Magnesium Carbonica and Sulphur: Compatibility in Relationship

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A chapter excerpted from the book A Homeopathic Guide to Partnership and Compatibility—Understanding Your Type and Finding Love

Abstract: Ms. Lalor authored the book “A Homeopathic Guide to Partnership and Compatibility” as a means to introduce the public to homeopathy specifically in the context of how differing constitutional remedy types might interact when in relationship with one another. Here we have excerpted the chapter on Magnesia carbonica and Sulphur. The two remedies—Magnesia carbonica, with its great need for security within a relationship and peaceful harmony, and Sulphur, with its need for recognition and egotism—create an interesting relationship dynamic, which is thoroughly explored in this article/chapter. Keywords: interpersonal relationships, homeopathic constitutional types in; Magnesia carbonica, Sulphur.

Magnesium Carbonica

Origins of Magnesium Carbonica

Magnesia carbonica, (shortened to Mag-carb), is derived from a dilution of carbonate of magnesia which contains the mineral magnesium. A tissue salt deficiency of magnesium results in loss of nervous system function. A person suffering from a physical magnesium deficiency will experience muscle cramping and tremors, as well as emotional apprehensiveness, confusion, and disorientation. The theme of a person who is suffering from nerve fiber contraction is reflected in the emotional and physical action and nature of Mag-carb. Mag-carb literally shuts down feelings to avoid feeling anxious. Mag-carbs (1) experience a sense of underlying apprehension and anxiety that they then experience as fear of rejection and abandonment. This is reflected in the need that Mag-carbs have to protect themselves from conflict or disharmony. Often the effort of dealing with anxiety and the effort of holding down feelings of apprehensiveness result in Mag-carbs suffering from depression. The anxiety that Mag-carbs suffer from is so intense that they end up suppressing it just to be able to function. When Mag-carbs suppress their emotional feelings, they often experience the effects of the suppression physically in muscular cramps and neuralgic pains that reflect magnesium deficiency.

Key Mental and Emotional Characteristics

• Mag-carb has strong feelings of emotional abandonment.
• Fearful that something bad will happen, to either themselves, or their loved ones.
• Fearful that they will be deserted by their partner.
• Mag-carbs can often have strong co-dependency issues within relationships.
• Strong need to hold the family unit together; they are often viewed as the family peacemaker.
• Family or support from a relationship is crucial to feeling secure.
• Comforted by working in large supportive groups. It will be the Mag-carbs working within an organization who will be the ones who seek to create harmony and co-operation amongst the members.
• Do not like conflicts or arguments, especially amongst family members.
• Mag-carb feels anxious during the day, and often feels emotionally safer at night in bed.
• Mag-carb constitutions work hard to provide strong financial security.
• Do not like to travel far from their bed or home.
• History of suppressing their feelings; a strong history of depression.
• Mag-carbs will often use dreams to work out what they are feeling.
• Mag-carbs have a recurring dream of being lost within their own home.
• Can appear monotone and depressed.
• Do not like to talk, especially in the morning.
• Look as if they are worn out and that every step they take is an effort.
• Mag-carb can often have strong co-dependency issues to do with food.

Key Physical Characteristics
The types of physical complaints that Mag-carb suffers are brought about from the stress of emotional disharmony or discord within family and relationships. The theme of suppressing anxiety also crosses over to the physical, and it is impossible to ever reject the emotional cause when considering the physical complaints of Mag-carb. If Mag-carbs ever feel threatened on any level, they will internalize all anxiety and it will be expressed as muscular aches and pains or be reflected in a sensitive stomach. (2) Mag-carbs often suffer from constipation when they are avoiding making decisions. The opposite of this is also experienced — Mag-carbs can suffer from diarrhea from anxiety or conflicts. Mag-carbs have a characteristic physical theme: they suffer from sour perspiration, sour diarrhea, sour vomit, and a sour temper when they are sick.

• Gastrointestinal complaints resulting from anxiety.
• Mag-carb has either extreme constipation after mental strain, or watery diarrhea after conflict or anxiety.
• Neuralgic muscular pains and cramps that are aggravated in bed at night.
• Restless at night, often needing to get up and move around. (Note that they feel better when in bed emotionally, but worse physically).
• Mag-carb will often suffer from tired and exhausted legs which feel relieved by walking outside in fresh, warm air; but they will feel worse from any slight cold wind.
• Often wakes tired in the morning.
• Mag-carb suffers from restless sleep, and is often troubled with dreams.

• Physically sensitive to touch, especially when upset.
• Sensitive to noise and all discord.
• Menses flow at night in bed, but slow down during the day.
• Cyclically worse before menses; every month Mag-carbs will feel very tired or suffer with sore throats (even if they are menopausal).

Sulphur
Origins of Sulphur
The homeopathic remedy Sulphur is derived from the element sulfur. Sulfur is a yellow crystalline solid that is found underground and is only able to be mined and forced to the surface in molten form at extremely high temperatures of 115º Celsius. (3) The same degree of intense heat that is needed to extract sulfur is also able to be seen as the motivational theme within the psyche of the constitution Sulphur. The explosive expansive heat needed to extract sulfur is matched by Sulphur constitutionally and mirrored by their reactive genius and creative self-absorption.

It is important to understand and know the core motivations behind each constitution. If one just looks on the surface, it is possible to confuse Nux vomica with Lycopodium, or Lycopodium with Sulphur. All three constitutions are essentially egoistical, but, the egotistical motivation of each is different. Nux vomica needs ego to eliminate possible threats, and builds ego to win. Lycopodium needs ego for survival and security, and builds ego for greatness. Sulphur's relationship with ego is distinctive. Sulphurs are altruistically inspired by a sense of greatness and a need to inspire the rest of the world to see the beauty they see. Sulphurs use ego as fuel for an unfaltering, inspirational desire to light the fire of knowledge and creativity in humanity.

