

Holistic Health Care for Cavaliers – Part Eleven

The Flower Remedies

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Hopefully, many of you have heard of the Bach Flower Remedies or, at least, “Rescue Remedy”. These were developed by Dr. Edward Bach (1886 –1936) a physician and homeopath living in Great Britain at the turn of the last century. He originally created the seven “Bach Nosodes” – also known as “Bowel Nosodes”. He, later, surmised that certain flowers had healing properties and went about creating distillations of the flower, mixing them with brandy and using them to treat a multitude of illnesses and “conditions”.

The Bach Flower Remedies have been in use for almost 100 years and we use them, extensively, in our practice to help address mental and emotional issues.

While often called homeopathic, they are actually not homeopathic in the truest sense, because they are only diluted and not potentized (i.e. succussed) and do not follow the basic premise of homeopathy- the “Law of Similars”.

As we mentioned earlier, the most famous combination of the Bach Flower remedies is *Rescue Remedy* which contains Cherry Plum, Rock Rose, Star of Bethlehem, Clematis and Impatiens flowers. We prefer a variant of the original brand called Five Flower Formula by FES (Flower Essence Services in California).

There are 38 original Bach Flowers and we will detail them in this chapter, but there are also a multitude of additional flower essences that have been developed in the last century since Dr. Bach. These are useful for many of the same emotional situations and newer problems like EM (electro-magnetic) sensitivity. Greenhope Farms in Vermont and Anaflora in California are sources of these newer and custom remedies. Our good friend and healer Sharon Callahan of Anaflora will also make custom formulations based on her sense of the specific patient need. This is beyond the scope of our chapter but it is always important to make people aware of the finesse and skill that can and should be applied to these remedies.

We will make up combinations of different flowers based on the needs and emotional state and personality of the patient. Storm fears, aggression, separation anxiety or grief are just some of the examples of the things we treat with Flower Remedies. We will often use these in conjunction with our other modalities, including homeopathy and rarely see anything but positive effects. We do not feel that Flower Remedies, when used in moderation, antidote homeopathic therapy.

Here are the original 38 Bach Flowers with a brief description of their focus.

Disclaimer -These summaries are NOT original as they are based on Dr. Bach's writings and have been handed down and repeated for almost one hundred years so any similarity to published material stems from that fact and we know of no one to credit with the copyright besides Dr. Edward Bach.

Agrimony

"The jovial, cheerful, humorous people who love peace and are distressed by argument or quarrel, to avoid which they will agree to give up much. Though generally they have troubles and are tormented and restless and worried in mind or in body, they hide their cares behind their humor and jesting and are considered very good friends to know. They often take alcohol or drugs in excess, to stimulate them and help themselves bear their trials with cheerfulness." - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For those who hide their troubles from themselves and others, making light of inner difficulties and rarely burdening others with them. They avoid arguments and confrontations. They will avoid being alone, and may use alcohol, drugs, food, or work to escape their pain. Teaches honesty about feelings and the ability to express them.

Aspen

"Vague unknown fears, for which there can be given no explanation, no reason. It is a terror that something awful is going to happen even though it is unclear what exactly. These vague inexplicable fears may haunt by night or day. Sufferers may often be afraid to tell their trouble to others." – Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: or those who have vague but troubling fears and anxieties which suddenly arise for no apparent reasons. These may be in the form of nightmares or apprehensions; they may also be related to religious or spiritual beliefs. Gives courage in exploring the unknown.

Beech

"For those who feel the need to see more good and beauty in all that surrounds them. And, although much appears to be wrong, to have the ability to see the good growing within. So as to be able to be more tolerant, lenient and understanding of the different way each individual and all things are working to their own perfection." - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For intolerance of others and the readiness to find fault. Teaches one to be able to accept and look beyond differences.

Centaur

"Kind, quiet, gentle people who are over-anxious to serve others. They overtax their strength in their endeavors. Their wish so grows upon them that they become more servants than willing helpers. Their good nature leads them to do more than their own share of work, and in so doing they may neglect their own particular mission in life" - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For those who always try to please others and find it difficult to say no to them, even when they are being exploited. Teaches the strength to follow one's own path in life.

Cerato

“Those who have not sufficient confidence in themselves to make their own decisions. They constantly seek advice from others, and are often misguided” – Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For those who don't trust the wisdom of their own judgment and always need to ask the advice and opinions of others, even when such advice is misguided. Teaches one to trust in one's inner guidance.

Cherry Plum

“Fear of mind being over-strained, of reason giving away, of doing fearful and dreaded things, not wished and known wrong, yet there comes the thought and impulse to do them.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For those who fear losing control of their thoughts and actions and doing things they know are bad for them or which they consider wrong. Teaches trust in one's spontaneous wisdom and the courage to follow one's path.

