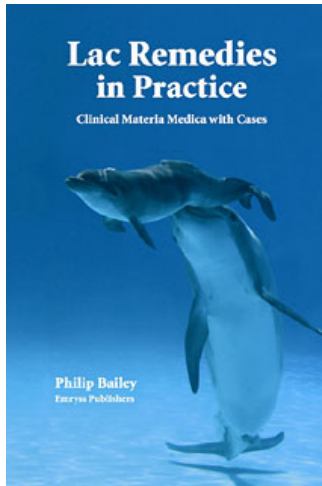


Philip M. Bailey Lac Remedies in Practice

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The *Lac* Remedies in Practice

A clinical materia medica with cases

Philip Bailey



Emryss Publishers

CONTENTS

<i>Introduction – Lac themes</i>	11-27
The <i>Lac</i> remedies	11
Missing Foundation	12
Ambivalence	13
Paradise Lost	15
Alone and Co-dependent	16
Mother-Child	17
Where is the Man?	19
Victim-Consciousness	21
Unsupported	22
Community Awareness and Advocacy	22
Rebel with a Cause	23
Push and Pull	25
Boundaries	25
<i>Lac humanum</i>	28-59
Lack of Nurturing	29
Survival	30
Alone	31
Mother Love	34
Activist/ Feminist	38
All or Nothing	40
On Jacob's Ladder – The Spirit-Body Split	42
Whose reality?	45
Depression and Worthlessness	47
Summary	48

Case 1	49
Analysis	51
Case 2	55
Analysis	56
<i>Lac felinum</i>	60-87
Ambivalence	61
Freedom and Dependency	63
Anti-Authority	65
Feminist	66
Fear and Delusions	67
Throat Chakra	70
Addictions	71
Sensuality	71
Cats	72
The Tomcat	72
Differential Diagnosis	74
Physical Complaints	77
Case 1	78
Analysis	80
Case 2	82
<i>Lac equis</i>	88-133
Blocked	89
Breaking Free	95
Depression and Mania	97
Assertive	99
Differential Diagnosis	100
Case 1	103
Analysis and treatment	104
Analysis	109
<i>Lac equis</i> – mind	111

Case 2	115
Comment	122
Case 3	128
Comment	130
<i>Lac caninum</i>	134-157
Worthlessness	135
Out of Control	139
Abuse	144
Denial	146
Grief	147
The Male	147
Case 1	150
Analysis	152
Repertorisation	153
Case 2	154
Analysis	156
<i>Lac defloratum</i>	158-173
Passivity	159
Nebulous	161
Self-esteem	162
Suppressed rage	163
Co-dependency	165
Fear of annihilation, of being trapped	166
Don't trust the Feminine	167
Case 1	168
Analysis	170
<i>Lac leoninum</i>	174-198
Dignity and Pride	175
Calm, Responsible and Controlled	177

Near Death Experiences	178
Africa	180
Trouble with Men	180
Summary	184
Case 1	185
Analysis	189
<i>Lac leoninum</i> rubrics in this case	192
Case 2	192
Analysis	195
<i>Lac delphinum</i>	200-114
Fear	201
Relationships and Sexuality	202
Heart-centred and Dreamy	203
Play, Escape and Magical Thinking	204
Depression	205
Case 1	206
Analysis	207
Case 2	209
Analysis	211
<i>Lac lupinum</i>	216-213
The Outsider	217
Trouble with Women	219
The Opportunist	219
The Thrill-Seeker	220
Avoidance	221
Trouble with Money	224
Death and other Inconveniences	225
Case	226
Analysis	227
Index	231

INTRODUCTION

The Lac remedies

Until quite recently remedies made from milk occupied a relatively small niche in our materia medica, and it was only *Lac caninum* that was familiar to most homeopaths. This has changed markedly over the past 20 years, thanks to the contributions of homeopaths such as Nancy Herrick and Rajan Sankaran, who undertook provings of animal milks, and Karl Müller, who provided remedy pictures of milks based on clinical experience. We now have a whole family of remedies derived from human and animal milks, and a growing understanding of their common and their individual qualities. It has become clear that these remedies are very deep acting when used constitutionally, since they address themselves to the earliest of traumas, the failure to bond adequately with the mother at birth.

