

The Hidden Colors of Light: A Case of Iridium Metallicum

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The following is a case of Iridium Metallicum. With careful listening, intuition, the use of a rubric in the Complete Repertory, and Jan Scholten's Homeopathy and the Elements, I was able to prescribe this remedy successfully. My client is one of three adult sisters, two of whom I had already treated. One received Magnetis Polis Arcticus, and the other Kali Phosphoricum. The third sister, my new client Iris (not her real name), came to see me mid-June 1998.

Iridium Metallicum Case - Female, sales manager, age 39, single: she is of medium height, slender and willowy, with short brunette hair, wearing some make-up, which accents her strong and attractive features. Her eyes are bright, big and almond-shaped, inquisitive and knowing. She blinks them frequently. Her pants and shirt are both casual and carefully chosen.

Iris, first of all, presented with a list of physical complaints.

- 1) Frequent urination: and occasional incontinence with cough, concern for "control of my bladder." She drinks fluids frequently and wakes at least once nightly to urinate.
- 2) Hypoglycemia: lightheaded and foggy when hungry or when eating carbohydrates. Snappy, irritable, amel. With eating, amel. With wine, amel. Eating protein for breakfast and lunch. These symptoms disappear on vacation.
- 3) Ailments from jet travel: client frequently travels for business; sore throats, swollen glands, sneezing, nasal obstruction, coughing ensues.
- 4) Skin rashes since childhood: eczema on arms; as an adult, genital herpes also on left buttock.
- 5) Headaches: dull pain in forehead, average once weekly, aggravated before herpes outbreaks, or with neck pain. Cervical vertebrae tend to dislocate, also triggering lower back pain.
- 6) Sore chest: from holding her breath, she believes. Iris suffers chronic tiredness. She wishes to have sustained energy and an easier relationship with food. "Spiritually," she said, "I want to merge and ground and be in present time." She is fearful she will "sabotage" her own joy. "Although I'm joyful now; if it's too good, I will leave."

Iris' story

"My whole life I have wondered why I am here. Who am I? My issues revolve around self

worth. I was a sensitive child. I was told, 'Overly sensitive.' I would transform myself to get love and approval by noticing what others needed. Even as a child, I was either self-conscious and shy or very directly focused."

"I have two selves:

7) a successful corporate businessperson in a corporate environment;

8) a spiritual self that seeks and desires a spiritual environment."

Iris is considering changing her job: "There is no foundation, no anchor, a nothingness." Although she is financially successful, she wants to be "more assertive, more powerful, present and comfortable." Iris gets paid on performance: in fact, she has been the top salesperson in one company for four years, and the first woman in the company ever to achieve this. "I used to feel guilty [regarding this high performance]. I felt I couldn't be corporate and spiritual." In any case, Iris says she tends to push herself to the breaking point of exhaustion.

"I'm very changeable. I feel people intensely. I manage people and do sales [for a commercial office furniture company]. I 'become' the other people I work with." Psychic/spiritual classes have helped her "to ground." These classes give her skills to embody her talents. "I'm all air and water astrologically." ("A rainbow is a mixture of light and water," Sherr). 1 "When I'm busy, I fly out of my body." Iris has a fear of heights and of falling. She fears a "lack of discernment in relations with men and of repeating these old patterns... Years ago, I was married to an emotionally and physically abusive man. I lose myself. I disappear emotionally."

Iris has "podium anxiety," with heart palpitations. "I feel too visible. I have a fear of being judged, yet I want so much to be seen." Loss of breath; she loses the train of thought.

Dreams

- Prophetic: (since childhood) "I shut down that side of myself for fear I had no one to talk to about these dreams. With the exception of a grandfather on one side, and a grandmother on the other, no one else was outwardly clairvoyant."
- Of being chased: "These occur when I feel anxious about being behind in work...I am chased after I have killed someone."
- Doing more and more: "As a waitress: having to seat more and more tables.... I have to do more and more."
- Travel dreams: transportation.

- Architecture: when visiting her boyfriend in another state, who is a builder, she had dreams of architecture, details even of the joinery of houses; "rubrics cubes condos."
- A gray quartz spiral swirling in her room through her heart. ("Sensation as if an iron rod is standing straight in the heart region," Scholten.)²

Medical history

Born: weak, fragile, jaundiced. Right hip not formed.

Pneumonia and mononucleosis at age 4.

Nosebleeds since childhood, agg. at high altitudes.

Acne during adolescence, treated with antibiotics for two years.

Broken wrist, and broken right clavicle for which she had surgery one year ago.

Whiplash.

