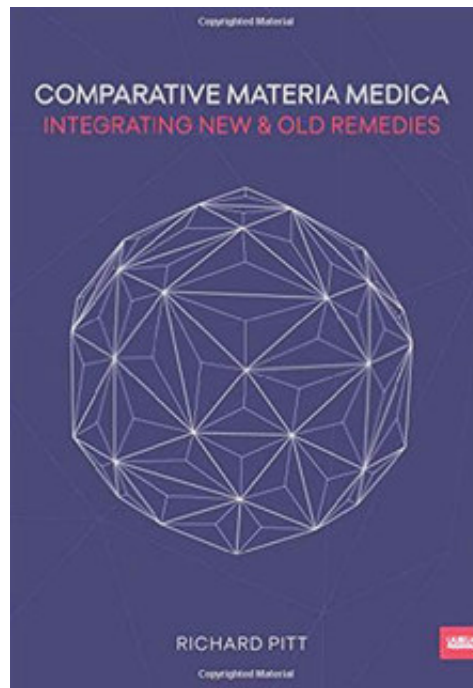


# Richard Pitt

## Comparative Materia Medica

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## Chapter Eighteen

# Lycopodium

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IDEA My survival is based on the struggle for recognition for who I think I really am. I am a plant wanting to be a mineral, I have to present myself with confidence and puff myself up to be accepted.

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### KEYNOTES

- Power, confidence, authority, arrogance.
- Intellectual. Mentally focused.
- Commitment, aversion to or takes too much responsibility.
- Seeking authority, to be influential.
- Cowardice, anxiety, anticipation.
- Sexual desire strong, wanting to prove themselves or weakness, lacking confidence and power.
- Mental and physical impotence.
- Liver, stomach. Digestion. Full of gas.
- Bladder, kidneys.
- Flatulence, mentally and physically, < clothing around abdomen.
- Right sided complaints.
- Sinus and lungs: recurrent infections, pneumonia etc.
- Joints: arthritis, gout.
- Food: desires sweets.
- Aggravated on right side.
- Aggravated in morning, on waking and 4-8pm.
- Aggravated by pressure of clothes.
- Aggravated by oysters.
- Aggravated by cold and wind.

### Intrinsic/Compensated State

Intellectually focused, theorizing. Intelligent, using mental faculties. Precocious intellectually but emotionally immature.

Censorious, dictatorial, controlling. Contradicts others.  
Seeking power, recognition, achievement, confident, seeks the limelight.  
Anticipatory anxiety if striving too high.  
Independent. Avoids emotional commitment or takes it on too seriously.  
Sensitivity, to criticism, to offence.  
Impatience, irritability worse contradiction.  
Grief, loss.  
Want of confidence, (but covered up).  
Flatterer, needing support.  
Digestive, liver disorders. Tendency to flatulence.

COMPARE *Argentum metallicum, Argentum nitricum, Chelidonium, Lachesis, Medorrhinum, Morgan gaertner, Natrum muriaticum, Nux vomica, Pituitary, Palladium, Platina, Silicea, Sulphur, Titanium.*

### **Decompensated State**

Weakness, mind and body.  
Confusion of mind, daily affairs, intellectual weakness, depletion.  
Performance anxiety. Anticipatory fears. Feels paralyzed, can't perform. Feels impotent.  
Anger, intolerance, lacking control emotionally.  
Company, desire for, deeply insecure, fearful, being alone, death, disease etc.  
Sensitive, weepy, over-emotional.  
Weakness of digestion, everything turns to gas.  
Sexual weakness, dysfunction, easy ejaculation, erections wanting, no confidence. Impotency.  
Chronic liver problems, hepatitis, cirrhosis, often with great fatigue in morning.  
Chronic bladder and kidney diseases, kidney stones, sand in urine etc, pain in ureters.  
Chronic joint inflammation, rheumatoid arthritis, < cold > heat.  
Lung conditions, NBWS pneumonia.