The materia medicae in this book are derived entirely from my own clinical experience using *Lac* remedies in my homeopathic practice. They are therefore somewhat different from materia medicae derived largely from provings. Thankfully, there is also a great deal of congruence between the two, particularly regarding keynotes and common themes.

My experience using *Lac* remedies has shown me that it is not the birth trauma that produces a *Lac* picture constitutionally. If that

were the case, we would only need one *Lac* remedy. Rather, particular *Lac* remedies run in families, and are inherited genetically. When a baby is born with a *Lac* constitution, it is more liable to have trouble forming a bond with its mother for two reasons. Firstly, its mother often has a *Lac* constitution, and therefore is intrinsically at a disadvantage with regard to forming a bond with her child. And secondly, the child itself, resonating constitutionally to a *Lac* frequency, is less able to bond fully.

In some cases both mother and child have the same *Lac* constitution, but the clinical picture is mild. In other words, the mother-child bond was established relatively normally, and the child grew up expressing the psychological and physical profile of a *Lac* remedy, but in its more benign form. In other cases, bonding was severely compromised, and in these cases the clinical pictures of both mother and the child express the more pathological degrees of *Lac* symptomatology.

Let us now consider the general themes that are encountered in *Lac* remedies.

Missing Foundation

Breast milk is our first sustenance. It provides all the physical nourishment we require and forms the basis for psychic bonding with our mother. This bonding is the foundation for our psychological development as a separate being. Through bonding to our mother we continue to be protected, as we were in the womb. We are still one with our mother, and hence safe. Only after bonding has successfully been established, can we begin to separate safely, to experience ourselves as separate entities, yet connected to mother, and hence to the world.

In *Lac* cases bonding was never fully established with the mother. This missing foundation underlies all the various dynamics that typify the *Lac* state. There are many reasons why bonding may have been unsuccessful. One common reason is that the mother was in a *Lac* state, and hence was not available emotionally. *Lac* mothers very often give birth to *Lac* children. If the mother did not bond with her mother, she cannot bond with her child. In such cases the mother may be aware of a profound distance between herself and her child. Often love will grow in time, but the child's psychological foundations have already been severely affected.

There may be various physical reasons why the mother cannot bond with the child. She may be severely ill after giving birth, and hence not available energetically. She may have post-natal depression. Or the child may be premature, or so delicate that she cannot be nursed by her mother, and must lie alone in an incubator. All these scenarios are encountered in *Lac* cases.

Very often in *Lac* cases there is a history of separation from the mother during the first two years of life. This can weaken an already shaky bond with the mother, and further threaten the individual's sense of personal security. Equally common is a history of difficulties in breastfeeding. It does not seem to matter whether the difficulties appeared to come from the mother (e.g. Lack of milk) or from the child (e.g. poor attachment to the breast).

Ambivalence

When a baby is born, it instinctively moves towards the mother's breast. This reaching out towards the mother is the first movement of the child towards a specific goal, and it lays the foundation for healthy

connections with other people later in life. When this first movement is interrupted, the individual grows up not knowing how to connect with other people.

Famous studies of new born babies showed that when their mother did not respond to their reaching out, they tried again and again to reach her¹. After several attempts fail to elicit a response, the baby stops reaching out, and withdraws. This withdrawal from contact is a kind of giving up, and it is seen in every *Lac* case. *Lac* individuals lack prior experience of reliable close connection. Rather, they have the early imprint of failing to connect with mother. The initial healthy reaching out movement toward the other was interrupted.

As a consequence, when they are faced with the possibility of relationship later in life, they cannot reach out and trust that the bond will be reliable. That would only open the original wound. If they do manage to open up and form a close bond with another, the loss of such a bond feels absolutely devastating. It repeats the original traumatic experience after birth, of losing the mother, who is everything.