The psychodynamic force behind Sulphur's passion and intensity is the heat and power of the element sulfur. Sulphur has conjured up so much force behind the exploding volcano that to not be recognized is crippling. If the world is not inspired and Sulphur is ignored, then Sulphur sinks into intensely acrid, cynical depression.

Key Mental and Emotional Characteristics
• The majority of creative geniuses are Sulphur. Sulphurs are either viewed as inspirational geniuses or grandiose.
• Philosophizers or “full of hot air,” depending on the
Tendency to boast and exaggerate; Sulphurs are accused of having "delusions of grandeur," depending on the eye of the beholder; Sulphur can also be viewed as innovate.

Extroverted and fanciful.

Absentminded and completely absorbed by their thought processes.

Sulphurs often want to be left alone to pursue their thought processes and creativity.

Sulphurs have a strong need to surround themselves with objects of inspiration and beauty.

Sulphur is passionate and enthusiastic about what interests them and very uninterested in what does not inspire them. Sulphur will not even feign polite interest.

Ambitious, with either a realistic or over-exaggerated view of their abilities; again relative to others’ perspective.

Sulphur will feel claustrophobic if forced to conform to societal expectations.

Social, especially if they are the center of attention or the social activity involves indulging in good food and good wine.

Can often be accused of being self-centered, especially by their partner.

Adverse to the practicalities of life; Sulphur is not interested in the day-to-day practicalities of earning money and going to work.

Sulphurs can suffer from obsessive, crippling hypochondria. Sulphurs especially fear losing their mind or intellectual capacity.

Tendency to get caught up in fearful fantasies about health or potential rejection by the world.

Sulphurs are acrid and cynical if they have lost faith in being acknowledged.

Sulphurs become depressed and withdrawn if the world has failed to recognize their contribution.

Sulphurs are crippled if they feel they have caused their failure.

Sulphurs become physically sick if they have been embarrased by failure.

Spiritual and religious. Sulphurs will be unconventional in their faith, even if they belong to an established religious institution.

Can be completely disinterested in conforming to societal pressures about appearance.

Key Physical Characteristics

Sulphurs do not hold back from experiencing life, and they definitely do not hold back from over-indulging in all the good things in life. Sulphurs love to eat and drink; consequently, Sulphurs also spend a lot of time suffering from their indulgence in food and alcohol. Sulphurs also spend a lot of time worrying about their illnesses, which are all ironically caused from over-indulgence. Sulphur's intensity and explosiveness is also expressed in numerous skin conditions that are characteristic of the heat and burning of the element, sulfur.

- Sulphur is aggravated from heat.
- Skin afflictions, aggravated from internal and external heat.
- Eczema, and itching skin at night, aggravated from becoming hot in bed.
- Sweat excessively, especially on the head and feet; often with a strong sulfur smell.
- Sulphurs love to eat large meals and love to eat frequently.
- Feel faint if they have not eaten; especially around 11am.
- Stomach complaints all aggravated from over-eating; indigestion, frequent flatulence; (often hot and sulfurous smelling flatus), hemorrhoids, and morning diarrhea.
- Sulphur wakes up between 2-5am, either aggravated by heat or digestion.
- Sulphurs dream, talk and twitch during sleep.
- Dry, burning, itching eyes.
- Aggravated in stuffy warm rooms.
- Crave lots of foods that stimulate, such as sweets, coffee, spices, and alcohol.
- Hot, flushed face after over-indulging, especially in alcohol.
- Skin complaints such as acne rosacea, all aggravated from over-indulgence in alcohol and sweets.
- Burning discomfort in joints.
- Stooped over and often feel like their back is unable to support them.
- Headsaggeaggregated from digestive complaints.
- Headaches that occur periodically; i.e., headaches that occur on the weekend.
- Frequent urgent urination, especially at night, often aggravated from over-indulging in alcohol.

Sulphur Partnerships

The Theme of Sulphur

In the wonderful comic strip Peanuts™, Linus declares to the world that when he grows up, he is going to be a doctor. He then says he is going to be even better than a doctor; he is going to be a “GREAT Doctor” (Schulz © 1960). The enthusiasm that Linus has grows from being a doctor to an even greater doctor and then grows to even loftier heights of being the learned doctor who writes a “syndicated
One of the great desires of Sulphur is to discover a such doubt. Sulphurs are so them. This belief in themselves can either be viewed as infectious, and one can't help but be inspired by such passionate enthusiasm for their pursuits in life it is infectious, and one can't help but be inspired by them. This belief in themselves can either be viewed as delusional egoistic mania or creative genius, depending on how one looks at it. Sulphurs are so enthralled with their own creative process they usually neglect the practical necessities of life. Linus is not going to be a doctor to help the sick or because it is a good career; what he wants to do with medicine is a far loftier ideal in his mind. Sulphurs are in pursuit of far greater ideals than the mundane, and Sulphurs do not really care how the rest of the world views them. Sulphurs are enthralled by creative pursuits and the creative intellectual pursuit of knowledge.

There are, of course, many Sulphurs who are not recognized as geniuses or who are not even recognized as great by the rest of the world. The important point is that Sulphurs have a powerful enough ego and belief in themselves that they see themselves as creative geniuses whether they are or not. It does not matter what their pursuit is in life, their good opinion of themselves does not change. Lycopodiums, in contrast, will in social settings boast and congratulate themselves on their accomplishments, then go home and doubt themselves. Sulphurs do not suffer from such doubt.

One of the great desires of Sulphur is to discover a new thought or theory. Sulphurs are optimistic and hopeful. They can inspire others, but they can also frustrate because some of their beliefs amount to but impractical philosophizing about life and basically a lot of hot air. Sulphurs have an explosive anger and passionate temper that one will either view as consistent with flashes of visionary insight or a negative temper. Sulphurs have a self-obsession with their own processes in life that will be viewed by others either as the eccentricity of a genius or the pure selfishness of an egomaniac.

