

Miracles in the Gulf?

Continuing the story of the Hubbard detoxification programme.

Used now for many years as a key component of recovery in the Narconon Drug Rehab programme and utilised in the 1990s to help people contaminated by the meltdown of the Chernobyl reactor, then in the New York Rescue Workers Detoxification Project in the wake of 9/11, the detoxification programme developed by L Ron Hubbard found further applications in 2010.

On 20 April 2010 came a blowout of a deepwater well in the Gulf of Mexico, 50 miles off the Louisiana coast, which triggered a series of explosions that turned one of the most advanced oil drilling platforms in the world - the Deepwater Horizon - into a charred and twisted wreck that sank two days later.

Four days after the blowout, the U.S. Coast Guard reported that oil was leaking from the well.



Multiple attempts to seal the ruptured oil well followed, all of which failed and over the following three months, more than 200 million gallons of crude oil poured into the gulf.

To counteract this environmental disaster, a massive cleanup operation was initiated so as to remove the oil and prevent it from washing ashore on Gulf Coast beaches. A fleet of boats skimmed the oil off the surface, while others segregated the surface oil using containment booms and burned it. Meanwhile, low-flying planes sprayed vast amounts of chemical dispersant onto the oil slick in order to break it down into droplets that would sink beneath the

surface.

Not only that, large amounts of dispersants were released right at the wellhead, which lay a mile below the sea.

In total, over two million gallons of chemical dispersants were applied to the spill in an all-out attack on the problem and this significantly added to the contamination released into the environment.

As a result of the catastrophe, a "No Fishing Zone" was declared over seven percent of U.S. waters in the Gulf. Much of the fishing industry was shut down and thousands of the fishermen and women were hired for months to work on the cleanup operation. In all, over 3,000 commercial and chartered fishing vessels were paid to participate in the cleanup.

But despite all these efforts, the oil still spread. By 18 May, a month after the spill, the "No Fishing Zone" was more than doubled to 19 percent (over 45,000 square miles) of all U.S. Gulf waters.

In late May 2010, shrimp boat captain **Darla Rooks** and her crew were fishing before dawn at Four Bayou Pass, east of Grand Isle, Louisiana - an area that had been deemed safe by officials.

The nets were dropped as usual but fifteen minutes later, Darla's husband came into the wheelhouse to report that there was nothing in their nets: there were neither shrimps, fish, nor crabs, not a living thing.

Of that morning, she recounts: "While inspecting the situation, my husband shook the net and water went all over me. Right away I began itching and burning. I showered and hoped that would be the end of it. Little did I know my health problems had just begun.

"I soon had a headache like someone was stabbing me in the top of the head with a knife, and I began vomiting without warning. My heartbeats were out of control and I had chest pain so bad that I felt like I was going to have a heart attack at any moment. Within 24 hours, I was on the floor of my cabin having a convulsion. This was the worst experience I'd ever had in my life. I thought for sure I would die that night.

"My health got progressively worse over the next year and a half. I had constant bloody diarrhea, hair falling out, swollen glands,

overwhelming fatigue, muscle spasms, crawling skin, vision and hearing loss, blood in my urine, and bleeding from my breasts and ears. I became a prisoner in my own body. I lost my ability to remember anything - to the point of feeling I was an Alzheimer's patient.

"My foot was paralyzed and numb. I was dragging it and stumbling over it as I walked. I came to the conclusion that this was the end and started making final arrangements for when I was gone."

Darla was not an isolated case: hundreds of others also suffered toxic chemical exposure and the worst hit were the cleanup workers who had come into direct contact with the oil, dispersants and toxic vapors.

By mid-June 2010, 143 oil spill exposure cases had been reported to the Louisiana Department of Health and over 100 of them were people who had worked in the cleanup. But the reported cases were just the tip of the iceberg, for many of the fishermen working on the cleanup did not report their health problems for fear that they would lose their only source of income.

To make matters even worse, most people along the coast were not even aware of the hazards of chemical exposure or its symptoms because the public had been told on official channels that the dispersants and chemicals used to clean up the spill were safe.

Jorey Danos was one of those who worked for six months on the cleanup operation at sea, corralling and removing the oil. In addition to direct exposure to the oil, Jorey and fellow crew members were subjected to the chemical dispersants in the water and from the low-flying planes that were spraying nearby.



He began to experience extreme abdominal pain, severe headaches and vomiting, which resulted in several visits to the hospital and he lost forty pounds in four months and was unable to sleep more than a few hours a night.

