

Tale of Two Doctors

Having always been fascinated by the way people process information, I have noticed many people's brains do not follow the same synaptic path as mine. Especially, when it comes to working on and repairing their vintage automobile. Some owners are like a Professional Doctor in their approach to a problem. Knowledgeable, meticulous, and nothing less than factory correct will do. I on the other hand approach a repair like a Witch Doctor; stare at the problem, rattle my wrenches, wiggle a few wires, unplug this, tighten that, perhaps even say a few magical four- letter words. These techniques usually get the issue fixed to a point where it works well, its functional and mostly safe.

My Witch Doctor approach for the most part has kept myself and my TR5 on the road. However, after so many years of voodoo repair, my Triumph needed a professional to sort a few chronic aches and pains. Ten years of small but annoying issues such as: not having a horn because it honked when I made a right turn or hit a bump (I disconnected the horn), not turning on the fan because it would blow a fuse, tolerating a needed hood release adjustment so it didn't take the strength of two men and a small boy to open. Extreme un-adjustable window gaps (believe me I tried). But finally, it was a slop in the drive train that caused me to turn my Triumph over to a real Doctor.

MD, DDS, ASPCA and EMT, Gary Gumminger. Gary's approach is completely different from mine. His brain is wired to *fixed it correctly* and don't settle for *pretty good and functional to get by*. His knowledge is impressive and attention to detail astounding.

It is convenient that Gary lives only a few miles from my house. Having made an appointment and developed a short list of symptoms, I took the ole TR5 over to Dr. Gary to get a diagnosis.

- 1) Slop in drive train. Having examined the U-joints I couldn't find anything major wrong.
- 1) Horn honking at inopportune times causing me to smile and wave at offended people.
- 2) Fan switch blowing a fuse. I Witch Doctor'd the wiring for a short but that did not produce results.
- 3) Gap in windows. My assessment of the situation was that the windshield needed to be repositioned, but I wanted second opinion.
- 4) Front left blinker and right rear taillight came on when I shifted into reverse.

After few appointments with Doctor Gary here are the test results and cures.

- 1) Slop in drive train, the Witch Doctor should have caught the issue of wire wheels and adapters being worn out and need replacing after 52 years of use. The Doctor jacked up ass end of Triumph and looked at me as he wiggled the tires back and forth, up and down and smiled. Until more funding is approved by management, I'll take the advice from the Doctor to beat the living sh@# out of hub nuts until I get new rims.
- 2) Honking issue fixed, no need to pull the steering wheel as I had diagnosed. The Doctor assessed that the column was out of alignment and he adjusted it.
- 3) Fan switch blowing a fuse was fixed by unbending a prong which caused a grounding issue.
- 4) Gap in window, here my assessment was correct, reposition of windshield. Set that aside for a later date and only drive on sunny days.

- 5) Blinker and right rear taillight when shifting in reverse. Surgery on my car years ago had resulted in the rear back up lights being removed but the wires to these non-existent lights was still in play. Wires were unplugged, situation solved.

Additional items diagnosed by the Doctor and treated:

- 5) Motor mounts installed upside down, huh, didn't know that.
Replaced right side up.
- 6) Front end bushings were marginal. Make mine neoprene please.
Operation successful.
- 7) Speedo and throttle cable routed incorrectly. You don't say!
Corrected. No more sticking speedo.
- 8) Idle adjustment on injection linkage out of whack. I'm impressed.
Adjusted. Idles famously.
- 9) Hose that attaches to injector manifold wrong type and needs to be tight for smoother idle. See above comment.
- 10) Clutch slave cylinder leaking. Yeah, I know. Replaced.
- 11) Clutch fork arm, "functional" but way out of whack.
Suggested problems may occur down the road, pulled transmission, replaced fork and throw out bearing.
- 12) Carpets should be attached with snaps to hold in place.
Seems long ago I remembered that. Now they snap.
- 13) Brake booster kaput. You mean after 20 years this is how the brakes should really feel. Replaced.
- 14) Talked about installing a sway bar I had laying around.
Done.
- 15) Discussed the need for a new muffler. Decided on a Falcon muffler. Installed. (Thanks guys sounds great)

16) All the little things I forgot to mention like leaking right rear shock. Replaced.

During this process the Witch Doctor had one small request, to be involved in some part of the repair process, allowing him to get reacquainted with the workings of the TR5. Gary graciously let me help him pull and install transmission, attach exhaust system, install shocks and work the jack to set motor mounts. Safe to say my car and I have bonded again.

In closing the TR5 drives the way I remember it. Tight. Right. And altogether quick. It was just what the Doctor ordered.



Craig