Sulphurs need the world to recognize and acknowledge their ideals. The visionary philosopher Samuel Johnson (definitely a Sulphur), wrote in 1766 about the inability of the world to understand his pursuits in life and the disdain with which he viewed the values of the worldly: “My zeal for languages may seem, perhaps, rather over-heated, even to those by whom I desire to be well esteemed. To those who have nothing in their thoughts but trade or policy, present power, or present money, I should not think it necessary to defend my opinions... Knowledge always desires increase; it is like fire, which must first be kindled by some external agent” (Boswell, p. 321).

The Challenge for Sulphur in Life
Sulphurs need the world to acknowledge their brilliance. If the world does not acknowledge them, it is the fault of everyone else in the world who lacks insight into their quest for knowledge. Sulphurs are seldom at fault. This drive for ego verification can also be viewed as either inspirational genius or chauvinistic. (4) Hahnemann, the founder of homoeopathy was supposedly a Sulphur. It is very probable that a lot of visionary founders were Sulphur as it takes a certain amount of ego strength and unflattering belief in your pursuit to be able to discover new thoughts, and Sulphurs definitely possess this strength. Sulphurs have the strength of character to view themselves (as expressed by Johnson) as agents to kindle the fire of knowledge for the rest of the world.

My other favorite Sulphur is the writer Balzac. The actor Gérard Depardieu plays a wonderful Balzac in the film Balzac: A Life of Passion. For the first part of Balzac’s life the world did not recognize his genius as a great writer. He spent the majority of his life struggling with financial security and recognition. His long-suffering mother, who kept giving him money to fund his new pursuits, also did not see the genius in her son and wanted him to be a lawyer. Sulphurs have an overwhelming need to be recognized. The fact that his mother did not think highly of him caused Balzac enormous pain and spurred a lot of the bad business choices which he subsequently made. He set up a printing shop to print his own books because other printing firms had not been enlightened enough to see his genius. The venture, of course, lost a fortune because the general public did not read his books or recognize his brilliance. The venture, of course, lost a fortune because the general public did not read his books or recognize his brilliance. He was continually ending up in debtor’s prison and was repeatedly being financially bailed out by the friends who recognized his genius as a writer. At no point in this process was there any doubt or sign of guilt or embarrassment in Balzac’s mind about his continual acceptance of their financial support. Balzac had an unflattering belief in his genius.

It is important not to assume that because someone
is Sulphur he is hopeless with money. The aspect that is important to emphasize is that Sulphurs will always be passionately blind to seeing the practicalities of a particular pursuit which interests them and they will always spend indiscriminately on whatever project inspires them. It might not necessarily equate that Sulphurs will be poor or frivolous with money, but if Sulphurs are inspired, they will not form a financial (5) plan before they follow their dreams.

When Balzac did manage to be financial, he spent it on indulging either his senses by buying beautiful objects or by overindulging in good food and wine. (6) The need to be seen as a great and important person drove him to continually waste his money on showy furniture and objects d’art (7) to boost his social importance. The other reason Sulphurs need to be surrounded by beautiful objects is that they need the outer world to reflect their inner idealistic visions. One does not get the impression that Balzac ever felt compelled to pay back his mother or friends for their generosity. Balzac, when he did have money, would also indulge in exuberant spending in the salons of Paris. The total accumulated debts from his failed businesses and ostentatious lifestyle left him owing in the year 1828, sixty thousand francs (which for the times sounds like quite a substantial sum).

Balzac never gave up his dream or belief in his genius and was always hopeful of recognition, and he was apparently well-known for his egoistic boasting. Sulphurs have an amazing ability to block out or selectively forget adversity. It is as if they have been blessed with a blinkered vision of themselves. Sulphurs do not acknowledge their own faults or spend much time gazing at their navels. This is not to say that Balzac was not given to moments of melancholy; he was, but the depression of Sulphur is unique. Sulphurs will definitely sink into hopeless despair and catatonic moroseness, but they will never doubt themselves; they will instead despair about the injustice of life and the ignorance of the world to fail to recognize their genius. Balzac, aside from wanting recognition from his mother, was not particularly interested in who she was or how she felt about her dwindling finances as a result of pulling him out of debt. He was only interested in fame and fortune or his mother’s money because he needed both of these to be able to pursue his writing. The love affairs with the numerous rich aristocratic women were also always a means to an end so that he could fund his writing. Balzac was not a man to waste his time on social niceties or placating his mother; the acquisition of her money was seen by him as a means to an end to help in the pursuit of his creative ideals. Balzac’s characters in his books are continually in conflict with the bourgeois values of the time and Balzac himself by all accounts was not exactly conforming to the ideals of society. Sulphurs can be very disinterested in everything and everyone who they find uninspiring. On the basis of this description, why would anyone have a relationship or any sort of friendship with such a self-obsessed person?

The Sulphur Strength in Relationships

The homeopathic remedy Sulphur is derived from a dilution of the volcanic element sulfur. When a volcano explodes, there is a strange magnetism and passion that draws one to it; the very nature of the passion and power behind the explosion is beautiful because it is alive and active and able to elicit wonder and fear in the spectator. Gérard Depardieu is such a good actor that he was able to portray the essence of why someone would fall in love with Sulphur. There is one scene in the film Balzac: A Life of Passion, in which Gérard Depardieu, as the character Balzac, concentrates all of his energy on seducing a woman. Admittedly, it is definitely in Balzac’s financial interest to win her over and this is, of course, the inspiration behind his pursuit; however, it would have to be the most passionate love scene in any movie that I have ever seen. Sulphurs are very passionate about what inspires them, and if they are inspired by another person as a love interest, then one can understand what they can contribute to a relationship. Sulphurs might present as non-reflective of their own selfishness, but they are expansive in trying to passionately and creatively inspire the world. Balzac’s countess Eveline Hanska, who he eventually married, abandoned all her estates and wealth just so that she could be with him. Her first husband, although providing well for her financially, was completely cold and emotionless. Balzac the Sulphur, in comparison, was intensely passionate. She however, did not abandon all reason; she left the love letters that Balzac wrote with her daughter for future insurance against poverty. She rightly foresaw that the depths of passion in his love letters would some day be recognized. Marriage to the countess meant that Balzac was able to clear all of his debts. Aside from her obvious wealth, he was also enthralled that she believed in his genius, and this was what inspired him the most. The reason for falling in love with her in the first place was that she wrote to him expressing her adoration of his writing. Even though he
needed her money, he needed her adoration of his genius more.

