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Understanding the child: A homoeopathic perspective on pediatric behaviour and remedies

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Abstract

Pediatric case-taking in homeopathy relies primarily on objective observations, as younger children often cannot articulate their symptoms. Careful attention to Behaviour, temperament, and parental input is essential in selecting the similimum. The AXIS framework—sociability, activity, destructibility, thermals, and Behaviour—serves as a practical guide for evaluating individuality in children. Distinct constitutional portraits, illustrate characteristic patterns of thought, emotion, and physical expression. Recognizing these remedy pictures enhances clinical accuracy, allowing practitioners to address both mental and physical aspects effectively. Integrating Behavioural assessment with constitutional analysis ensures individualized prescriptions, resulting in gentle and lasting cures in pediatric practice.

Keywords: Pediatric homeopathy, case-taking, axis framework, behavioural observation, constitutional remedies, child temperament, homeopathic portraits, individualized prescription

Introduction

Each child's Behaviour is like a unique fingerprint, no two are ever same. Taking history and examining in younger children differs from those of adults. It can be challenging.

In Homoeopathy the most valuable indications of remedy for the prescription are to be found in those presenting with both subjective as well as objective symptoms. But in pediatric age group its more of an objective symptom which are obtained. Subjective symptoms are mostly obtained from any of the attender or guardian. In younger children, the observation of parents and physician himself are utmost important. Finding the right similimum is greatest challenge for every homoeopath in pediatric as child cannot answer all the questions which is put forth and whatever parents tell, it's their judgement or feeling. Peculiar modalities, Behaviour or reactions are guide to the remedy.

Especially in school going ones it is important to understand each child's Behaviour as no child reveal their emotion, their Behaviour in same manner just as in case of Homoeopathic remedies which shares no similar totality and should be given a proper consideration in both educational as well as in clinical settings. The mental state, conscious and subconscious is usually revealed by their general Behaviour, conversation, expression of their countenance as well as by their voluntary verbal expressions.

Children respond well to homeopathic treatment. Their vital force is young and strong, and the web of life has not, in most cases, become tangled by disease, suppressive treatments, environmental pollution and emotional stress. They present the homeopathic artist with, not a blank canvas, but one on which the picture stands out clearly, and if the right medicine is applied, they get well and stay well in a rewarding fashion ^[1].

Certain aspects can be said as AXIS must be considered while investigating a pediatric case which not only helps in understanding the child but also by considering following points can help to reach an individualized Homoeopathic remedy in turn results in *rapid, gentle and permanent cure* which is definite. Here AXIS represents essence of general and innate characteristics of child ^[2].

Those aspects are

- SAD Axis - sociability, activity, and destructibility (Aggression): Sociability

It refers to response of a child to a new stimulus or new situation like meeting stranger, making new friends. But all do not react in a same way.

They can be approaching or withdrawing type. This can be judged by the interaction between child and the mother with doctor, child and stranger, giving child a new stimulus.

Approaching: They can also be referred as 'extrovert', 'easy going'. Here the child reacts positively to new stimulus and without any inhibitions, adapt to new environment or stimuli easily.

Withdrawing: They are referred as 'introvert' 'inhibited'. The child feels inhibited internally when they are presented with new stimuli. Hence, they withdraw from such situations. Take more time to adapt to new stimuli.

Activity

It is the degree of the energy expenditure spent by a child throughout the movement. This activity level can be inherited or can be influenced by child's environment, and it is important factor in determining temperament. They can be hyperactive or hypoactive on two planes- mental and physical plane.

Aggression

This tells about how child reacts and manifests his/her anger which can be -aggressive and non- aggressive.

Aggressive type is the one where child expresses anger through the action such as ripping or tearing apart objects, slapping, hitting, bite, strike others or break their toys.

Non-aggressive children do not manifest any destructive Behaviour in fact they are calmer and handle anger situations peacefully. Usually, they mildly ignore the situation and move ahead.

- **Thermals:** It refers as tolerance to heat and cold Heat is produced in body through different chemical reactions in metabolism. The heat production differs in each individual which depend upon their genetic constitutions. In order to unlock genetic constitutional similitum, we need to know how much the heat is generated and their tolerance to the heat and cold.

Hence when we want a deep and effective cure then we have to consider thermals as one of key for prescribing remedy.

In children the thermals are determined by assessing how much heat is produced and how extra warmth the child needs. In order to assess following points must be checked: - temperature of abdomen, of neck, perspiration, desire to need cooler environment and position in sleep.

- **Behaviour AXIS:** Two concepts are discussed in this particular axis. They are - diligence and Behaviour.