But even worse than the physical effects of the chemical exposure, were the effects on Jorey's mind was doing to his mind. He suffered

from irritability, severe mood swings and paranoia - to the point of carrying a gun just to drop his children off at the school bus stop. As he put it, "I was losing my children. I was losing my marriage. I was losing my mind."

He went to see one doctor after another. Each gave him a different diagnosis none if the medications they prescribed provided any lasting relief. One doctor even diagnosed him as having paranoid schizophrenia and bipolar disorder and prescribed him psychotropic medication!

To Jorey, it seemed as if his life was coming to a premature end and, like so many other victims of the disaster for whom there was no workable treatment in sight, he felt helpless.

Another of the great many victims of the toxic soup in the Gulf was Marine biologist, Scott Porter, who dived into the Gulf after the spill to assess the damage done to the marine life.

After diving through a 30-foot layer of dispersed oil in June 2010, he developed a rash with hard cysts under the skin and after diving again the following month, he developed headaches and body cramps. He continued diving and with each dive his symptoms became worse.

Other divers in his crew were also experiencing similar problems, which included nausea, diarrhoea, skin rashes, stomach cramps, dizziness, confusion and fatigue.

The authorities did what they could, but nobody seemed to have real answers.

Marylee Orr, the Executive Director of the Louisiana Environmental Action Network (LEAN) began receiving emails and calls from cleanup workers and Gulf Coast residents, reporting that they were badly ill due to what they thought might be chemical.

"I felt completely lost," Orr said. "Even though I've done this kind of work for a long time, I'd never seen the enormity of this. I'd get calls day and night. It wouldn't be unusual that while walking my dog at 11 o'clock at night, I'd be talking to someone who was telling me that their whole toilet is full of blood because they had rectal bleeding, or a wife calling me, hysterical that her husband was having a seizure and asking what could she do. I became a sort of lifeline to these people."

Orr's organization received hundreds of calls from cleanup workers concerned about the health problems they were experiencing and which they suspected were connected to exposure to the oil and dispersant.

"It was pretty alarming," Orr said. "It wasn't going away with traditional medical treatment."

She talked over the problem with **Doctor Mike Robichaux**, a medical doctor based in Raceland, Louisiana, whom she had known for twenty years. A former state senator and a doctor for over 40 years, Dr. Robichaux was initially skeptical that the health problems being reported were caused by chemical exposure. But as he looked into the issue and examined numerous patients, a pattern began to emerge. ~.

Though the symptoms were bizarre, they were common to all those he spoke to or examined. People from Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas all had similar symptoms, although none of them knew or had ever met one another.

Dr. Robichaux prescribed medication to help handle the rashes, abdominal pain and other symptoms but was well aware that he was not addressing the root cause of these people's conditions.

"The problem was that nothing worked in treatment. I was helping them but it was band-aids on a major hemorrhage. I could see that some of these people were going to actually die if we didn't institute treatment for them."

He became one of the few doctors that took those suffering from toxic exposure seriously and one of the rare few who were willing to speak out about it.

But what, if anything could be done to help the growing number of people with serious health problems that seemed to be the result of chemical exposure? Both Orr Dr. Robichaux were at their wits' end.

Meanwhile, in California, **Jim Woodworth**, a co-founder of the New York Rescue Workers Project and its president for seven years, had also been getting emails and pleas for help from people in the Gulf area who were sick. Given the tremendous results of the New York project, Woodworth was understandably confident that something effective could be done in Louisiana.

In December 2010, he received a call from **Barbara Wiseman**, who was working in Louisiana on issues related to the environmental effects of the spill. She had met a number of scientists (one of whom was the marine biologist Scott Porter mentioned earlier) who were ill from toxic exposure and wanted to introduce them to him. Woodworth in turn spoke to Porter and arranged to fly to Louisiana to meet him and the other scientists in person.

Upon arriving, Woodworth presented Hubbard's detoxification programme to Porter and his colleagues. They, in turn, introduced Woodworth to Marylee Orr, with whom they had worked with for years, at LEAN's headquarters in Baton Rouge,

After thoroughly looking into the programme, Orr gave it LEAN's full support. She then introduced Woodworth to Dr. Robichaux.

Woodworth took Dr. Robichaux through every step of the programme in detail.

"I'm a skeptic. I'm a 'show-me' guy," says Dr. Robichaux. "But I felt like I'd really found something that was in all likelihood going to be effective."

As a result, not only did he agree to be the medical director of the programme, he offered a space in Raceland where it could be delivered.