_Sulphurs_ give back to all relationships with their passion. The power of _Sulphur_ is the passion and hopefulness which is able to elicit possibilities and fire hopefulness and optimism. There is a crazy scene in the film where they were traveling to Paris in the snow; at every stop he bought her a present to remember him by. _Sulphurs_ do not hold back from completely indulging in their experience of life, and this quality can be very attractive. When _Sulphurs_ “fall in love,” they do so with such intensity that the object of that passion is seen as the most beautiful possession that they own. This sort of passion is very sought after, and for Eveline Hanska it was well worth giving up her castle, inheritance, and position in Russian society. _Sulphurs_ have a generosity that appears to be the polar opposite of their need for financial security. _Sulphurs_’ need to surround themselves with objects d’art (8) and great opulence is also reflected in their lavish generosity towards loved ones and friends. (Quite often with _Sulphurs_, it is actually another’s money or the bank’s that they are spending). Financial security is only seen as a means to an end. The end goal for _Sulphurs_ is their aspiration to inspire.

**The Emotional Legacy for Sulphur**

Healthy _Sulphurs_ are intensely passionate, intensely creative, and intensely inspirational. Unhealthy (9) _Sulphurs_ are intensely depressed, intensely hopeless, intensely irritable, intensely withdrawn, and intensely cynical of the world. _Sulphurs_ become unhealthy if they are not acknowledged or needed, and most importantly if they lose their freedom to do what they want in life. _Sulphurs_ become unhealthy if they are not recognized all the time as great by the world. The psychodynamic force behind the _Sulphur_ persona reflects the power and explosive nature of the element sulfur. Sulfur is only extracted from under the earth’s surface with intense heat of 115°C Celsius. _Sulphurs_ sink into depression if they are not met with a worldly acknowledgment that is able to match how much they have struggled to come out from deep within the core of the earth’s structure. It is a somatic experience for _Sulphurs_ to be recognized. It is almost as if _Sulphurs_ have conjured up so much force behind the exploding volcano that to not have it recognized is an insult. _Sulphurs_, if ignored, have an intense amount of irritable, sulphuric, corrosive angst.

The best portrayal of the depressed irritable genius who is waiting for the world to recognize him is the comic book caricature portrayal of the personality of Harvey Pekar in the film _American Splendor_. _American Splendor_, directed and written by Robert Pulcini and Shari Springer Berman, is a documentary-like film of a true living person who becomes a comic book personality. The film constantly smudges the lines between the real life character of Harvey Pekar and the writer’s interpretation of the comic book character of Harvey Pekar played by actor (10) Paul Giamatti. Harvey Pekar (11), the super ego of the comic book personality, is a larger-than-life caricature of the unhealthy _Sulphur_ persona. He is constantly negative and depressed and totally self absorbed. His history of relationships and marriage is a dismal failure. He feels irritable and unrecognized constantly. His job as a clerk in the basement of a hospital bores and depresses him. His flat is a domestic wasteland of rubbish and disorganization. He goes through life cynically destroying everyone and every interaction. Eventually his wry, caustic perspective of life inspires him to turn every boring interaction in his life into a comic strip. Harvey turns his introverted irritable humor into genius inspiration and creates the comic book caricature of himself, Harvey Pekar.

Harvey slowly starts to become recognized by the underground comic book art scene. It is when the wider world starts to acknowledge him that the true nature of the _Sulphur_ Harvey comes to the fore. When Harvey realizes that he is invited as a guest on a famous TV show so the host and audience can laugh at him, his _Sulphur_ ego decides to defend with rage and anger. As with Balzac, Harvey was not a man to waste his time on social niceties. _Sulphurs_ have a need to be recognized, but they will also not be manipulated or bought or sold. _Sulphurs_ have a very strong sense of their own ego and _Sulphurs_ are never wrong; it is always everyone else that is truly perverse. The very first scene in the film is of Harvey as a child getting angry with a woman at Halloween because she points out he is not in fancy dress. For Harvey, it is the woman who is crazy for expecting him to be in fancy dress for Halloween, and it does not occur to Harvey that, in fact, he is the one who has not conformed in his choice of dress. It is this sense of belief in themselves which is able to fuel the _Sulphur_ cynicism and ill humor with the world. _Sulphurs_ have a cynical disinterest in everything and everyone they find uninspiring. His wife Joyce, played by actor Hope Davis, has a fantastic line in the film which describes Harvey - “delusions of grandeur.” _Sulphur_ is either a brilliant, inspired genius or suffering from delusions of grandeur; the interpretation is in the eyes of the beholder.
The Challenge for Sulphur in Relationships

A successful relationship for Sulphur has to be with a partner who believes in his pursuits and passions in life and who believes in him. It is when this passion is not acknowledged that Sulphur can become depressed and dejected. Sulphur is listed in the eighteenth-century homeopathic Materia Medica under “selfishness.” With Sulphur, it is not selfishness in the sense of only caring about himself; it is more a case of being totally absorbed by his own thoughts and creative processes. The difference is quite possibly a case of semantics, but it is crucial to understanding why Sulphur will sink into hopelessness. The character of Harvey in the film completely fell apart if he did not receive all the attention and notice he felt he deserved. Sulphurs are so passionate about how they feel that rejection can throw them into despair. Sulphurs will quickly sink into being ill-humored, peevish and irritable with everything in the world if everything is not going their way. The Achilles Heel of Sulphurs is rejection. (12)