A baby who has no contact with another person becomes autistic. In *Lac* cases contact is there, but bonding is incomplete. The result is a person who is constantly in a dilemma - should I try again to connect (Gestures, makes: grasping or reaching at something – Millenium), or should I protect myself? This is a fundamental dynamic in *Lac* cases. The person feels torn between the two movements – towards or away. Yes or No. As a result, ambivalence is a key symptom in most *Lac* cases.

¹ James Robertson's film, 'Young Children in Brief Separation', 1976, Robertson Films

The original ambivalence towards attempts at connection continues later in life, whenever a connection to another person is considered. And this basic ambivalence spreads out, to cover reactions toward many things. Should I move towards Life or Death? Towards Expression or Silence? Towards Independence or Connectedness? Towards Feeling, or Neutrality? It is the basis of the well-known *Lac* tendency to feel pulled between looking after self, and connecting to others.

Paradise Lost

A newborn child has just emerged from the paradise of the womb, where it felt at one with its environment. The movement towards Mother is a movement toward safety, a continuation of connectedness. When this is not possible, the child tries to retreat back into the womb. It curls up and withdraws its senses. In *Lac* people we see an attempt to withdraw away from life, back into the paradise of the womb, or even the spiritual world, whence came the child's soul. Two manifestations of this attempt are narcotic use, and spiritual identification. In both cases, the individual seeks to return to a pre-natal feeling of oneness.

Most *Lac* cases are not addicted to narcotics. The spiritual realm is more often chosen as a haven from the cold isolation felt in this world. Most *Lac* individuals are spiritual people, in both senses of the word. They have some experience of higher states of consciousness, and they identify with philosophies which emphasize spiritual realities. Frequently, they identify with New Age philosophy, a kind of user-friendly religion, which emphasizes that you are Spirit, and all things are possible. In so doing, the *Lac* individual maintains the split that occurred at birth, between Heaven and Earth. In effect, she says 'No thanks' to life on Earth. Many individuals who responded deeply to

a *Lac* remedy have commented, 'I never really fully committed to being here on Earth.'

This denial of Earth-based reality is common in *Lac* cases. They appear as 'space-cadets,' more interested in your Sun-sign than in a real connection; more keen to heal the planet's Heart chakra, than to connect with their own injured feelings. And their original retreat to a prior paradise was a desperate one, hence this desperation can be seen in the zealous manner in which *Lac* individuals express their spirituality. If you affirm their attachment to Spirit, they can feel secure. If you do not, they begin to doubt it, and then they may have to feel the terrible loneliness of the newborn child, disconnected from its mother. Repeating the mantra, 'I am surrounded by white light' is a poor substitute for early maternal bonding.

Alone and Co-dependent

Having failed to bond completely with Mother, the *Lac* child feels very alone, and this feeling never leaves her. She will feel alone for the rest of her life, unless she experiences profound healing. Even if she is in a long-term, committed relationship, she is liable to feel alone, and most *Lac* individuals find it hard to maintain such relationships. *Lac* cases often report that they feel cut off from the world, alone and unsupported. (*Lac* clients very often use the word 'unsupported' in their histories).

Just as the newborn defended itself by withdrawing, so the *Lac* individual tends to isolate himself, not daring to feel the devastation of further failures at reaching out. Like *Natrum*, he becomes good at caring for others, whilst being unable to care for himself.

The *Lac* child cannot bear to simply lose the mother. Instead, he seeks to win her love. *Lac* cases typically report that they tried as children to please their mother, and as adults they continue to try. They were 'good' children, just like *Natrum muriaticum*, helpful and responsible. Very often they were the eldest child, helping mother by shouldering some of her responsibilities towards the other children. They thus became like little adults. Later, they continue to take responsibility for other people, and feel guilty when they don't. In this sense *Lac* cases have unclear boundaries.