Family history

Maternal side-cancer

Paternal side-heart problems

Sleep-difficult, wakes at 3:00 AM

Energy-aggravations. 3:00 PM, high at 11:00 AM

Food-desires spicy, salty, fish, robust and warm foods, chocolate

averse-ice, ice cream

aggravates-coffee

Generals-anxious in wind

agg. cold air

Two and one-half years before, Iris had received Phosphorous LM 1-15 over a forty-five day period from another homeopath. Some physical symptoms improved for one to two years. The mental/emotional picture had not changed. This practitioner, however, did point out to Iris that her antagonism of will (between her work and spiritual life) was her core problem. And I agreed.

I prescribed Iridium 1M for Iris. Iridium is in the "Gold Series," according to Jan Scholten's schema. It is in between Osmium to its left and Platina to its right. Iridium, along with Baryta Carb and Aurum (from the Gold Series) are listed in the rubric "will, contradiction of " (Complete Repertory). Iris' case seemed most suited to the issues of the "Gold Series": of work, responsibility, performance, isolation, religion, etc.; and Iridium seemed to fit the case best.

First follow-up-at one month-late July 1998:

Iris said, "Nothing has happened." New client, new remedy (for me), nothing's happened! Reflecting on the wise words of Jeremy Sherr, "nothing" may indicate the gentlest of all healings. I exhorted my client to tell me about her month.

"I cannot say things are better or worse. I had an anxiety attack for two hours, three or four days after taking the remedy." Almost two weeks into the remedy, Iris had an anxiety attack in a hotel room: "I didn't know what to wear for a party. I couldn't leave the hotel room to go to the party. I was afraid I wasn't enough...Anxiety is still an issue." (Iris had not actually spoken of anxiety during the first interview.) "I have been depressed, but not badly...I am also coming to tears where I didn't before." This practitioner noticed a softening in her demeanor.

"My sensitivity, when mixed with anxiety and insecurity, is not pretty. It takes on a different color. It blends together to create depression and anger, and outwardly, frustration and anger."

Iris' sense of personal/psychic boundaries is definitely better, not taking things too seriously or personally. "I get busy and forget to feel for others and myself, but I feel more of an opening. I see a need to be compassionate and to do management simultaneously! I am feeling less socially awkward in business." Iris again noted how seeking approval from her father (i.e. , outside herself) as a child set up a pattern of anxiety she still faced. When I asked her about the conflict she had spoken of between her spirituality and doing business, Iris replied: "I haven't thought about that this month. I guess that means I am a spiritual woman of business!"

Neutral focus-amel. in general, amel. in the afternoons.

Frequent urination-amel., does not wake at night.

Nosebleeds-amel. (none even at high altitude).

Hypoglycemic symptoms-amel., able to eat well more easily; desires fewer sweets and chocolate, but craves coffee.

Herpes-at onset of an outbreak, Iris took a suppressive medication.

Menses-three days early and she wept with them.

PMS symptoms, which she had denied to herself in the past, became more obvious and unavoidable to her.

Dreams-no architecture dreams. Other dreams unremembered.

Sleep-still erratic, somewhat improved. Trouble quieting the mind over the day's business.

Iris' "nothing," it seemed, was something quite special. She and I both mused about this and agreed Iridium 1M was working for her. No remedy was given at the first follow-up.

Over the course of the next twelve months, Iris received Iridium 1M twice and 10M once. (Iris was sensitive to jet travel, and on at least one occasion she needed a repeat due to the deleterious effects it had on the remedy's action.) She continued to improve in all the ways she showed on the first follow-up.

Over time she dropped the relationship she had with her boyfriend when she found "sexuality with him was suffocating and he could not support my sensitivity even though he said he could." No other type of closeness could be found with him. Then she began to date

two new men. (Delusion; wants two of everything, Scholten). She enjoyed learning about herself in this way, but felt self-conscious at the perceived societal norms (of dating only one man at a time). In a few months, she chose one of the two partners to whom she felt best suited, and has continued to enjoy and flourish in the relationship.

During treatment, Iris quit her job and became a consultant for the same company. I noticed her tendency to be hurried and to arrive late for appointments diminished. So did her desire to see many other alternative health practitioners. She seemed more relaxed and less perfectionistic as time went on.

Iris' case is uncannily reflected in Jeremy Sherr's published proving of Iridium (and I have only just read this proving in order to research this article). In his introduction, Sherr writes, "Iridium was named from the Latin/Greek work Iris, meaning rainbow. While in it's solid form, Iridium is a silver- white precious metal, however in marine acid, it becomes astonishingly multicolored and iridescent, 'emitting a light of extraordinary splendor.'

"The Greek goddess Iris is the daughter of Elektra. She is considered to be the personification of the rainbow...the goddess Iris has her own highway. This female courier transports messages between earth to heaven via the iridescent highway of a rainbow. She can travel through air, water and the underworld-from the very fundamentals of the earth to the zenith of the heavens. Her task is to be a joiner, uniter and conciliator..." 3

Consider Iris' case:

"I am all air and water" (the rainbow).