Chestnut Bud

“For those who do not take full advantage of observation and experience, and who take a longer time than others to learn the lessons of daily life. Whereas one experience would be enough for some, such people find it necessary to have more, sometimes several, before the lesson is learnt. Therefore, to their regret, they find themselves having to make the same error on different occasions when once would have been enough, or observation of others could have spared them even that one fault.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For those who repeat the same mistakes over and over again, never learning from past experience. Teaches one to be a good learner and to pay attention to the present.

Chicory

“Those who are very mindful of the needs of others they tend to be over-full of care for children, relatives, friends, always finding something that should be put right. They are continually correcting what they consider wrong, and enjoy doing so. They desire that those for whom they care should be near them” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For those who are over-involved with and possessive of family and close friends and impose their own standards on those they love. Teaches unconditional love.

Clematis

“Those who are dreamy, drowsy, not fully awake, no great interest in life. Quiet people, not really happy in their present circumstances, living more in the future than in the present; living in hopes of happier times when their ideals may come true. In illness some make little or no effort to get well, and in certain cases may even look forward to death, in the hope of better times; or maybe, meeting again some beloved one whom they have lost.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For those who find their lives unhappy and withdraw into fantasy worlds. They are ungrounded and indifferent to the details of everyday life. Teaches one to establish a bridge between the physical world and the world of ideas; may foster great creativity.

Crab Apple

“This is the remedy of cleansing. For those who feel as if they have something not quite clean about themselves. Often it is something of apparently little importance: in others there may be more serious disease which is almost disregarded compared to the one thing on which they concentrate. In both types they are anxious to be free from the one particular thing which is greatest in their minds and which seems so essential to them that it should be cured. They become despondent if treatment fails. Being a cleanser, this remedy purifies wounds if the patient has reason to believe that some poison has entered which must be drawn out.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For feelings of shame, uncleanliness, or a poor self-image. This remedy teaches acceptance of the body and the environment, and is also used as a physical cleanser.

Elm

“Those who are doing good work, are following the calling of their life and who hope to do something of importance, and this often for the benefit of humanity. At times there may be periods of depression when they feel that the task they have undertaken is too difficult, and not within the power of a human being.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: Used when one feels overwhelmed or overburdened by responsibilities, for feeling that a task is just too difficult to accomplish. Teaches composure and the ability to see problems in an appropriate perspective.

Gentian

“Those who are easily discouraged. They may be progressing well in illness or in the affairs of their daily life, but any small delay or hindrance to progress causes doubt and soon disheartens them.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For feelings of discouragement and doubt which may be caused by even small obstacles. The cause of depression is always known. Teaches confidence about the ability to overcome problems.

Gorse

“Very great hopelessness, they have given up belief that more can be done for them. Under persuasion or to please others they may try different treatments, at the same time assuring those around that there is so little hope of relief.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For feelings of hopelessness and despair. For those who give up in the belief that nothing more can be done: often in the case of chronic illness. Teaches that confidence in a solution or cure is one of the components of healing, and imparts such confidence.

Heather

“Those who are always seeking the companionship of anyone who may be available, as they find it necessary to discuss their own affairs with others, no matter who it may be. They are very unhappy if they have to be alone for any length of time.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For those who have a need to constantly talk about themselves and their problems, who hate being alone. Teaches the ability to listen sensitively to others.

Holly

“For those who are sometimes attacked by thoughts of such kind as jealousy, envy, revenge, suspicion. For the different forms of vexation. Within themselves they may suffer much, often when there is no real cause for their unhappiness.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: Holly: For those who are troubled by feelings of envy and hatred because they feel they don't get enough love. Teaches one to be truly loving.

Honeysuckle

“Those who live much in the past, perhaps a time of great happiness, or memories of a lost friend, or ambitions which have not come true. They do not expect further happiness such as they have had.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For those who dwell too much in the past, on lost loved ones, or on ambitions which were never realized. Often they never expect happiness again. Teaches the ability to live joyfully in the present.

Hornbeam

“For those who feel that they have not sufficient strength, mentally or physically, to carry the burden of life placed upon them; the affairs of every day seem too much for them to accomplish, though they generally succeed in fulfilling their task. For those who believe that some part, of mind or body, needs to be strengthened before they can easily fulfill their work.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: Hornbeam: For the feeling (often experienced upon waking) that one doesn't have the strength to get through the normal activities of the day. Teaches mental liveliness and alertness, an enthusiasm for life.