It is important that partners of Sulphur know what they are in for. Sulphurs will be off all the time pursuing their creative passions, and their partner will be left to deal with the practical necessities of life. There is a wonderful scene in American Splendor where Harvey invites Joyce back to his flat for the first time and the mess is unbelievable. His defense is that he did not want to delude her to the true nature of things by tidying up for her visit. Only Sulphurs would have such a caustic cynical analysis to support their lack of domesticity. Balzac was equally recognized for his self absorption. He supposedly wrote up to sixteen hours a day and consumed exorbitant amounts of coffee in the process. If he was not writing, he was relaxing and indulging in his other passions - wine, women, and food. Sulphurs see they have a duty to altruistically stimulate the fire of creativity and thought in society but they are not necessarily conventional in the methods they use.

Definitely, Sulphurs are considered to be one of the most self-absorbed constitutions. It is important in trying to work out your constitution that you ask yourself what the core motivation is behind all of your actions. The egoistic selfishness of Sulphur is distinctive. They are inspired by a sense of their own greatness and the need to inspire the rest of the world to see the beauty that they see. The goal is as Linus expressed - the creative inspiration of others by publishing one’s thoughts for the rest of the world to read.

Sulphur and Magnesia carbonica

The Emotional History behind Magnesia carbonica

The homeopathic remedy Magnesia carbonica is often the first remedy I would think of using for the anxieties of an orphaned or abandoned child. The same remedy can also be applicable for adults if they feel as if they were abandoned as a child. A child does not need to have physically lost its parents to experience abandonment. Children are spending long days in crèches or are being left at home with nannies while their parents need to spend long days at work. Not every child will feel abandoned if left with a nanny or at a crèche, but the children who do absorb this experience as an abandonment trauma (13) will often grow up to become constitutional Mag-carb. Mag-carbs experience a sense of underlying dread and apprehension of potential rejection and abandonment. This anxiety is reflected in the need that Mag-carbs have to protect themselves from conflict or disharmony.

Because a lot of the trauma that Mag-carbs absorb into their psyche occurs in childhood and the resulting painful memories well repressed, much of this trauma is not easily recalled. The pattern of repressing painful experiences continues and as adults they shut down emotionally and suffer from depression. Depression is one of the main reasons a Mag-carb adult will consult me for treatment. The habit of denying or repressing painful experiences is a hard pattern for Mag-carbs to break out of, and rather than allowing themselves to get in touch with these feelings, Mag-carbs continue the habit of repression into adulthood. Mag-carbs have a switched off emotional façade of controlled calmness. The calm outer persona is flat, monotone, slightly unfriendly and often reminiscent of a person who is on an anti-depressant medication. Mag-carbs are sitting on years of suppressed experiences and they have a very definite desire not to feel any more pain; so it is understandable that Mag-carbs would hate any sort of fights or disagreements, particularly within their family or home.

The other defense mechanism that Mag-carbs can have is the denial that they have any need for people at all. They convince themselves they do not even need to talk (14) to others, and this isolated repression is then able to protect them from any potential upsets. It is also quite common to see Mag-carbs suffering from no experience of apprehension or depression, but instead suffering from dreadful unexplainable shifting muscle aches and pains (15).
that come about for no reason. Years of holding on to feelings also has the effect of suppressing their physical energy. Every step they take seems to exhaust them.

The Emotional Needs of Mag-Carb in Relationships
The fact that Mag-cars are not in touch with their feelings leaves them with a continual generalized feeling of apprehension and indecision (16), and it is twice as hard for Mag-cars to make decisions as it is for any one else. This is a constitution that needs constant reassurance of love. Mag-cars look towards a secure stable home (17) to ease their anxiety. A relationship with a partner who is loyal and sure is crucial to the health of Mag-cars. Mag-cars have strong fears they will be abandoned by their partner in the same way as their parents abandoned them. Mag-cars are the constitution who will work to hold the family together in adversity, because they need the security of home and family to provide them with comfort and strength.

Based on my knowledge of Sulphur, it would appear on first impression that a relationship with Mag-c would be unlikely for Sulphur to enter into because Sulphur is not noted for his love of responsibility. Sulphurs do not like responsibility; nor do they like being backed into a corner or made to feel like they have to do something they do not want to do. Sulphurs will, however, find an enormous amount of ego satisfaction from this relationship and will see that being needed is a worthy ideal. Sulphur's ego and sense of power in this world is based on being needed and recognized; Mag-cars, by their very nature of needing nourishment, care and stability, will constantly reinforce in Sulphur how much he is needed. Sulphurs will also use the security obsessions of Mag-cars to pursue their ideals.

Is Co-Dependency Always Unhealthy?
Traditional psychology has always asserted that co-dependent relationships are unhealthy for both partners. If both constitutions choose a partner that enables them to remain healthy, from a homoeopathic standpoint one has to assess this relationship combination as being successful even if it falls into the classic definition of co-dependency. Mag-cars will often set up relationships with people that are based on co-dependency. Mag-cars not only need the other person, they also like to make sure the other person needs them. If the other person in a relationship with Mag-cars wants to withdraw support, then Mag-cars can be very manipulative and needy. There are not too many constitutions that have the strength of personality or ego to be able to walk away from, or stand up to, the neediness of Mag-carb.

There are also not too many constitutions that will not harbor feelings of resentment or anger at being manipulated. Sulphurs have the strength of ego to be able to walk away from Mag-cars when they feel like they need some space. They are also encompassing and expansive enough in their love that they will not hold on to feelings of resentment at being manipulated.