Diligence: stands for those children who are sincere, hardworking, having unremitting attention, usually to a particular task. We have to determine whether child is diligent or not

If the child is diligent: The child is never forced to do any work or asked to study. Goes to school on his/her own interest and never leaves or bunks off from school. The child insists on going to school despite of any illness. If child goes to school for fear of being punished or for any vested interest then diligence must be ruled out

Behaviour: It speaks about whether the child is obedient or misbehaving.

The child may be obedient due to various reason such as - strict parents, timidity nature of child, conscientiously diligent child, fear of being rejected or abandoned, in a mild yielding child.

Expression of obedience are - when they are told not to do, will stop whatever they are doing, they are well behaved. If they are offered something like chocolate, first they seek permission or will look at their mother and then only accept. Misbehaving are the one who voluntarily or involuntarily misbehaves and disturb others ^[2].

Constitutional portraits of Homoeopathic child remedies: Baryta Child: "Tiny Hands, trembling confidence"

- Indicated in children are often subjected to quinsy, they are prone to recurrent infections and frequent colds, sometimes progressing to tonsillitis with suppuration ^[4].
- The child reflects both physical and mental immaturity or dwarfism.
- Children are usually late in learning any of the activity and with their studies ^[3].
- The child does not learn and repeat the mistake again and again. Their growth and intellectual milestones are delayed.
- A hallmark is pronounced shyness—they avoid strangers, hesitate to speak, and often display nervous habits such as nail-biting. These traits reflect a lack of confidence and indecision, even in simple choices ^[3].
- They are very forgetful and inattentive. They never stick to an activity like playing for any length of time.
- As they are inattentive, never concentrate on a lesson. It appears that they are learning something today but tomorrow they will forget everything.
- With lack of confidence, they are irresolute, they can't decide upon what to choose. For example, choosing topic for project in school. Whenever they finally decide, later they change saying that it's not good enough ^[2].

Calcarea Child: "The Child with Stubborn Heart with Shy Eyes"

Calcarea children typically have a soft, round build due to sluggish metabolism and difficulties with bone development. Diseases arising from defective assimilation, imperfect ossification ^[4].

Academically, they process information slowly and often require repetition to retain knowledge. Makes mistakes in reading and writing.

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- Inflexible and obstinate. Because of a need to finish what is started so they will have tantrums in order to be allowed to finish tasks.
- They are very obstinate and dislike sudden changes in routine and may have emotional outbursts when forced to adapt ^[4].
- They have fear of being laughed at so they do not answer any questions in the class even if they knew.
- Although affectionate and diligent when supported, they lack initiative, preferring indoor activities.
- Harsh criticism easily reduces them to tears, and they frequently avoid risk-taking, opting for security and familiarity.
- So, they are happy whatever they are doing, and they excel in it. They avoid taking new risks or initiatives ^[2].
- Whenever teacher or anyone shouts at the child, immediately starts weeping and gets scared.
- Mathematics is the subject which is difficult for them but if they put some efforts, they are able to solve the problems.
- Fear of ridicule prevents them from participating openly in class.
- If any friends bully the child, instead of fighting back the child comes home and starts weeping. Want of confidence.
- While examining the child, he or she starts weeping. Fear of injection ^[2].

Chamomilla Baby: “The Snappish Child”

- Indicated in conditions related to children, newborn and during dentition period. (diarrhea during dentition period)
- Chamomilla is suited to children who react with extreme irritability to pain or discomfort. Minor illnesses, especially during teething, cause exaggerated distress.
- Ailments from anger resulting in various complaints such as diarrhea, fever and chill ^[4].
- These children scream, demand attention, and angrily reject whatever is offered to them.
- Due to extreme sensitiveness, they are easily affected by mortification, by chagrin or by excitement results in various complaints such as convulsions, colic and various other nervous symptoms.
- Great irritability such that a little pain in a child brings forth manifestation which seems as if it was a great suffering ^[7].
- The child is cross, snappish and Their irritability often extends into school years, where they may answer rudely or disrupt lessons.
- During pain the child whines, cries and sputter everything in the room. They ask for things lie to eat or something to play with, but when they are given to the child, throws them away ^[4].
- Despite rejecting affection, they paradoxically insist on being carried or rocked, which provides temporary relief especially of their pain.
- Their sensitivity to anger, noise, or conflict makes them easily upset, and they express frustration through misbehaviour.
- They omit words while reading or writing ^[3].

Calcarea Phos Baby: “Mental Sluggishness and Physical Delay”

Physically, they are pale and undernourished, yet mentally restless.

Children requiring Calcarea phosphorica show delayed bone development, losing flesh and may be slow to walk or support their own weight ^[4].