Woodworth then returned to Los Angeles and spoke to his wife, Carol, about all that had occurred. Mrs Woodworth had worked alongside her husband in New York for seven years as the Executive Director of the New York Rescue Workers Detoxification project and was an integral part of the team. Together they decided that if they could get funding for the project, they would move to Louisiana to establish the **Gulf Coast Detoxification Project** to help those in need.

Seeing the desperate need for the programme and the lack of available solutions for those affected, the International Association of Scientologists (IAS) responded favourably to a grant request that had been drawn up by Woodworth and the International Academy of Detoxification Specialists (IADS).

Support of the scientologists made it possible to establish a delivery centre that would provide the programme free-of-charge to 100

people involved in the spill, from scientists and cleanup workers to Gulf Coast residents.

The Woodworths wasted no time in putting together a technical team to work with Dr. Robichaux to deliver the programme.



Renowned actor **Danny Masterson**, joined the team as a co-founder and spokesperson, and was instrumental in raising awareness and support for the project through events, media and personal interviews. This was not the first time he had come to the aid of those exposed to hazardous chemicals as, since 2003, he had been deeply involved in the New York Rescue Workers Detoxification Project and similar programmes.

Such was Masterson's help on the New York detox project that he was awarded the Heroism Award in 2009 by the New York Sergeants Benevolent Association NYPD - the largest police sergeants union in the world.

Soon after the approval of the IAS grant for the project, Woodworth flew back to Louisiana and joined Dr. Robichaux for a briefing on Hubbard's detoxification programme that was given to a group of more than 40 sick cleanup workers in Raceland, offering them a chance to do the programme at no charge. Amazed at the opportunity to regain their health, every one of them signed up.

The delivery facility was rapidly renovated and the saunas, treadmills and equipment were fully installed - all in just 11 days. With everything in place, delivery commenced on 15 October 2011.

As each person arrived to begin the programme, Dr. Robichaux gave them a thorough physical examination, noting down every one of their symptoms. As he watched them progress through the daily regimen of exercise, sauna sweat-out and vitamins and nutrition, he also noticed their symptoms beginning to diminish.

He says: "We saw 113 people do the programme and the results were phenomenal. In fact, I got taken to task for describing the results as 'miraculous: but I'd never seen anything like them. It was really an exciting adventure."

“If I hadn't done the programme, in two months I would have been dead or in an insane asylum.”

Jorey Danos was one of the first to start the programme. In the first two weeks, he re-experienced many of the effects of the chemicals he had been exposed to but then these diminished as he persevered with the daily regimen.

"But I stuck with it," he said. "The paranoia has ceased and a lot of the symptoms that I had before I am no longer experiencing since the detox. But the biggest change for me was the mental aspect. If I hadn't done the programme, in two months I would have been dead or in an insane asylum."

The shrimp boat captain, Darla Rooks, was another cleanup worker referred by Marylee Orr.

She says: "One day I received a message letting me know help was being offered to me by the Gulf Coast Detox Project, I was so happy, I began to cry. I was almost dead with no hope of recovery and now I was being given the chance to get better and to live. I immediately called the Gulf Coast Project and also informed the staff that my husband and grandson had been on the boat with me and were sick also. We were welcomed with open arms.

"To my amazement, my symptoms began to disappear within a week of being in the sauna. I wiped brown-colored sweat from my body for several days. I was walking faster than I had in years and began gaining some weight back. My vision and hearing improved. One symptom after another disappeared as if they were never there in the first place. My husband who had been vomiting every day for over a year began feeling better. His energy came back. His mood became much more pleasant. Before long he was ready to get back to work. My seven-year-old grandson is also doing great. He is sleeping peacefully for the first time in over a year. He stopped complaining of chest pain and headaches. He began running and dancing again. His concentration and mental clarity are amazing. This programme has surely given me my life back. Without it, I know I would be dead by now. Words can never express how grateful I am for the gift that has been given to my family and me. I always knew there were people who helped those less fortunate but I never thought I would be so blessed to receive the best gift ever. That gift is life - my life!"

Says Dr Robichaux: "It's been one of the nicest things I've experienced

in my lifetime."

Dr Roibichaux is probably not the first person who has had that to say about the Hubbard detoxification programme and we think it highly unlikely he will be the last either.

The Vitenam Detoxification Project, now being used to help Vietnamese people contaminated by the defoliant Agent Orange that was used by the US military during the Vietnam war, may well be a case in point.

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