Except for matters to do with money it is very hard to manipulate Sulphurs. Sulphurs are able to be manipulated because they do not know how to be practical with money management. Mag-cars are aware of their need for security and will be very practical and careful with money. The Carbonica side of their nature means they hoard money and hold on to everything and do not let go, and the Magnesium side of their nature means they will make sure they work hard in life to secure a solid financial base.

What is interesting about Sulphurs is they also set up co-dependent relationships. Sulphurs will feel important and potent because they will be needed by Mag-cars, and on the other hand, Sulphurs will also want to be looked after. What Sulphur needs is to be able to pursue their altruistic dreams; to do this Sulphurs need financial support. The most important thing to remember with Sulphurs is they are motivated by idealistic beliefs in a better society. Sulphurs believe their purpose in life is to altruistically inspire and stimulate creative thought. It is the Sulphuric fantasies about their creative projects and goals which will trap and hold Sulphurs to Mag-cars. Sulphurs are aware of their co-dependent need for financial support from Mag-cars, and this will not concern them in the least.

I recently asked a Sulphur man what his occupation in life was. His answer was that of a text book case of Sulphur. He replied, "I like to meet people for lunch or breakfast. I am a great philosopher. I like to share my insights, get to know what others think about life; then I like to go down to my property and dig the earth with my hands." This is such a beautiful Sulphur answer; what other constitution would answer that way to the question of what he did for a living? (19) It is easy to see from this answer why this Sulphur man would need the practical money skills of a Mag-carb.

The exchange for Mag-carb comes in the security of knowing that Sulphur will not leave, and this feeling
of security allows Mag-carb to be healthy. Sulphurs are an expansive and inspiring constitution and they love to feel they have inspired others. Sulphurs, in exchange for support of their creative ideals and pursuits, will be eternally grateful and adoring. When they love, Sulphurs throw their whole being into the passion of loving. The most important thing in life for Sulphurs is to be able to pursue their passion. Balzac knew what he needed in life was support (20) for his writing. Mag-carbs will be content with Sulphur’s dependence on them, and Sulphurs will be delighted that they have been able to find a partner who is willing to support them in their pursuits. Sulphurs will pursue their ideals and then come back when they are ready; in the meantime Mag-carbs will not be upset or insecure because they know Sulphur will return. Mag-carbs know that the exchange rate is equal and fair in this relationship.

Mag-carbs will be quite happy to create dependency (21) in their loved ones, but they do not often acknowledge it inside of themselves. Just as they shut down or push their feelings aside, they often set up the same sort of convoluted process in relationships because focusing on their feelings of insecurity is a little too close to home. Every constitution is motivated by different emotional needs. A Natrum muriaticum constitution in a relationship with Sulphur could easily be hurt by Sulphur’s selfish pursuit of his goals, and many other constitutional types in a relationship with Mag-carb could also tire of her constant neediness. This is why it is so important to understand and accept each other’s constitutional needs. Mag-carbs will react very differently to Natmurs. Mag-carbs know that Sulphur is never going to leave them; so they actually feel very secure and content with this arrangement. Mag-carbs interpret all of life through their own emotional needs and insecurities.

The film Her Majesty Mrs. Brown, directed by John Madden, has a wonderful example of a Mag-carb in the character of Queen Victoria and a Sulphur in the character of Mr. Brown. The portrayal of Queen Victoria by actor Judy Dench is a Mag-carb in a grieving state after having lost her adored husband Albert. The exhaustive length of time she has been grieving, her suppressive manner of grieving, and her apprehensiveness about letting go of the grief are typical of Mag-carb. It is obvious that without the support of her beloved Albert she is struggling with feelings of insecurity and needs desperately to hold on to the memory of him by grieving for an interminable amount of time. This behavior is consistent with that of Mag-carb when they feel abandoned. The character of Queen Victoria and her devotion to family and harmony is also revealed as the film progresses.

Mr. Brown is brought to court in the hope he will be able to encourage the Queen to leave the castle and go riding again. Mr. Brown, played by actor Billy Connolly, is a headstrong Scottish Highlander who takes his service to his Queen very seriously and passionately. His sulphuric passion for life is able to compel her to abandon her long lasting grief and start to live again. The Queen becomes more and more dependent and happy in Mr. Brown’s company, and they both grow to need each other. Queen Victoria is unable to see she can return to the demanding role of head of state if she does not have Mr. Brown on whom she depends. He, in turn, believes he is important to her. Mr. Brown also passionately believes he is the only one who can protect her. Sulphurs need to be seen as important in life. This relationship is based on the fulfillment of mutual co-dependency. The story unfortunately is one of unrequited love because such a relationship between a servant and a Queen would have been viewed as a potential threat to the position of Monarchy and government.

Sulphur and Mag-carb Together in the Film American Splendor

The personality and relationship between the two comic book characters in the film American Splendor are Mag-carb and Sulphur. American Splendor is a documentary-like exposé of the life of Harvey Pekar. The film switches between the real life Harvey Pekar and the comic book character and the film’s caricature of Harvey played by actor Paul Giamatti. Harvey Pekar, the comic book caricature, is the classical manifestation of the cynical and irritable, caustic Sulphur who is totally depressed and downtrodden with his life. Harvey is inspired to make a comic book exposé of his wry cynical perceptions of his social interactions of everyday life. Because Harvey is Sulphur, most of the comic book is a self involved gripe about how the actions and feelings of everyone in the world either annoy him or inconveniences him. His partner Joyce (22) played by actor Hope Davis is also exposed and dissected in the comic book with the same degree of cynical dismemberment.