Mother-Child

There is a mother – child dynamic that is very typical in *Lac* cases. The patient says that as a child they looked after their mother. In other words, the roles were reversed. I have had *Lac* children complain to me that their mother behaves like a child. They were referring to the mother's dependency, and her emotional immaturity. *Lac* constitutions, like other constitutions, run in families. Very often the mother and the child both respond to the same *Lac* remedy. In such cases it is common for the mother to use emotional blackmail to maintain the care she gets from her child. She may say, 'You are killing me' when the daughter comes home late from a night out, and the daughter, who has grown up hearing how much her mother has sacrificed for her, feels very guilty.

Here both mother and daughter are acting out *Lac* programmes. The daughter is looking after her mother, in order to win her love. The mother uses her daughter for support, since she feels so alone and unsupported. During consultations *Lac* mothers will often bring a child in for support. Even though the child is only ten years old, he will correct his mother's mistakes, point out symptoms his mother has

forgotten, and hug his mother when she cries. The mother appears to have no idea that this relationship is inappropriate. This dynamic is especially seen in one-parent families, which are surprisingly common when the mother is a *Lac* individual.

As the *Lac* child of a *Lac* mother grows up, he begins to resent the manipulation that he senses his mother is using. He is used as a confidant and partner by his mother, and this puts enormous pressure on him. By the time he is a teenager, he is liable to have developed a lot of anger towards his mother, an anger that usually survives well into adulthood. When a case revolves around anger towards the mother, a *Lac* remedy is often indicated.

With regard to *Lac* mothers, two very different dynamics are typically seen. One is the mother who could not bond with her child, and remains detached. She may do her best to be a good mother, but she knows she does not feel the closeness to her child that she should. She may favour another child, or even be actively unkind toward the child she could not bond with. In the latter case, it is as if she took out on the child all the anger she felt when she, as a child, was rejected by her mother.

The other common *Lac* dynamic is the *Lac* mother who is totally dependent upon her child for love and emotional security. Since she could not find it from her mother, she seeks it in her child. Here is a being who needs her so much that she can rely on the connection. In these cases the roles are reversed, and the child grows up looking after the mother. (In practice, we also see a mixed picture, where the mother is cool to the child, yet still manages to rely on the child and be looked after by her).

Mother and child themes run through *Lac* cases in many ways. A *Lac* patient will often dream of children in danger, and sometimes of saving such children.

In life many *Lac* people are staunch advocates for mothers and children, often in professional roles. This advocacy is seen especially often in *Lac humanum* cases.

Where is the Man?

Single-parent families are extraordinarily common in *Lac* households. The majority of the *Lac* mothers I have treated were single mothers. I have wondered why this is so, and come to the following hypotheses.

- ~ The *Lac* woman does not trust love. In a relationship with a man this mistrust has the effect of pushing the man away. Subconsciously, the *Lac* mother feels safe with her children, but not with her husband.
- ~ The *Lac* mother develops such a dependency on her child that she excludes her partner. This can contribute to a relationship break-up.
- ~ *Lac* people tend to be co-dependent. Thus a *Lac* woman may attract a man who needs looking after, become pregnant, and then realize she cannot be a mother to the man as well as the child.
- ~ *Lac* women are less likely than most to be willing to have an abortion after an unplanned pregnancy. This may be in part due to emotional sensitivity, and also the fact that they may have dreamt of the close contact they would enjoy with their child.

Even when the *Lac* mother stays with her partner, there is a tendency for her to push him out of the picture. *Lac* clients often report that their father was in the background and the mother was dominant at home. Sometimes the *Lac* mother is so dependent upon her child for emotional support that she breast-feeds until the child is three or four, and keeps her in the bed with her at night. This has the effect of pushing the father away. He cannot compete with this intense mother-child bond, and so he withdraws. The *Lac* child grows up feeling that her father is ineffectual, and later she tends to see all men in this light.

When the *Lac* child grows up without the strong presence of a father, she tends to identify with her mother. This often involves taking on her mother's resentment towards men. But where does this resentment come from? Again, there are several possible origins.

- The mother resents her own father, because he did not protect her from her needy mother.
- The mother resents her husband, because she feels unsupported by him.
- A man or men have actively been cruel to her.

