

The Weakness of Silica, Silicon Dioxide (SiO₂)

Chemically, Silica is an oxide of Silicon, element 14 of the periodic table. Silica is similar in many ways to Carbon for providing structure/strength to organisms. While it does occasionally occur in its pure form, it is more generally found in a variety of forms of silicon dioxide or silicate. Silicon has an almost endless list of uses. It is a principal component in semiconductor devices, integrated circuits, oscillators, frequency standards, laboratory vessels, and microchips; it forms high-grade glasses, cements, ceramics and glazes, abrasives, optical fibers, mirrors and lenses, and is used as a component in silicones for synthetic plastics and rubberized substances (Figure A, Silica Collage, Appendix A). As Silica, it can be found in two states, crystalline and non-crystalline.



Figure 1: Quartz Crystal

MIND - DELUSIONS - body - divided, is
MIND - DELUSIONS - double - being
MIND - DELUSIONS - divided - two parts; into

In a special silicosis publication from the U. S. Bureau of Mines, this summary description is given:

“Silica can be found in more than one state—amorphous as in the remains from a diatom (silica-based plant) and crystalline as in a quartz crystal. Both are SiO₂, but they are quite different physically. What’s more, silica in its crystalline state is found in more than one form.”



Figure 2: Silica-rich Waterway

Silica has a key relationship to water in that water must be present in order for it ever to form (it is this understanding that prompts scientists to believe that water has been or is present on the surface of Mars). In its crystalline state, it is found in sand and several kinds of rocks and metallic ores, making up nearly twenty-six percent of the earth’s crust. Considered ‘nearly harmless’ in most forms, it can lead to serious respiratory ailments when airborne dust particles are breathed into the lungs (Silicosis is the most common occupational lung disease in the world.) Interestingly, the spines of sea urchin (and similar forms of life) are comprised almost entirely of silicon dioxide¹ Certain plants and animals cannot survive without it; some plants will even adhere themselves to the side of an aquarium and actually etch the glass as they absorb needed silica from it. In its non-

crystalline form, silica is responsible for the beautiful colors and ‘fire’ of opal gemstones and will cause water to take on an almost iridescent turquoise blue color.

The singing sand or barking sand phenomena, known for producing sounds when sand is under pressure, is caused by sheer stress and is usually triggered by wind passing over dunes but can be triggered by walking on the sand. Certain conditions have to come together to create singing sand:

- The sand grains have to be round and between 0.1 and 0.5 mm in diameter
- The sand has to contain silica
- The sand needs to be of a certain humidity

¹ Pure silicon, particularly that created in a highly refined laboratory process, will form needle-like crystals. Is it any wonder we can find [MIND, DELUSIONS, needles, sees], [MIND, DELUSIONS, pins; about], and [MIND, SEARCHING, pins, for] in the repertory?

The frequency of vibration is related to the thickness of the dry surface layer of sand. The sound waves bounce back and forth between the surface of the dune and the surface of the moist layer creating a resonance.²

Finally, Silica has recently been proposed as an active agent in the potenziating and succussing of homeopathic medicines. Research has not yet borne it out, but one theory of the dynamizing of medicines in water is that silica in the glass vial interacts with the water and the substance and is a key component (playing a 'supporting' role of sorts) in the 'memory' of water to carry the power of the medicine far past the presence of physical matter.³

In pathology then (Figure B: Silica Image, Appendix A), it is no surprise to find a lack of grit or support, drifting as in a sand dune, inertia, lack of resistance, lack of vital response, lack of fire (unless provoked, and then it can be like a violent sand storm.), a sense of being stuck, disconnected or out of tune, an inability to assimilate, affections of the digestive system, connective tissue, skin, nails, and a tendency to suppuration and ulceration with failure to heal. There is simply no longer enough energy or stamina in a Silica patient to 'stand up' or 'move.' They become rigid, immovable, too weak, too lacking, and concerned for their image.

"The Silica subject's lack of confidence plays its part in the difficulty he has in fixing his attention. He is too tired to stick to a task which he is anyhow too timid to undertake... He may be so exhausted that his one desire is to lay down...the emotional state of Silica resembles that of Sepia, but the hard core will to recover...is lacking." [Gibson]

"Silica is flint, crystal, and is one of the main components of glass: this shows its quality of maintaining a specific shape and being inflexible. It can break, but not bend. It stands hard to keep its shape at any cost. Silicea people stand defiant, obstinate...the state comes from a situation where fulfilling a specific image is a necessary condition for acceptance...often Silicea has only one problem. It is as if all their effort is concentrated in filling up that one weak spot in themselves." [Sankaran]

"The key idea in describing silica patients is that they are YIELDING. It is a kind of shyness or timidity, but not really cowardice (like Lyc or Gels). It is a submissiveness that arises out of lack of energy to insist upon his or her own point of view, even though it may be strongly held. They are quite agreeable and mild, easy to get along with. There is a state which comes later, when the mind is already tired, where they become clairvoyant. They have easy contact with other people; they are sensitive to their feelings, like Phosphorous. Then the mind breaks down and becomes blank. When the mind is blank, it becomes clairvoyant – it opens up to influences of the outside. They don't know how to protect themselves." [Vithoukas]

"The action of Silica is slow...it is, therefore, suitable to complaints that develop very slowly...the mental state is peculiar. The patient lacks stamina. What Silica is to the stalk of grain in the field, it is to the human mind. The peculiar state is found in the dread of failure. If he has any unusual mental task to perform, he fears he will make failure of it, yet he does well. Lyc is stupid, the dread of undertaking anything is from a general knowledge of inability. In Silica, it is imaginary. In ordinary people if a splinter lodges in the tissues, a suppuration will slough it out, but in these feeble constitutions a plastic deposit takes place about it and it remains. This is not the highest state of order." [Kent]