Joyce the comic book caricature, as revealed through the eyes of Harvey, is Mag-carb. Consequently,
the depression that Joyce (23) experiences is also revealed in terms of how it inconveniences and impacts on Harvey. Joyce is portrayed as the more extreme unhealthy presentation of Mag-carb. In the comic book caricature presentation, Joyce is revealed as someone who is filled with depressive gloom and fatalism. He also describes her as so depressed she is never able to lift her body off the futon. (24) Joyce moved cities and gave up her career and security to move in with Harvey, and for Mag-carb this would have the effect of being extremely upsetting. The fact she sinks into chronic depression and is unable to get out of bed after also hearing the news that Harvey is not prepared to have his vasectomy reversed is also conveniently glossed over. Joyce craves a normal functioning family and wants to have children and a sense of belonging. These are the normal desires and needs of Mag-carb. Harvey will not have children (25) and Joyce sinks into a classic Mag-carb depressive abandonment. Harvey's frustration with her is always run past and assessed on the basis of his own needs of the relationship. His irritation is solely based on the fact she is not there to meet his needs, and he is forced to look after her.

The fact that Harvey also needs her to look after him is also not mentioned until he can use her absence to his emotional advantage in the telling of the story of “who is there for whom.” Joyce rarely gets to tell her side of the story. Harvey continually dismisses her observations and talks over the top of her. Harvey only concentrates on allocating blame, and it is because Joyce goes off to Israel to save orphaned children that he sinks into decay and disarray. Because she is not there to care for him, his life starts to disintegrate. The fact that his life was like that before she entered it is conveniently not mentioned. The fact that she feels disempowered and useless in her life and relationship with him is also not acknowledged, and the fact that all of her attempts to tidy up the apartment or create any space for herself were actively sabotaged by him is also not acknowledged. Harvey only emphasizes that Joyce has this need to go off and look after abandoned children. This is a perfect description of Sulphurs in their most unhealthy self-absorbed, self-involved state. The fact that he finds a cancerous lump in his testes when she is away is what makes matters even worse. The one thing that Sulphurs fear is illness, and the fact that he can not acknowledge or deal with the lump until she comes home is also a classic portrayal of the unhealthy side of Sulphurs when they try to avoid responsibility.

Sulphurs will also set up co-dependency relationships (26) in life and be equally as comfortable as Mag-carbs with the dynamic. Harvey needs Joyce as much as she needs to be with him. The symbiotic co-dependency between them is wonderful, yet both of them have a frustration and irritation with the need and love they have for each other. This film is a wonderful portrayal of the need and dependency and fulfillment that they are able to bring to each other as Sulphur and Mag-carb.

Bibliography

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Endnotes

1. For the homeopathic student it should be noted that the carbonate aspect of the remedy is the aspect that contributes to the level of fear and anxiety that is particular to Mag-carb.

2. In my clinical practice, I have used Mag-carb for children that are not able to digest their mother's milk. The use of Mag-carb in this instance is a very clear example of the emotional theme of anxiety matching the physical theme of a sensitive stomach. It is also one of the main remedies to consider in cases of “failure to thrive” (FTT). It is often one of the first remedies to
consider for orphaned or rejected babies.

3. Sulfur is also obtained from natural gas impurities and from sulfur containing chemicals.

4. I have not been gender specific with Sulphur. In referring to Sulphur as chauvinist, I am applying this to female as well as male. Female Sulphurs are as equally chauvinist as male Sulphurs. The “Concise Oxford Dictionary” defines chauvinist as a “bellicose patriot; fervent supporter of a cause.”

5. The most common reason Sulphurs are good with money and are able to plan ahead is a desire to retire early so they can indulge in other creative pursuits.

6. Sulphurs are often noted for their obsession with their health. Balzac gave a very good portrayal of why this is the case. Sulphurs suffer from continual digestion problems caused from overeating. Sulphurs will continually complain of feeling faint if they have not eaten in the last hour! Hahnemann, the founder of homeopathy, lists more than 300 different symptoms of types of digestive complaints experienced by Sulphur. I know from treating Sulphurs in my own practice that it is inconceivable and viewed as preposterous that they ever consider that it would perhaps be a good idea not to eat so much. The fact they overeat and indulge in too much alcohol is never considered the answer; it must be that they are suffering from Irritable Bowel Syndrome, or they even prefer to insist that it must be cancer which is behind their indigestion, the inference being that it is your fault for not knowing either what ails them or that you should be able to restore their health so they can go back to eating properly. Balzac, after being put on a bland diet by his doctor friend, expressed that life is simply not worth living if he cannot have his wine and coffee and his large helpings of very rich food.

7. The following is an extract from Catherine Coulter’s book on the Portraits of Homoeopathic Medicines. It is a quote I could not resist using as it enhances my image of Balzac: “The museum-like décor of his home is rivaled only by that of an Arsenicium, but Sulphur’s rooms will be crowded with objects, while the Arsenicium connoisseur is more select. Both types share a specific form of materialism, wanting to own whatever they appreciate. If it were possible, some Sulphur or Arsenicum would by now have purchased Versailles or the Taj Mahal.” (Coulter © 2002, p.158, Vol. 1)

8. Balzac, even in the throws of passion leaving Russia with his countess, takes along several of the objects d’art from her estate in the coach. Ironically, the weight of all his possessions subsequently causes them to be stuck in the snow.

9. Boswell describes the depression of his friend, Samuel Johnson, in the following quote. It is a wonderful portrayal of the depression and melancholy which afflict Sulphur: “The ‘morbid melancholy’, which was lurking in his constitution and to which we may ascribe those particularities and that aversion to regular life, which, at a very early period, marked his character, gathered such strength in his twentieth year as to afflict him in a dreadful manner. While he was at Lichfield, in the college vacation of the year 1729, he felt himself overwhelmed with a horrible hypochondria, with perpetual irritation, fretfulness and impatience; and with a dejection, gloom and despair, which made existence misery... Johnson, who was blest with all the powers of genius and understanding in a degree far above the ordinary state of human nature, was at the same time visited with a disorder so affective, that they who know it by dire experience, will not envy his exalted endowments... But let not little men triumph upon knowing that Johnson was an HYPOCHONDRIAC.” (Boswell, p.31)

10. The portrayal of Harvey in the film American Splendor also reflected the physical characteristics of a Sulphur constitution. Just the way that Harvey walked along the street with his shoulders stooped and the fact that he kept scratching was very humorous. Sulphurs feel like their back is unable to hold them; so they often have stooped shoulders, and they also suffer from various itching skin irritations.

