

FLOWER ESSENCES

EMOTIONAL WELL BEING

Flower essence remedies are very low potency remedies that address issues of emotional well-being, the development of character and spirituality, and mind/body health. The removal of emotional responses to certain triggers, the recognition that some ways of responding to certain situations are more appropriate and healthier than others, and the changing of negative attitudes such as fear to faith, and anxiety to peace, can have profound effects on both mental and physical health.

Dr. Edward Bach, an English physician and the creator of the original 36 Bach Flower Remedies, wrote in the early 1930's that, "Behind all disease lies our fears, our anxieties, our greeds, our likes and dislikes. True healing involves treating the very basis of the cause of the suffering. Therefore, no effort directed to the body alone can do more than superficially repair damage. Treat people for their emotional unhappiness, allow them to be happy, and they will become well.. While the idea of emotional underpinnings to physical ailments is finding acceptance today, this was truly revolutionary thinking in Dr. Bach's day.

ARE FLOWER ESSENCES HOMEOPATHICS?

Flower essences, while considered by many to be homeopathics, are created a little bit differently and work by slightly different principles. In addition, there are no poisonous, unhealthy, or inorganic substances used in their creation. They are made from flowers, considered to be the crowning achievement and highest frequency cycle of plant life. These remedies are prepared from a sun infusion of wildflowers or garden blossoms in natural and very pure water. This solution is then diluted following homeopathic protocols. They are used only in the first 1 to 3 dilutions, making them very low potency, mild remedies.

HOW DO FLOWER ESSENCES WORK?

Flower essence remedies do not seem to follow the homeopathic law of similars, which is the very foundation of homeopathic theory. To work by the law of similars, these remedies would have to create within us negative feelings and emotions in order to draw these imbalances to the attention of our psyche and the innate healing abilities our minds and bodies possess. Flower essences do not do this. Instead, as Dr. Bach described the process, they "flood our natures with the particular virtue we need, and wash out from us the fault that is causing the harm". Flooding our natures with the opposing virtue is the way to eradicate any fault, in my opinion. Focusing on the fault only feeds the negative and gives the fault more power.

Perhaps Dr. Bach's explanation is an oversimplification, but it does explain the action of these remedies quite well. For example, Holly flower essence does not create feelings of envy, jealousy, or hatred in persons to whom it is given, even in large quantities or over long periods of time. Instead, Holly flower essence brings a feeling of connection and love into our hearts, even if we have been troubled in our lives by jealousy, envy, lack of connection to others, and even strong feelings of hatred.

Flower essences address our emotions. In fact, flower essence literature contains no reference to physical ailments at all. The descriptions of the states that the remedies address concern themselves completely with emotional and mental health.

Dr. Bach advised, "Think of the patient, not the disease. . . The main reason for the failure of modern medical science is that it is dealing with results and not causes." To Dr. Bach the cause of the body's vulnerability to disease lay in the emotions. Physical ailments were the result of these emotional misperceptions and imbalances. Many Eastern philosophies and even Christianity believe much the same thing.

Flower essences remedies are so gentle that often a person will not have a sense of having had an emotional problem. Only in retrospect will the person be able to see what attitudes have changed, softening into a more positive and healthful perspective. I have found that keeping a journal, where the intuitions and insights stimulated by the remedies can be recorded, is both helpful and enlightening. There is much to be learned about oneself this way.

EMOTIONAL HEALTH AND OUR PHYSICAL BODIES

The scientific community, over the last two decades, has confirmed that our psychological and emotional state

influences many of our bodily functions—far more than most of us realize. Our immune system, adrenal glands, hormone levels, and the neurotransmitters of our brain and nervous systems are known to be affected by our thoughts and the state of our mental and emotional health. While there is very little in the literature about physical ailments and physical states are not the focus of flower essence remedies, flower essences remedies bring about profound physical changes.

Flower essence theory recognizes, more than most modalities, that the underlying emotion behind a physical problem may not be the same for one person as another. For example, two people may suffer from chronic headaches. For one, fear may be the overriding emotional cause, while for the other, loneliness may be the issue. (Perhaps the loneliness is tinged with a fear of being alone and fear is the underlying emotion, after all.) The flower remedy will act by flooding the person with the positive emotions of faith and connection to others until the negative emotions give way. The remedy opens a door, allowing us to see an alternative way to think and react. We still must choose between the old dysfunctional pattern or the new, more life giving, healthier one.

