



SKIN DRY HANDS

(anonymous)

October 15, 2002

"My hands are fine and I am confident that they will remain so!"

During the winter of 1992, my company transferred me to another work location. Several colleagues and I had the mandate to reconstruct the site. This task required that we train new colleagues as well.

In our old circle of collaborators we had a very intimate and close relationship to one another and it was customary to reach out for a handshake when we met. This was a habit that the newcomers quickly adopted as well.

Unfortunately, there was one colleague who had a problem with his body hygiene. I really don't want to go into details here.

To touch his hand was for me so incredibly uncomfortable that I had to invent for myself more and more tactics to avoid this simple act.

However, when ever it came time to replace him on his shift and when - of necessity - I had to give him a handshake, I thoroughly washed my hands as soon as he was gone, and I also squeamishly cleaned my workplace. The idea to eat my breakfast after shaking hands with him practically filled me with horror. This is why I procured some dishes, for my sole use, and I always locked them up to make sure I was the only one to use it.

Since then, every year when the cold season started, I had problems with my hands. They became rough, developed small fissures that then opened up and started to bleed, the fissures swelled up and healed with quite a lot of pain. However, what was affected was only the **outside of the hand, the back of the hand, knuckles and outer surfaces of the fingers**. Absolutely nothing helped, no ointments, no creams, nothing. During the summer, I had no problems with my hands because in the summertime, I could always refuse to shake his hand under the pretense of sweaty hands - without appearing to be impolite.

In the Spring of 1998, I was transferred to another work place, to a similar open-plan office, as I was previously used to. I never saw that colleague again.

But at this new work location, the practice of busy handshaking continued as before, and during the winter of 1998 I also had fissured and rough hands.

In the following year, I took a Sabbatical starting in November of 1999 until March 2001. During this time, I got to know about German New Medicine.

I was absolutely stunned when I discovered that neither during the winter of 1999/2000 nor the subsequent winter of 2000/2001 did I get the familiar problem with my hands.

When I researched the above-mentioned situation on my own and combined my findings with the knowledge of German New Medicine, it became instantly clear to me that I had suffered a separation conflict of "**wanting to separate**" (involving my hands in a defensive way) - proven by the fact that **only the outside of the hands** was affected! After all, for me to be in contact with that colleague was sheer agony.

I quickly identified my "tracks" as being the "office", the/a "colleague", the "cold season", the "shaking of hands". I therefore informed my colleagues that, for the time being, I would not shake hands with them. Everybody accepted that.

Now we are in October and my hands are fine and I am confident that they will pass the winter unscathed!

Translated from the German original by Caroline Markolin, Ph.D.

Extract from: <http://LearningGNM.com>

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