COMPARE *Agnus castus, Argentum nitricum, Arsenicum album, Berberis, Carbo vegetabilis, Causticum, Chelidonium, China, Kali carbonicum, Magnesium muriaticum, Medorrhinum, Morgan yiertner, Sarsaparilla, Selenium, Silicea, Stannum, Sulphur, Thuja.*

### **PROGRESSION**

Initially there is mostly a great confidence shown and often a strong intellectual ability. The lack of confidence and basic doubt is well hidden. there is often a need to be seen, to show off and to be able to perform well in front of people, or simply a need to be right with a tendency to contradict others. As the underlying anxiety arises, there can be a compensatory increase in being dictatorial and judgemental.

The anxiety can't be shown and as long as one feels the need to preserve one's position and status, there will be much bravado and superiority shown. However, anxieties continue to seep through, with great anticipatory anxiety before any performance and of being alone. There is a feeling of increasing weakness and dependency on others. The digestion always plays up, everything tuns to gas and there is a tendency

to pains in the liver and kidneys. As the decompensated state arises, there is increasing mental weakness, physical and mental impotency and a tendency to lose weight, especially around the shoulders and neck. The waist though gets more flabby and there can develop serious pathology in the liver and kidneys, as well as joint and heart problems.

### Seeking recognition, Approval, Power

*Lycopodium* is one of most commonly prescribed remedies. It is a strong polychrest and has affinity with many organs and functions in the body. However, it is perhaps one of the most overprescribed remedies in the materia medica, partly due to its ubiquitous appearance in the repertory and apparent affinity for a wide variety of conditions. However, it is a unique remedy as it is the only plant taken from its botanical family. This perhaps makes it feel even more important.

The remedy is often prescribed on an "essence" image, with the characteristic polarity of arrogance and cowardice being seen in some shape or form. However, that is not enough to give the remedy with confidence unless backed with strong keynotes. The more "archetypal" condition of an ego challenged by insecurity is something many people can identify with and is therefore easy to project onto people. Also, from the plant's perspective, it wants to be recognized for itself and possibly has forced itself into our materia medica, adopting a more "inflated" image than it deserves. I describe it as the "wannabe mineral", as it thinks it belongs alongside remedies like *Calcareo carbonica* and *Sulphur*, which many homeopaths have attested to, but really it is mostly pretending.

The unique symptom of *Lycopodium*, (*Mind, power, love of*), the only remedy in the rubric in Kent's repertory (two additions more recently) reveals an essential quality of this remedy. It reflects a rearguard action against the idea of decay or diminishment, both physically and psychologically. This underlies much of the symptomatology of the remedy. In early stages, it will produce the compensated authority, power, control and domination in the remedy. This power can present itself in many ways, but it is power in context and comparison to other things and people. It often needs to be expressed, for example as the boss at work, or in people who seek to be in a position of authority and power at all times, including even spiritual power, becoming spiritual authorities, even the classic English vicar! Here it resembles remedies such as *Medorrhinum*, *Niccolum*, *Palladium*, *Platina*, *Sulphur* and *Veratrum album* and is found in the rubric, *Mind, dictatorial*. It may simply be seen at home, the domineering partner conveniently married to a person needing *Pulsatilla* or *Staphysagria*. The weakness will not be revealed in these stages of the remedy. The struggle to perform will reveal itself later. These stages of degeneration are important in many remedies, *Lycopodium* being a very good example.

*Lycopodium* often presents with a friendly, outward demeanor, but is not usually extroverted. There can be a feeling of an effort being made, with a desire to be recognized or liked. It can feel ingratiating at times, but often there is a genuine desire to make contact. Sometimes diffidence can be presented, as if they don't care much or are rather cynical of the whole game. This surface presentation can most look like *Sulphur* and also at times *Nux vomica*. *Sulphur* shares the outward demeanor and also the characteristics of being intellectually inclined, arrogant and somewhat abstracted from mundane reality. However, *Sulphur* doesn't usually make an extra effort to be liked, to get on with the practitioner. They are more