EXPECTED RESULTS

In most instances, change in emotional patterns come quite quickly, within a few weeks. In some instances of deeply rooted psychological patterns or beliefs, it may take longer or require follow-up with other remedies as the perception changes. The remedies do not create any kind of emotional or physical dependency. In fact, the remedies have a self-limiting effect. The need for the remedy diminishes as the person makes discoveries about his psyche and perceptions and moves toward a more balanced and healthy emotional state.

J. Herbert Fill, M.C., a psychiatrist and former New York City Commissioner of Mental Health, used flower remedies almost exclusively over tranquilizers and psycho-trophic drugs. He found flower remedies to have a profound and long-lasting effect on his patients, and they were free from any side effects. “I deal with emotional problems as well as physical ones,” says Dr. Fill. “In my observations, these remedies appear to work on a much deeper level apparently assisting the individual in resolving deep-rooted conflict, as opposed to simply relieving the symptoms”.

Dr. John Bolling, a specialist in behavioral and drug abuse problems and former Assistant Professor and Chief Resident in Psychiatry at New York University’s Bellevue Medical Center, found significant health improvements in 80% of the patients he treated with flower remedies during a clinical study. Although other types of treatment were used simultaneously (meditation and hypnosis) Dr. Bolling found the most impressive part of the study “was the dramatic improvement shown in the overcoming of blocked emotional patterns by 20% of this group who prior to the study had been deemed resistant to any form of treatment.”

Dr. Bolling stated, “Clearly Dr. Bach’s remedies were the primary factor here. In addition to the marked improvement in their emotional state, these patients are now more open and receptive to other treatment modalities which had not been effective before.”

Case Histories

#1. Harold Whitcomb, M.D., of Aspen Colorado, uses flower remedies, especially in his treatment program for chronic fatigue syndrome. He finds that deep-seated, buried emotions are common in people with chronic fatigue and that the flower remedies help to bring these emotions to the surface, allowing them been seen, acknowledged, and changed.

#2. A forty-year-old man suffering from chronic asthma since age three came to see Dr. Susan Lange, O.M.D., of the Meridian Health Center in Santa Monica, California. The man’s long treatment history included inhalants and prednisone (a steroid hormone with effects similar to cortisone). Dr. Lange ascertained that the initial outbreak of the man’s asthma coincided with the onset of his parent’s marital difficulties. The man’s parents fought openly in the home, and his mother eventually committed suicide.

Dr. Lange performed acupuncture to open blockages in the man’s chest and treated him with Fuchsia, a flower essence native to America that addresses the repression of deep-seated emotions such as anger and grief. Because the man was masking his suffering behind a cheerful facade, Dr. Lange incorporated Bach’s traditional flower remedies Elm and Agrimony into the treatment protocol.

As the energy held in the man’s chest released, Dr. Lange treated him for a blockage in the solar plexus and administered the flower essence Sunflower for issues of self-worth. Finally, he was treated for repressed kidney

energy and was given Basil, Sticky Monkey Flower and Rock Rose. These remedies addressed his fear of intimacy. With three months the man was able to discontinue all previous medication and was free of his asthma, reports Dr. Lange.

#3. When treating children, Dr. Lange also likes to treat the parents simultaneously. She finds that their problems often (usually) interconnect. In one case, a mother was experiencing a postnatal depression and couldn't relate to her child. Mariposa Lily, a flower essence native to America, was given to both the mother and the child to help them with parent/child bonding. The health of both mother and child improved, as did their relationship.

#4. Julian Barnard reports seeing a nine-year old girl suffering from repeated migraines who was tense, anxious and depressed. She was given a single bottle containing the flower remedies Gentian, Water Violet, Walnut and Bach's Rescue Remedy formula. Within days her mother reported marked improvement, noting that her daughter had been transformed back to her happy, outgoing self.

#5. A three-year-old child stung on the throat by a bee became frightened and hysterical, screaming in pain. He was given Bach's Rescue Remedy directly into his mouth and immediately became calm and quiet. With the stinger removed, Rescue Remedy was applied to the skin to alleviate inflammation. The entire episode was over in two minutes.

TRAUMA AND PREVENTATIVE THERAPY

"Flower remedies are particularly beneficial in helping to relieve acute trauma associated with accidents, bruises and injuries, as well as grief that would occur following the loss of a loved one," says Dr. Bernard. He also believes that using flower remedies can be a tremendous preventative therapy, and that by correcting underlying emotional problems, one can ensure that many physical problems will never occur.

I have been using flower essences for many years. I have found them to be gentle, effective, and absolutely amazing. Because they do not set up symptom pictures like homeopathic remedies do, it is impossible to misuse them or to do any harm.