My heart is beating so fast now and this feels scary but I also feel protected in this mission because it is inevitable that I do this.

I am at the school now, it was a ‘bouncy castle’ play day — the castle is burning, there is fire everywhere, jets and blasts of water being poured onto the school building. Everyone is in fancy dress
or wearing huge ridiculous noses and ears. You cannot identify anyone or tell if they are injured in any way. This is like some surreal dream. Is it just a trick, am I being set up? There's Rumpelstiltskin, has he taken my children? Who is that samurai with a sword, has he murdered my children, is he friend or foe?

I am now soaked with the icy water from the fire fighter's hose. There is so much water it is like a tidal flood and I feel I need a boat to find my children else I will be cut off from them by the flood of foamy water. I cannot swim but I have a sense of being underwater because I am so cold, like ice, I still cannot seem to move quickly but I feel at last as if I am about to be awakened if I can only find my children. I am lost in this sea of people, so many people, treading water.

I would gladly sacrifice myself for my children. I would go to the extreme of throwing myself into a pit of vipers and be eaten alive to rescue their souls. Please let it be me and not them, but I need to be reunited first. I have no perception of time, maybe it is running out.

Finally, they are there in front of me. I cannot believe it, my family, my world, my life, in two short measures have finally appeared in front of me and now I know I have been awakened from this world of damp black ink, now we can live again. We are safe, everyone is safe, we are moving away from familiarity and into a new and contented journey. Mother and child have been reunited.

This story might have some uncanny resemblance to Charles Perrault's 'Sleeping Beauty' written in 1697 but in fact it is based on the true account of the provers and the main sensations and dreams they experienced throughout the proving, spindled together to form a fascinating tapestry of events.

I hope you enjoy reading the full proving data, which can be downloaded at the link below. Now we just need cured cases to fully highlight the potential depth of this mesmerising remedy.

Joy Lucas began her studies of homeopathy in the early 1980s and has had a busy practice for the last 15 years. Although a bit late she finally began to realize the wonderment gained from new provings of new remedies and also realized that there were a lot of remedies already in our materia medicas that hadn't had sufficient proving. Now is the time to put that right and she hopes her proving project provides new and enlightening material so that we can use all our remedies efficiently. Joy practices in Saddleworth, North West England.

www.homeopathicmateriamedica.com
www.homeopathicmateriamedica.blogspot.com

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