- Indicated mostly in cases of non-union of fractured bones in flabby sunken emaciated children with defective bone development ^[4].
- Their developmental delay contrasts with occasional bursts of sharpness in practical matter
- The child is physically very active, if child prefers indoor games, then the remedy is contraindicated ^[2].
- Often the child has feeble and weak mind, so they have inability to sustain mental efforts, result in sufferings of head ^[3].
- Schoolwork quickly overwhelms them, leading to headaches, phobias, or stomachaches.
- Whenever the child hears that someone has done wrong, he can't tolerate, indignation rises. He avoids the conversation.
- Very irritable. Becomes very violet if his opinion is contradicted. They do not tolerate interruption or interference.
- They resist prolonged concentration, appearing lazy or

inattentive, though they may be internally restless. Irritability is marked—they become angry when contradicted and avoid challenging intellectual tasks ^[2].

Cina Baby: “The Restless, Reactive and Ravenous Child”

- Predominantly a *WORM REMEDY*. The Cina child frequently exhibits worm-related symptoms such as teeth grinding at night, nasal picking, and unexplained hunger despite weight loss.
- Canine hunger. The child is hungry soon after full meal. Greater the hunger, greater the emaciation ^[4].
- The Chamomilla child is characterized by marked irritability and hypersensitivity to discomfort, often switching quickly from one toy to another
- They may demand objects or attention but quickly reject what is offered.
- Denied requests trigger angry outbursts that may include hitting, throwing objects, or pushing caregivers away with piteous moaning.
- Minor ailments or pain feel overwhelming, leading to restlessness, crying, and temper outbursts.
- The child is oversensitive; they can't take any joke especially if related to him.
- They are offended by smallest things
- Relief often comes from being carried or rocked, suggesting the need for constant soothing but it doesn't give any relief.
- Can't bear even to look at the child. Refuses hair cutting.
- Oversensitivity to teasing, combined with an insatiable appetite and restless Behaviour, are hallmarks of this remedy picture.
- Sensitive and touchy. The child can't stand up any disturbances like getting scolded or punished, can produce convulsions.
- They are irritable and capricious. They resist physical contact, dislike being examined, and may respond aggressively to being touched. If examining, the child strikes, bites and throws things at the examiner. Starts to weep and cannot be quieted.
- The child is always hungry, hunger which is not relieved by eating. Greater the hunger, greater the emaciation.
- They do not want to be touched or looked at ^[2].

Kreosotum Child: “The Unsatisfied Little Giant”

- Kreosotum is indicated for children with early dental decay and painful dentition, teeth begin to decay as soon as they appear.
- Every discharge from mucous membrane is - corrosive fetid ichorous with greatly depressed vitality.
- These children often appear prematurely aged, tall, and thin, with wrinkled features with rapid emaciation with difficult dentition ^[4].
- Restlessness prevents contentment, and only affection or constant caressing provides some relief.
- Lack of satisfaction. Dissatisfaction dominates their Behaviour: they demand new toys or activities but discard them quickly.
- For example; when a child is given with a toy, for few minutes plays with it later throws away the toy.
- Enuresis during first sleep and difficulty waking to urinate are key physical features. Can only urinate

when lying.

- Passes urine during sleep with dreams of urination ^[2].
- copious pale, cannot get out of bed quick enough, child is aroused with difficulty ^[4].
- Their irritable and unsatisfied nature often leaves caregivers struggling to provide comfort.

Lycopodium Child: ‘Inside the Lycopodium Child: From Shyness to Little Tyrant’

- Right sided remedy and in all diseases, complaints are worse from 4-8pm
- Lycopodium is child of parents who demand achievement, so the child has anticipatory anxiety,
- Two Main Types of Behaviour is the lycopodium child:

1. Fearful / Insecure Child

- Clings to parent (especially mother).
- Timid, anxious, shy around strangers.
- Lacks self-confidence, fears failure.
- Needs security and reassurance.

2. Bossy / Dominant Child

- Loud, demanding, and controlling.
- Reverses parent-child roles is seen, parents appear apologetic.
- Acts like a “little tyrant,” treating family as inferiors.