Impatiens

“Those who are quick in thought and action and who wish all things to be done without hesitation or delay. When ill they are anxious for a hasty recovery. They find it very difficult to be patient with people who are slow as they consider it wrong and a waste of time, and they will Endeavour to make such people quicker in all ways. They often prefer to work and think alone, so that they can do everything at their own speed.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For those who act and think quickly, and have no patience for what they see as the slowness of others. They often prefer to work alone. Teaches empathy and understanding of and patience with others.

Larch

“For those who do not consider themselves as good or capable as those around them, who expect failure, who feel that they will never be a success, and so do not venture or make a strong enough attempt to succeed.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: Larch: For lack of self-confidence and the anticipation of failure. Often they make no attempt to succeed. Teaches self-confidence and the determination to take on challenges.

Mimulus

“Fear of worldly things, illness, pain, accidents, poverty, of dark, of being alone, of misfortune. The fears of everyday life. These people quietly and secretly bear their dread; they do not freely speak of it to others.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For known fears: of the dark, heights, disease, death, poverty, etc. Teaches courage and an understanding of other people's fears.

Mustard

“Those who are liable to times of gloom or even despair, as though a cold dark cloud overshadowed them and hid the light and the joy of life. It may not be possible to give any reason or explanation for such attacks. Under these conditions it is almost impossible to appear happy or cheerful.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For depression of unknown cause, a sudden gloom which descends upon one for no apparent reason. Teaches inner stability, cheerfulness, and serenity.

Oak

“For those who are struggling and fighting strongly to get well, or in connection with the affairs of their daily life. They will go on trying one thing after another, though their case may seem hopeless. They will fight on. They are discontented with themselves if illness interferes with their duties or helping others. They are brave people, fighting against great difficulties, without loss of hope or effort.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For those who never give up, regardless of difficulties. This remedy gives such people joy in their endeavors, and teaches them to take a break from time to time.

Olive

“Those who have suffered much mentally or physically and are so exhausted and weary that they feel they have no more strength to make any effort. Daily life is hard work for them, without pleasure.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For mental and physical exhaustion, caused by illness or personal ordeals. This remedy assists in giving strength and vitality.

Pine

“For those who blame themselves. Even when successful they think they could have done better, and are never satisfied with the decisions they make. Would this remedy help me to stop blaming myself for everything?” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For those who are never satisfied with themselves and blame themselves for not doing better. For people who suffer from guilt and will even blame themselves for others' mistakes. Teaches self-acceptance and the replacement of guilt with regret.

Red Chestnut

“For those who find it difficult not to be anxious for other people. Often they have ceased to worry about themselves, but for those of.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For those who worry constantly about the well-being of those they love and anticipate terrible things happening to them. Teaches the ability to radiate positive thoughts to people even when they're in trouble. Emergency situations and for any situation in which one feels terrified.

Rock Rose

“The remedy of emergency for cases where there even appears no hope. In accident serious or sudden illness, or when the patient is very frightened or terrified, or if the conditions is serious enough to cause great fear to those around. If the patient is not conscious the lips may be moistened with the remedy.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: This remedy is useful for patients suffering from terror, extreme fright, panic and nightmares.

Rock Water

“Those who are very strict in their way of living; they deny themselves many of the joys and pleasures of life because they consider it might interfere with their work. They are hard masters to themselves. They wish to be well and strong and active, and will do anything which they believe will keep them so. They hope to be examples which will appeal to others who may then follow their ideas and be better as a result.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Scleranthus

“Those who suffer much from being unable to decide between two things, first one seeming right then the other. They are usually quiet people, and bear their difficulty alone, as they are not inclined to discuss it with others.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Star of Bethlehem

“For those in great distress under conditions which for a time produce great unhappiness. The shock of serious news, the loss of someone dear, the fright following an accident, and such like. For those who for a time refuse to be consoled, this remedy brings comfort.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence; For trauma and shock, whether experienced recently or in the past. Teaches the ability to recover from traumas and to integrate them into the present life.

Sweet Chestnut

“For those moments which happen to some people when the anguish is so great as to seem to be unbearable. When the mind or body feels as if it had borne to the uttermost limit of its endurance, and that now it must give way. When it seems there is nothing but destruction and annihilation left to face.”

- Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For extreme anguish, the feeling that one has reached the limits of one's endurance. Teaches one to believe that change is possible, to trust oneself and the benevolence of the universe.

Vervain

“Those with fixed principles and ideas, which they are confident are right, and which they very rarely change. They have a great wish to convert all around them to their own views of life. They are strong of will and have much courage when they are convinced of those things that they wish to teach. In illness they struggle on long after many would have given up their duties.” – Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For those who need to convince others of the rightness of their own beliefs and whose overenthusiasm may sabotage their good intentions. Teaches one the ability to see other viewpoints and imparts a genuine enthusiasm which inspires others.

