



Flower Power The Foundations of Flower Essences

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hat's your favorite flower? Have you ever thought that it may be an ally for your well-being?

Flowers have been used medicinally and as expressions of the heart for time immemorial. You may be familiar with the use of flowers in botanical medicine, aromatherapy and even homeopathy; however, the majority of people are less familiar with flower essences. The most common misconception is the assumption that flower essences are the same as essential oils and work with scent. Let's examine what flower essences are to clear up this confusion.

Flower essences, aka flower remedies, is a general term referring to liquid, pattern-infused solutions made from flowers. Flower essences focus on emotional and spiritual well-being. It is believed that the energetic healing aspects of the flower are imprinted in the water, so no physical part of the flower is imparted in the flower remedy. While aromatherapy uses fragrances of the physical plant's oil, flower essences do not have a floral fragrance and work based on the flower's energy or life force. Most flower essences are preserved with brandy, to hold the energetic pattern longer. Some flower essences use glycerin as the preservative for those who prefer an alcohol free remedy.

Think of an orchestra tuning before a concert. There is a mishmash of sounds as the instruments tune up and it is difficult to identify specific instruments or notes. The violin sounds the perfect "A" note that all the other instruments tune into. They join to-

gether to match that note and are now in resonance. The flower essences act as the pure "A" note, which holds the higher energy of the balanced state of the emotion. Like the orchestra, the lower unbalanced energies raise their vibrations to tune into or match the higher balanced frequencies. The effectiveness occurs when they are in harmony, when they resonate together as one.

Dr. Edward Bach, an English conventional medical doctor and researcher, and later homeopath, is considered the founder of flower essences in 1928. There are now countless brands and types of flower essences across the globe. Many contemporary flower essences adhere to Dr. Bach's philosophy and methodologies, while others have created their own modifications. My comments reflect the tradition of Dr. Bach. His description of how flower essences work from Judy Howard and John Ramsell's book, *The Original Writings of Edward Bach: Compiled from the Achieves of the Dr. Edward Bach Healing Trust* follows:

The action of these remedies is to raise our vibrations and open up our channels for the reception of the Spiritual Self; to flood our natures with the particular virtue we need, and wash out from us the fault that is causing the harm. They are able, like beautiful music or any glorious uplifting thing which gives us inspiration, to raise our very natures, and bring us nearer to our souls and by that very act to bring us peace and relieve our sufferings. They cure, not by attacking the disease, but by flooding our bodies with the beautiful vibrations of our Higher Nature, in the presence of which, disease melts away as snow in the sunshine.



Rescue Remedy® or Crisis Formula is the most well known flower essence. This five-flower combination is for **acute**, high-stress, emergency situations. (Rescue Remedy is made with Clematis, Cherry Plum, Rock Rose, Impatiens and Star of Bethlehem flower essences.) I recommend having Rescue Remedy in your emergency kit for both people and pets. Rescue Remedy is wonderful for those in-the-moment crises; however, single flower essences may better meet your specific and long-term concerns.

Selection

The selection of flower essences is very simple:
1) identify your **current, out-of-balance** emotion(s);
2) select the corresponding flower essence(s). Let's say you identify feeling overwhelmed, with just too many things to deal with. This matches the indicator description for the ELM flower essence. Possible outcomes include being better able to reframe your experience and discover new options such as being able to break the task into smaller steps, or delegating.

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Simplicity, self-care and being responsible for one's own health were foundational principles of Dr. Bach. He was one of the pioneers in recognizing the connection between emotions and physical health, and that health incorporates body, mind and spirit. He now would be considered a psychoneuroimmunologist. What made his approach unique is that he was the first to use flower essences specifically for emotional states. He believed that if our emotions were in harmony, our physical balance would follow. Consequently, the focus of Dr. Bach's methodology is on emotions and does not take into account physical symptoms.

The following quote from *The Original Writings of Edward Bach* describes his belief in the right to good health:

Health is our heritage, our right. It is the complete and full union between soul, mind and body; and this is not a difficult far-away ideal to attain, but one so easy and natural that many of us over looked it.

I believe the flowers help us to pause for a moment and draw upon our inner strength and wisdom to approach the situation from a different angle or to muster the courage to do what needs to be done.

Usage

The usage of flower essences is the same for people of all ages and for animals of all sizes. The recommended amount to use for a single flower essence is two drops; four drops are recommended for a combination remedy that has multiple flower essences. (You can combine up to seven flower essences to make a personalized remedy.) The suggested frequency of use is four times a day, with additional use as needed. Unlike conventional medicine, more is not better. It is frequency, rather than quantity, that makes the difference; if additional usage is required, taking them more often is recommended.

The most common way to use flower essences is to put the drops in water and sip. However, they can also be applied topically or put in a spray bottle to mist an area of the body.



Flower essences are not a panacea and results vary with each individual. The experiences reported by my clients and students note their experiences with flower essences are gentle and subtle. Often it is in reflection when one realizes that they are no longer experiencing the issue that had previously been of concern.

My experience has been that flower essences help me to be my best self. Decades of flower essence experiences have given me courage, confidence, patience, clarity, nurturance, solace and so much more. Flower essences have become my allies, and they “always have my back.”


I view emotions as a guidance system or maps to our well-being. Negative emotions are indicators when we are out of harmony with who we truly are. The goal of using flower essences is to move toward a more positive and harmonious expression of the emotion we are experiencing and to become more of our authentic selves.

Flower essences are not habit forming, and there are no side effects. Consequently, I encourage my students and you to play with the flower essences: pay attention to your feelings and emotions, try an appropriate flower essence and notice. I suggest taking notes of how you feel before your selection and while you are using the essences. This is an excellent way to observe your experience. A personalized, one-ounce remedy lasts approximately one month, depending upon the frequency of use.

Flower essences integrate well with other modalities including Healing Touch. Sometimes, as healers and health care professionals, we need to remember to prioritize self-care, which in turn allows us to care for others. I encourage you to discover ways flower essences can address your specific challenges and support your journey.

Why would you want to use flower essences?

You may wish to try flower essences if you are looking for a simple, safe and effective method to ease your daily stress, harmonize your emotions, and move into being and living your best self. If you desire a system where the focus is on you and the selection is individualized for your unique, current situation, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach, I invite you to *enliven YOUR essence* with flower essences.

If you have questions that may be addressed in future articles or blogs, please send them to questions@awakening-hearts.com. 



Chicory - to move from love with strings attached to loving unconditionally



Clematis – move from daydreaming, and thoughts in the future, to being present, focused and grounded



Mimulus – for any fear you can identify – Mimulus offers courage