These Two Extremes Can Appear Separately or as a Continuum in the Same Child

- The child is Indecisive. They do not want to answer questions, and they look at a parent to make sure they are answering correctly
- If forced to make a decision the child may run away or cry
- Weak handshake, timid voice, avoids eye contact.
- Giggles nervously, may cry or hide if pressured to decide⁵.
- Lycopodium children present two contrasting personalities. In public, they may be shy, hesitant, and overly dependent on parents for reassurance. They avoid eye contact, speak timidly, and may freeze when asked direct questions. At home, however, they often display domineering Behaviour—demanding, controlling, and treating siblings or parents as subordinates, behaving like a “little tyrant.” ^[2].
- This oscillation reflects insecurity masked by compensatory dominance. They also suffer anticipatory anxiety, dreading performance or social exposure, though they frequently perform well once tasks begin.
- Lycopodium children often oscillate between timidity and dominance.
- The child has fear of strangers (present from infancy, not just developmental), of being alone, especially in the dark.
- Anxiety before sleeping, insists on light or company. Needs parents close by.
- They also experience anticipatory anxiety—fear before performance or social situations—yet frequently improve once the task begins ^[5].
- The child likes to dominate or to control over others. He plays with younger child so that the child can dominate ^[2].

Ignatia Child: "The Silent Sufferer"

- **The Remedy of Contradictions:** complaints relieved by unusual factors (e.g., sore throat better from swallowing solids).
- Indicated in children who catch cold in warm moist weather and commonly indicted for bronchitis in infancy ^[4].
- She is sensitive yet hard working girl and overtired after she has been working in school, music, and art.
- The child is quick to perceive and rapid to execute, mild disposition.
- Ignatia children are sensitive and introspective. They internalize emotional pain and often conceal disappointment, preferring solitude but may show some hysterical reactions like deep sighing.
- She wants to alone, doesn't communicate much with her friends
- Sensitive physically and mentally if anything is told in lighter note, becomes sensitive. At least provocation she cries and have complete discouragement.
- They are easily moved to tears, but tear never comes out ^[2].
- They are diligent students but may develop psychosomatic symptoms—headaches, sighing, or convulsions—after academic failures or reprimands. or somebody in her class performs better than her ^[4].

Pulsatilla Child: "The Dependent Child Seeking Love and Security"

- The child is mild and clingy. Pulsatilla children crave affection and reassurance, often clinging to parents or remaining close to caregivers ^[2, 5].
- Timidity is pronounced in this child. Whenever a question is asked to child, They rarely assert themselves independently and instead look to adults to answer for them.
- However, their dependence makes them prone to insecurity and tears if affection is withheld.
- The child may be timid all the time or in unfamiliar surroundings. They prefer familiar surroundings, are easily moved by praise or criticism, and dislike confrontation.
- They want to be liked by others, but they lack initiative to begin the interaction.
- These children crave love, attention, and physical affection. They often cuddle, hug, and seek reassurance, even subtly prompting others to touch or comfort them.
- Unlike more self-driven personalities, their actions often aim to gain approval rather than satisfy inner conviction.
- While they may be messy in habits, they keep themselves tidy, with well-groomed hair and clean clothes, often styled cutely rather than seriously.
- Gentle and cooperative, they seek validation through helpfulness and affection.
- Unlike Natrum muriaticum children, who clean from an inner drive, Pulsatilla children do it for external praise ^[5].

Tuberculinum Child: "The Fearless yet Fragile Child"

- Disobedience is the hallmark of tuberculinum. They

often disregard parental instructions, repeating misbehaviour regardless of punishment.

- The parents will punish the child, but it doesn't bother to them, instead they repeat the same for which their parents have told not to do.
- Tuberculinum exhibit restlessness and defiance. They are hyperactive mentally but their body is slow. They love to wander off, often likes to observe things which move faster.
- Thinking and rational action are often disturbed. Spectrum ranges from mild imbalance to severe mental handicap.
- The child is fearless and bold. Likes to try things like amusement park rides where other children are scared off. Fearlessness contrasts with specific phobias particularly of animals like cats or dogs ^[2].
- Physically, they may be delicate or developmentally delayed, yet they seek excitement and novelty, from outdoor exploration to risky play.
- Mental + physical anomalies combined are combined in the child. Headaches or fatigue from studying.
- Aversion to homework — may lie, refuse, or act restless.
- They tire quickly from mental effort, avoid homework, and may be mistaken for children with ADHD.
- The child has Memory issues: forgetting, rereading, skipping letters, writing vertically.
- They are affected by some of diet: Dairy → causes aggression, destructiveness. Sugar C fruits → causes restless, impulsive.
- Irritability is pronounced on waking, and dietary triggers (such as sugar or dairy) may worsen restlessness or aggression.

Conclusion

Pediatric homeopathy demands sensitivity, observation, and structured analysis. The AXIS aspects combined with constitutional portraits, provides a reliable approach to case-taking. By focusing on individuality, homeopaths can unlock the similimum, enabling rapid, gentle, and permanent cures in children.

Conflict of Interest

Not available

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