"I need to be grounded. I lose myself; I get busy and fly out of my body."

Dreams of "architecture, joinery."

Dreams of transportation.

And most exquisitely, Iris' "solid form" (her business persona) is better elucidated through the vibrancy of her "colors" as a psychically gifted person when the potentized remedy itself is given.

From Jan Scholten's brilliant description of Iridium, a few themes for this case stand out:

- "A blunder during the conducting of business"-Iris' anxiety before a party: she didn't know what to wear.

Anxiety, disturbing sleep: thoughts of business of the day.

- "Not quite arrogant"-Iris: "Since childhood I have been either shy and awkward or incredibly focused." Scholten: "They [Iridium] tend to be quite single minded. They are always preoccupied with what is yet to be done...They may seem irresponsible but this is only because they see everything from the point of unexplored possibilities. They do feel very responsible, much more than others might expect."

- "Robbed of their own power at the last minute"-Iris suffered chronic fatigue, anxiety and foggy-headedness related to food intake. When she first came to me, Iris' food, sleep and energy level were disturbed or under-functioning. She was robbed of her ability to be fully in her body and to be present in her spirituality.

In this day, religiosity, which runs through the "Gold Series" (or the 6th period of the Elemental Table), might be interpreted as psychic openness or a willingness to do "God's work" through a variety of channels not represented in our classic texts. Iris' openness and struggle with her spirituality and psychic abilities may be translated into the appropriate religious rubrics.

Iris' work in the commercial furniture industry is a revealing metaphor for her expression at stage 9 of the Gold Series. She is not yet sitting in the "big chair" herself (i.e. , the throne) like Platina or Aurum, but she is traveling to and visiting the businesses where she sells and sets up the office (the throne room).

Iris' dreams of having to do more and more (in her waitress dream) reflect a stage of development directly before the summit. She has acceded Sisyphus' tragic push to the top which always fails (Osmium) but she has not yet succeeded to the glitter and assuredness of Platina. Her dreams of having killed someone and of being chased (corroborated in Sherr's 'Dream Section') reminds us of the well-known violence of Platina, only Iridium is not so sure of itself; hence is being pursued as well.

Physical symptoms in Iris' case corroborated by Sherr's proving of Iridium:

Head-forehead, pain, dull
Respiration-spells of breathlessness
Bladder-frequent urination
Extremities-pain, right clavicle, right hip
Skin-itching on arms (and legs)
Symptoms found in Scholten's description of Iridium:
Mind-hurried
Fear-heights, of falling
Generals-(eating
sleeplessness
right-sided
Causes-hurt, humiliation

In the Materia Medica of the Mind by Heli O. Retzek, only six common rubrics are listed for Iridium:

- Antagonism, herself with
- Concentration, difficult

- Dullness, sluggishness, difficulty of thinking and comprehending
- Thoughts, two trains of thought
- Will, contradiction of
- Will, weakness of

The classic texts (Boericke, Clarke, Choudhury, Hering) remind us that in nature Iridium is found only in combination with Osmium and Platina as Osmiridium. It has a high specific gravity and is one of the heaviest substances known. Clarke compares it to China and Laurocerasus for "the aged and persons exhausted by disease," and for children "who are puny, weak-limbed and grow too fast." It is said in Clarke that Iridium may be superior to Aurum, Aurum Mur and Osmium in uterine tumors. All the texts refer to a vacant feeling in the head-and "painful weakness of the lower limbs and renal region alternating with self-confidence and facilitated mental labor."

Iridium was introduced by Hering in 1853 and proved by A. J. Tafel in the 19th century. It is compared to Platina for its numbness and cramp-like sensations; and also to Ferrum Met., Palladium, Causticum, Kali Ferrocyanatum. The psychic sensitivity of Iridium may place it in the Phosphorous family of remedies which would also include Iris' sisters' remedies Magnetis Polis Arcticus and Kali Phosphoricum, among others.

Iris is dancing and performing in experimental theater, and ready to find consulting work more suited to her talents, possibly creating healing environments in the workplace. However, nineteen months after her first dose of Iridium, her issues of insecurity and some skin symptoms led me to recently prescribe Phosphorous 200C for Iris. If over time it appears that Phosphorous is a curative remedy for her, it will be interesting to explore the relationship of Iridium to Phosphorous.

1 Jeremy Sherr and Dynamic School, Dynamis Proving, Volume I, by Dynamis Books, England, 1997, p. 341.

2 Jan Scholten, Homeopathy and the Elements, by Stichting Alonnissos, Netherlands, 1996, p. 727.

3 Sherr, op. cit., p. 341.

4 Scholten, op. cit., p. 725.

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