Whatever the dynamics, many *Lac* women are distrustful of men, and some are overtly hostile. The hostility expressed towards men in the past by aspects of the Feminist movement can be due, to some extent, to this hostility that many *Lac* women feel (often unconsciously) towards men. *Lac* women have a strong tendency to advocate for the rights of women and children, and this has led to many of them being involved previously in the Feminist movement.

Victim-Consciousness

In my experience, the single most characteristic feature of most *Lac* cases is the way they feel that they are a victim. They tend to express helplessness, and to complain about how unfairly others have treated them. Indeed, they express a lot of indignation about this. As long as they remain caught in this victim-consciousness, they are unable to move forward in life. Taking the correct *Lac* remedy can often do a lot to break this tendency.

Victim-consciousness is a defence mechanism which the *Lac* individual uses to avoid feeling his own feelings of hurt and helplessness. When the small child feels rejected by his mother, there is a tendency for him to blame himself. Low self-esteem and self-criticism are features common to all *Lac* remedies. In order to protect himself, he turns the blame onto his mother, and becomes her victim. This first defence is repeated with other people later on, becoming a pattern. Whenever the *Lac* person feels rejected, he reacts with anger and indignation, and with blame. This is less painful than feeling the hurt which lies beneath.

Lac cases actually use the word 'victim' frequently during the consultation. They may be referring to themselves, but just as often they project victimhood onto others. One woman who responded well to *Lac felinum*, referred to her partner as a victim, and said he was like a starving man at a banquet, who could not see the food in front of him. She was describing herself precisely. Another word which *Lac* cases use over and over is 'Abuse'. It matters not whether actual abuse occurred, or how serious it was. It is the frequency of use of the word which stands out in *Lac* cases, irrespective of the facts. *Lac* people feel that they have been abused, because they did not feel protected by their mother. Of course, when the mother-child bond is weak, actual abuse is more likely to happen. It is very common for *Lac* individuals

to say that they were their mother's scapegoat or whipping boy and in some cases this appears to be true.

Unsupported

Equally common is the complaint from a *Lac* individual that they have no support. They feel unsupported by their parents, unsupported by their friends, unsupported by their work colleagues. Sometimes this is true, because *Lac* people, by pulling away from others, cut off their own support systems.

One highly characteristic feature of *Lac* cases is the way they cut themselves off from their own family of origin. So often they refuse to have contact, citing terrible treatment they have received from the whole family. This is usually more about the perception of the *Lac* individual. She does not trust love, and will push it away rather than risk being hurt again. After taking a *Lac* remedy, many people re-establish contact with their family, and no longer have to be on guard to make sure they are not emotionally abused.

Community Awareness and Advocacy

Every wound has within it the seeds of its own healing. In *Lac* cases, the wound of abandonment leads the *Lac* individual to seek connection with the community as a whole. Unable to nurture herself with one-to-one contacts, she develops an interest in community affairs, and will often find a job working for community organizations. In fact, she is often enthusiastic about community to the point of being zealous. The community replaces her own family, and her fierce dedication to community reflects how much she needs this connection. In

Lac consultations the word ‘community’ is often spoken many times by the client.

Community involvement offers the *Lac* individual two means of overcoming his sense of isolation. Firstly, by helping the community he feels more worthy, and also more needed. And secondly, by living in close interaction with the local community, he no longer feels so alone.

Part of Lac’s attraction to community work is his need to help others. This is a key-note feature of *Lac* cases. They offer the support that they themselves wish to receive. For the *Lac* individual, the community takes the place of the family, just as God or Spirit may take the place of father.

The need to help is accompanied in *Lac* cases by a strong aversion to injustice. Thus many *Lac* individuals become advocates, particularly for women and children. I have been struck by the fact that it is only my *Lac* clients that use the word ‘advocate’ in consultations. They identify strongly with the role. The *Lac* person’s work with community, and her strong sense of injustice, usually reflect a left-wing political bias. However *Lac* is generally more interested in community and in spirituality than in politics.