Vine

“Very Capable people, certain of their own ability, confident of success. Being so assured, they think that it would be for the benefit of others if they could be persuaded to do things as they themselves do, or as they are certain is right. Even in illness they will direct their attendants. They may be of great value in emergency.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For those who insist that others do things their way, the "boss" or "dictator" personality. Teaches one that genuine leadership means encouraging the leadership qualities in others.

Walnut

“For those who have definite ideals and ambitions in life and are fulfilling them, but on rare occasions are tempted to be led away from their own ideas, aims and work by the enthusiasm convictions or strong opinions of others. The remedy gives constancy and protection from outside influences.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For those who are easily influenced by outside circumstances and may be detoured from the positive changes they want to make in their lives. This remedy eases all transitions.

Water Violet

“For those who in health or illness like to be alone. Very quiet people, who move about without noise, they are aloof, leave people alone and go their own way. Often clever and talented. Their peace and calmness is a blessing to those around them.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For those who are independent, loners, sometimes proud and aloof. This remedy teaches them to interact with others without sacrificing their independence.

White Chestnut

“For those who cannot prevent thoughts, ideas, arguments which they do not desire from entering their minds. Usually at such times when the interest of the moment is not strong enough to keep the mind full. Thoughts which worry and still remain, or if for a time thrown out, will return. They seem to circle round and round and cause mental torture. The presence of such unpleasant thoughts drives out peace and interferes with being able to think only of the work or pleasure of the day.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For unwanted thoughts and worries which seem to endlessly recur and which can cause insomnia. Teaches a balanced state of mind and the ability to use one's thoughts constructively.

Wild Oat

“Those who have ambitions to do something of prominence in life, who wish to have much experience, and to enjoy all that which is possible for them, to take life to the full. Their difficulty is to determine what occupation to follow; as although their ambitions are strong, they have no calling which appeals to them above all others. This may cause delay and dissatisfaction.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For people who want to accomplish something in their lives, but who have no clear sense of purpose. They feel dissatisfied and uncertain. Teaches focus and direction.

Wild Rose

“Those who without apparently sufficient reason become resigned to all that happens, and just glide through life, take it as it is, without any effort to improve things and find some joy. They have surrendered to the struggle of life without complaint.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For resignation and apathy, for those who make no effort to find joy in their lives. Teaches enthusiasm and the ability to make life meaningful.

Willow

“For those who have suffered adversity or misfortune and find these difficult to accept, without complaint or resentment, as they judge life much by the success which it brings. They feel that they have not deserved so great a trial that it was unjust, and they become embittered. They often take less interest and are less active in those things of life which they had previously enjoyed.” - Dr. Edward Bach

Essence: For resentment, and the feeling that life is unfair; one may also resent the cheerfulness of others. Teaches one to take responsibility for one's own life.

Rescue Remedy: Contains Rock Rose, Cherry Plum, Clematis, Impatiens, and Star of Bethlehem. This is good both for emergency situations, shock, and stress. Helps to stabilize the emotions.

Making Up the Actual Solutions

When we mix these remedies into a custom formula, we use a few drops from the stock bottle and add that to our dropper bottle, we then will use a brandy /water mixture to dilute and stabilize it. There are also other stabilizers that do not involve alcohol like Red Shiso (Greenhope Farms).

It is customary to only combine up to five essences into one formula (with Rescue Remedy counting as one if it is used). These are used orally, in water, on food, allowed to evaporate into the air and can be applied to the ear tips or pulse points.

These are the original 38 Bach Flowers and, as previously mentioned, there are a number of additions to the "Flower Remedies" over the years.

Some of Our Custom Formulas

As some examples, we like the following combinations for general, particular purposes:

Noise and Thunderstorm Fears 1 – Aspen, Mimulus and Rock Rose

Noise and Thunderstorm Fears 2 – Aspen, Mimulus, Walnut, Rock Rose and Rescue Remedy

High Anxiety: Larch, Elm, Clematis, Walnut and Rescue Remedy

Victim Formula: Aspen, Agrimony, Larch and Rock Rose

Aggression Formula 1 : Vine, Vervain, Holly

Aggression Formula 2 (usually more fear based): also good for Feral Cats and inappropriate urination (marking): Vine, Vervain, Holly, Impatiens and Rock Rose

Self-Confidence: Agrimony, Larch, Gorse, Rock Rose and Mimulus

There are a number of training programs and certification for Flower Essence practitioners and we have never found a negative to the use of these substances (in moderation) by the pet owner although getting the greatest effect may often require someone with advanced training or experience.