11. My interpretation of Harvey Pekar as Sulphur is based entirely on my interpretation of Harvey Pekar the comic book caricature, and not on the presentation of the real Harvey Pekar who was interviewed in person in the film American Splendor. I have no proof or knowledge to the fact that the real life Harvey Pekar is the constitution Sulphur.

12. Sulphurs, when rejected, will quickly sink into depression. When Sulphurs are depressed, they can become obsessed with any potential threat to their existence. Sulphurs, at this time, will reflect the typical hypochondria that Samuel Johnson suffered from.

13. Mag-carbs can also easily interpret their parents divorce as a rejection or abandonment.

14. It is also important to note that Mag-carbs have a very rich dream world. Often their dreams give
15. Mag-carbs can suffer from violent neuralgic pains along the course of nerves, especially in the legs and feet; the pains can be so intense they feel it is only better when they are constantly moving. Conversely, they also feel their feet are too heavy and too tired to move. The other leading physical symptom of Mag-carb is extreme sensitivity to being touched when they have experienced any sort of mental or emotional distress. They are so sensitive in their body at these times that even cold air can cause them to feel like they are being bruised.

16. This feeling of inactivity crosses over to the physical. Mag-carbs often suffer from constipation. I have noticed in my Mag-carb patients that they often suffer extreme constipation and total inactivity of their bowels with absolutely no urge to pass a stool when they are avoiding making decisions. The opposite of this is also experienced. Mag-carbs suffer from watery stools that float on the surface. I have observed that diarrhea coincides with difficult dilemmas or conflicts or difficult emotions they are trying to avoid or emotional traumas they have had to endure.

17. What is particular to the apprehensiveness they suffer is that although they can have anxiety all day; at night in bed it goes away. Home and the security of being in bed are very important for Mag-carbs. It is this peculiarity which reveals what lies underneath the insecurity and apprehensiveness of Mag-carbs. They feel like they have been abandoned from the security of family. Home and their bed are consequently very comforting.

18. It is important to quantify what I mean by Sulphur's being impractical with money. The aspect that is important to emphasize is that Sulphurs will always be passionately blind to seeing the practicalities of a particular pursuit that interests them. Sulphurs lack financial discrimination. Sulphurs will not stop, as does Calc-carb, and work on a financial plan. Mr. Brown had no family or plans for the future; he was truly inspired by service and devotion. Balzac was inspired by his writing. Sulphurs are not interested in working or planning for anything that does not fit into their particular pursuit in life. If Sulphurs are good with money, then there will always be a very strong partner who is controlling the overall finances and keeping them in check.

19. This is definitely the partner that Samuel Johnson needed at twenty. I'm sure his hypochondria and melancholy came on at the same time when he had to face the practicalities of life in terms of earning money and not just being able to live his life writing.

20. Balzac knew he needed to marry someone wealthy enough to support his writing. Balzac did have the choice of several wealthy women; the fact his countess also thought he was a genius was the crucial ingredient needed to make him choose her. Sulphurs might be willing to trade their passion and love, but they will not prostitute themselves. The exchange rate or negotiated price of Sulphur's support for Mag-carb is that Mag-carb has to believe in Sulphur's ideals. Sulphurs will not tolerate anyone who does not share their vision. If Mag-carbs wants to keep a Sulphur partner, they have to believe in him/her.

21. Mag-carbs, because they have such a strong need for support, will put a lot of effort into creating a dependent extended family unit. Because Mag-carbs struggle with feelings of being abandoned or orphaned, large, close families ease their feelings of not being needed or wanted. This will also appeal to Sulphurs as the greater the family, the more important they will feel.

22. My interpretation of Joyce as Mag-carb is based on the caricature comic book personality as presented in the film American Splendor and not on the real life person.

23. The real life Joyce is only interviewed in the film once and in that interview she states that she sees Harvey's interpretation of her as negative. I interpret the presentation of Joyce by the Sulphur Harvey as Mag-carb. In real life she may not, in fact, suffer as intensely from depression as cynically portrayed by Harvey.

24. Harvey also portrays Joyce as someone who is chronically hypersensitive to food and appears to either have extreme food allergies or have a very
dysfunctional attitude to eating. Often the effort of dealing with anxiety and the effort of holding down their feelings of apprehensiveness and depression can totally exhaust Mag-carbs. They suffer from sensitive digestion problems that also emotionally coincide with difficult dilemmas or conflicts. Mag-carbs have a characteristic physical theme — when sick, they suffer from sour perspiration, sour diarrhea, sour vomit, and a sour temper. The types of physical complaints that Mag-carbs suffer from come on with the stress of emotional disharmony or discord, especially within the family and relationships. It is impossible to ever reject the emotional cause when considering the physical complaints of Mag-carbs.

25. Harvey will not have children because the world does not live up to his sulphuric ideals.

26. American Splendor is a documentary style film of a film within a film and Harvey Pekar is a real life person making a caricature of his own personality. My comments are to be taken in the context that it is entirely my interpretation that the personality of the two comic book caricatures as presented within the film American Splendor are Sulphur and Mag-carb. My comments on their relationship are also based on the film's comic book caricature portrayal only and I make no factual claims that they have a co-dependent relationship in real life.

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(Editor's note: Ms. Lalor is practicing homeopathy legally in Australia)