Rebel with a Cause

One of Lac’s primary defences is to rebel. The newborn’s move away from his mother, when he has not been taken in, is the first ‘No,’ and it is followed by many more. Mother is not only the original source of nourishment. She is also the first authority. The child’s withdrawal is not only a protection, but also the beginning of a kind of rebellion. Later on, he will feel the need to rebel against authority,

particularly when that authority is seen as uncaring. This combination of rebellion and sensitivity to injustice often results in the *Lac* person become an activist. The intensity of the *Lac* activist's commitment to the cause is directly proportional to his own sense of indignation at being abandoned.

Another remedy that often has activist tendencies is *Ammonium*. Both types are prone to suffer great indignation at injustice, and both types tend to be community-minded. Let us look briefly at the differences between *Lacs* and *Ammonium* salts.

Firstly, the *Lac* issues of abandonment and feeling unsupported are not prominent in *Ammonium* cases. Secondly, *Ammoniums* tend to have clearer boundaries than *Lacs*, both in terms of knowing when to say 'No,' and in terms of psychic empathy. Thirdly, *Ammoniums* do not try to please like *Lacs* do. And finally, the ambivalence seen in many *Lac* cases, born of a deep psychic split, is not seen in *Ammonium* cases.

Causticum is another remedy that is known for its activist inclinations. Here the similarity with *Lac* is less. With *Causticum*, advocacy is not personal. In other words, he is not fighting for victims because he felt a victim himself. Secondly, *Causticum* tends to be detached most of the time, without being split in a pathological sense. *Lac*, on the other hand, is very emotional, but may become detached as a result of a pathological split.

Push and Pull

One area where ambivalence is seen very often in *Lac* cases is in romantic relationships. Only the relationship with the mother is more fraught with danger and filled with more opportunities for healing.

Lacs approach romantic relationships from one of two directions. Either they are extremely wary, and slow to warm to the other person, or they jump in heedlessly. This-all or-nothing approach is expressed at many points in the relationship, because *Lac* people are pulled so strongly towards and away from intimacy. When they finally fall, they fall hard, and then they can switch from aloofness to being clingy and dependent. It is common for a *Lac* person to state that they have been clingy in some relationships, and aloof in others. The middle ground of open adult relating is not so easy to maintain, since the early dynamics of reaching out for, or pulling away from mother, are so strong.

The *Lac* individual often finds herself caring for her partner. She may have chosen a partner who needs help, such as an alcoholic, in which case she will give and give until she feels resentful that she is getting little back. Or she may adopt the role of parent to a man who is emotionally immature. By looking after him, she wins his love, but fails to achieve true intimacy. After taking the indicated *Lac* remedy, many individuals begin to see their co-dependency more clearly, and move toward healthier relating.

Boundaries

There are many similarities between *Lac* remedies and *Natrums* and *Ignatia*. However, one important difference is the strength of personal boundaries. These are strong in the case of *Natrum* and *Ignatia*, weak in *Lac* cases. Again we can postulate the origins of these weak boundaries

as arising from the early experience of failure to bond adequately to the mother. A newborn child has no sense of boundaries. Through bonding to the mother, it gradually learns that it is not its mother; that she is a separate entity. In the process, the child learns that it has boundaries, which separate it from the world, and from other people.