"In our texts the summations of Silica often start by likening the need for this remedy with the need for internal 'grit.' The patient is often refined, delicate, sensitive and yielding. Generally speaking, the emotional level is fairly well-balanced in Silica patients except for problems of self-esteem. The self-confidence of the patient is often very poor. The patient is almost paralyzed by irresolution and insecurity about his perceptions or performance and may wish to leave work altogether." [Morrison]

"Constitutions which suffer from deficient nutrition, not because food is lacking in quality or quantity, but because of imperfect assimilation. Has a wonderful control over the suppurative process – soft tissue, periosteum, or bone. Inactivity of rectum with great straining – when partly expelled, recedes again. Offensive sweat. Intolerable, sour, carrion-like odor of the feet; in-growing toenails. Promotes expulsion of foreign bodies from the tissues: fish bones, needles, bone splinters. Better for warmth, especially from wrapping up the head; all the symptoms except gastric, which are better for cold food." [Allen]

² It is somehow not surprising to find the rubrics [MIND, SINGING, inability for] and [MIND, SHRIEKING, in children, when spoken to] as SRP single rubrics for silica.

³ Ullman, Dana. The Homeopathic Revolution. North Atlantic Books: Berkeley, 2007, pp 32 – 33.

"Yielding. Faint-hearted. Sensitive, weeping mood. Loathing of life. Wishes to drown herself. Cannot express himself correctly. Hopeless, sad. Unfounded dread of failure. Fontanelles open, with distended abdomen. Moist, crust eruptions on scalp. Affections of canthi in tear duct region. Falling of hair, premature baldness. Affections after suppressed foot sweat. Obstinate colds with ear affections. Aversion to cooked, warm foods or meat. Soggy, wilted skin. Talks in sleep loudly, whines, or laughs. Better for magnetism and electricity."
[Phatak]

"NUTRITION. *Children.* Tissues [*elastic; cellular*], NERVES, GLANDS. Tubes [Eustachian, tear ducts, etc; fistulae]. *Bones.* Cartilage. Mucous membranes. *Skin. Left side. Right side.* Worse: COLD [AIR, DRAFTS, *damp*]. Uncovering [esp. head], bathing. Checked sweat [*>feet*]. *Sensitive to* [nervous excitement, jarring spine, noise, light, change of moon.] Night. Mental Exertion. Alcohol. During menses. *After vaccination. Milk.* Better: WARM [WRAPS, to head, becoming]. Profuse urination. Warm room. Magnetism." [Vermuelen]

- Lack of self-confidence. Timidity. Apprehension and anticipation.
- Delicate, refined. Yielding. Mildness with inner resistance.
- Specific image. Image bound. Wants a fixed opinion.
- Lack of emotional independence.
- Obstinate, fixed. "Convinced against her will, but of the same opinion still."
- Conscientious about trifles.
- Overworked mental state, but will not stop.
- Sensitivity (noise, drafts, pain, cold)
- Perspiration (easy, suppressed). Feet!
- Thirsty
- Suppuration
- Frequent, recurrent infections. Caries. Seems incapable of throwing off well.
- Glandular affections.
- Sensations of splinter, hair.
- Affections of hair, nails.
- Constipation with receding stools (makes a show, but retreats into self)

These patients are often quite intelligent and refined; they may admit that they will listen and acknowledge the opinions or perspectives of others, yet still hold stubbornly to their own. They may make statements like:

"My brain doesn't work like it used to."

"I'm stuck. My head doesn't feel connected to my body."

"I wish I could just lie down."

"I'd be happy to just leave work."

"I'm so tired. I have no strength. No stamina."

"I get so cold. I just cannot get warm enough."

"I don't want to eat cooked food."

"I have little festering injuries that just never seem to heal. They grow over and feel hard, but don't seem to heal"

"I just can't seem to focus on things."

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Appendix A
Figure A: Silica Image



Appendix A Figure B: Silica Image

Lack of emotional independence.

Lack of self confidence.
Timidity; yielding,
mildness with inner
resistance.

Shy children who will not
answer, but whisper the
answer to the mother.

Chill & Agg from cold weather; Agg from warm stuffy rooms during acute; Agg from drafts, being uncovered (wants head wrapped); Agg from suppressed sweat (most often the feet); Weakness and fatigue; Collapse; Delayed development in children; Glands become enlarged & suppurating; Defects of bone, spine, hair, nails, teeth, and from poor metabolism of minerals; Sour perspiration; Agg from new or full moon; Agg from vaccination; Tumors, growths on the body; abscesses form on the body.

Delicate, refined. Image bound.

Left side does not belong to her.

May admit to having convictions which she will not argue.

Enlarged head out of proportion to body, emaciated appearance, distended or enlarged belly.

Anxiety from noise. Stage fright. Fear of pointed objects; pins.

Obstinate. Screaming when touched. Weep when reprimanded.

Failure to thrive in infants. Cannot assimilate nutrition; do not tolerate breast milk; lose weight. Tear duct styes in newborns.

Timid stool; difficult stool, straining; craving for sweets, ice cream, eggs; Aversion to mother's milk; rectal abscess; Dental abscesses; Acute/chronic ENT symptoms; Mastitis in nursing women; breast abscesses, nodules, fibroids; scoliosis; curvature, calcification, defects of the spine. Ingrowing toenails, bunions; Crippled nails; offensive foot sweat.