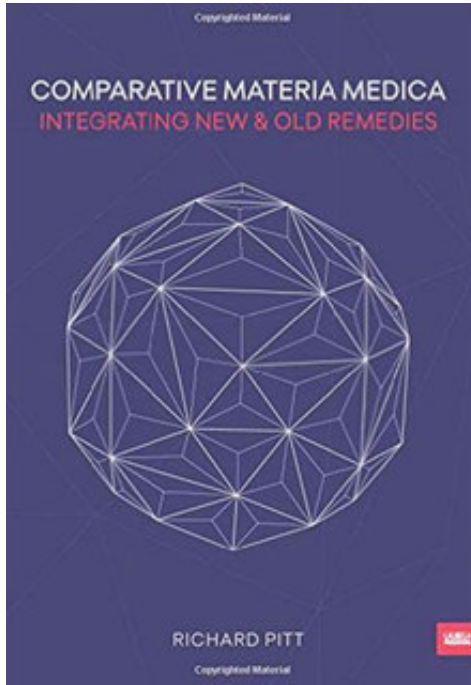
indifferent to their impact on others. *Sulphur*'s concerns are also more abstracted on an emotional level, whereas *Lycopodium* will talk more about issues concerning their relationship with others. In this way, *Lycopodium* is often compared to mineral remedies, as the issues are mostly to do with a comparison with others, but on a hierarchical level, hence the "wannabe mineral". He is seeking to be above his station, to prove himself to others. However, beneath this comparison with others is a basic question and self-doubt about his position in the world and his ability to maintain it.

Physically, *Lycopodium* and *Sulphur* can share certain characteristics, especially in the digestive sphere, but mostly the distinction will be made on the emotional realm. *Nux vomica* also looks like *Lycopodium* on the surface. Anger and irritability are common to both as are digestive problems but *Nux vomica*, similar to *Sulphur*, do not struggle so much with existential anxiety about who they are. *Nux vomica* are more matter-of-fact and are simply dealing with their reactions to life's challenges, often found in the work domain and the challenge to keep their emotions and frustrations in check and less about their performance ability. Both *Nux vomica* and *Lycopodium* are known to be hesitant to make commitment in relationships, either marrying late, not at all or finding it simply difficult to commit. Both perceive it as a loss of power and authority but as mentioned, *Nux vomica*'s concerns are more for action and simple expression of themselves and not wanting to be constricted in this way, whereas *Lycopodium* is more concerned about the responsibilities involved in such a decision and feels challenged in anticipation of having to perform as a partner. However, both remedies can still look alike and often need to be differentiated. They can both be impatient and have a disposition to contradict, *Nux vomica* from irritability and impatience and *Lycopodium* as an instinctive desire to be right and to know, even when they don't.

### **Lack of confidence, Cowardice, Fears, Anticipation**

When the underlying issues of the lack of confidence and cowardice are revealed, then other remedies need to be compared. *Argentum nitricum* and *Argentum metallicum* can often be considered. Both have anticipatory anxiety and a certain intellectually refined quality, similar to *Lycopodium*. *Argentum nitricum* is more extroverted than *Argentum metallicum*, and so *Argentum metallicum* may actually look more like *Lycopodium*. There are a lot of similarities especially between *Argentum nitricum* and *Lycopodium* in the mental sphere. Both have a strong fear of being alone, a desire for company, and ailments from worries, cares, mortification and anticipation. They may have fears about their health and of life in general. Both give the impression of being fearful in general, although in *Lycopodium* this is generally found when they are in a more broken down state, no longer able to compensate with the controlled, intellectual and superior demeanor. With *Argentum nitricum* and somewhat less so with *Argentum metallicum*, the fears and anxieties are more on the surface, more out of control, with the person being much more extroverted. All three remedies may complain of difficulties with mental functioning, with forgetfulness, weakness of memory and other mental issues.

*Silicea* is another remedy that can look like *Lycopodium* when dealing with anxiety, especially of an anticipatory nature. Both remedy types can look alike, especially in children. The old books describe their anticipatory predicament identically although it is questionable which one of them goes through with ease once beginning the event! Both can present as being refined, critical and haughty, *Lycopodium*



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