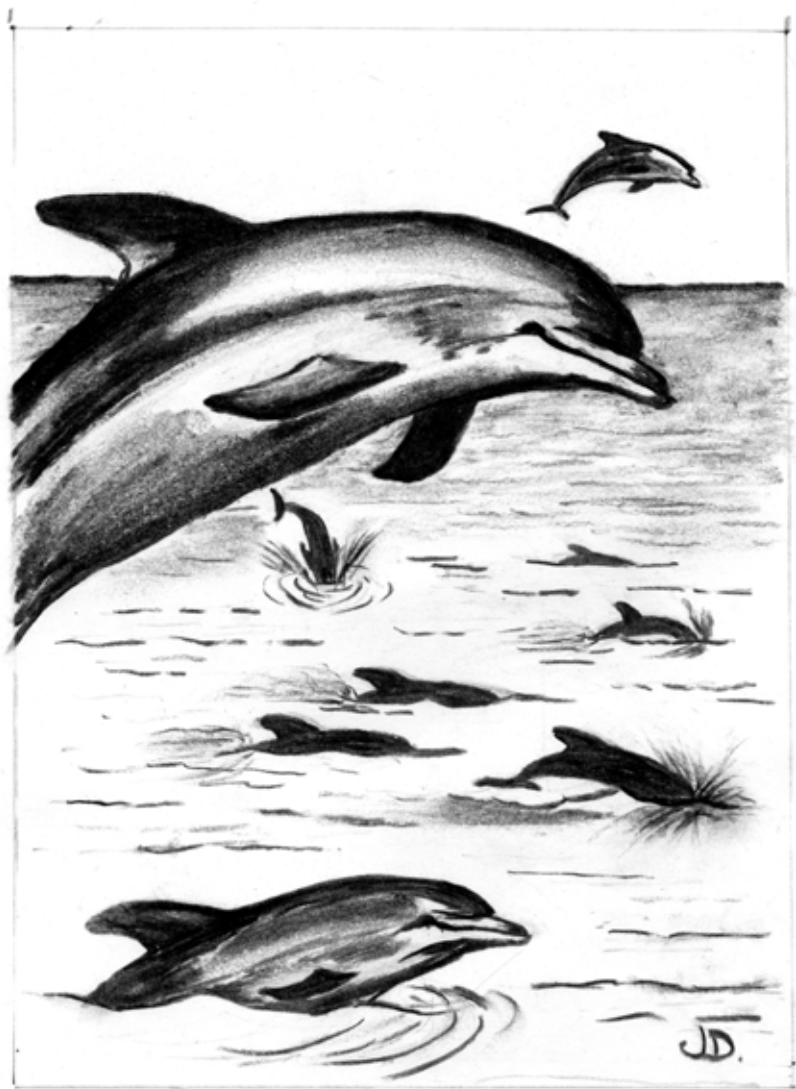
When bonding to the mother is weak, these lessons are not learned so distinctly. The child continues to try to merge with the mother, and hence differentiation is not completed. This results in indistinct personal boundaries in *Lac* individuals (as it does in *Boron* individuals, who seem to go through similar dynamics at birth).

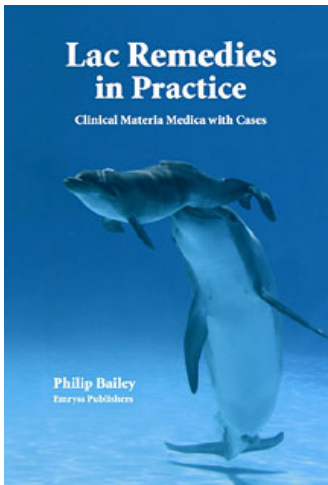
Weakness of personal boundaries expresses itself in several ways in *Lac* cases. First of all, *Lac* people are extremely empathetic. They actually feel the feelings of other people, through a kind of psychic osmosis. In this sense they resemble *Phosphorus* and *Carcinosinum*. Like the latter, many *Lac* people become healers and therapists, and they struggle to keep their feelings separate from their clients.

Secondly, *Lac* people are co-dependent, which means they cannot separate their own responsibilities from those of others. As a result they tend to take on too many responsibilities. And when they fail to fulfil a responsibility that was not theirs in the first place, they feel guilty.

(Bert Hellinger has shown convincingly that personal guilt arises when we feel that we have threatened our place in the family or community. Since *Lac* people never feel secure in their family of origin, it follows that they will easily feel guilty. When you know deep down that you belong, you do not fear that by making a mistake you will be expelled. It is this fear that Hellinger has shown to be behind most personal guilt).

There is a lot of similarity between *Carcinosinum* and *Lac* cases. In particular *Carcinosinum* can appear very close to *Lac felinum*. We shall examine the differences later in the chapter on *Lac felinum*. Suffice for now to note that the principal issue for *Carcinosinum* is the search for Self, whereas for *Lac* it is the search for connection to Other.





Philip M. Bailey

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