

# Literary Research of Bach Flower Remedies with Respect to Pharmacology and Materia Medica

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## ABSTRACT

Bach flower remedies are an alternative or complementary treatment that is used for emotional problems and pain. They're made out of watered-down extracts from the flowers of wild plants. Homeopathy is the belief that the body can cure itself. It uses small amounts of natural substances like plants and minerals to treat the body or mind. The idea behind Bach flower remedies is similar to homeopathy. But they use fewer materials and don't work directly on physical symptoms, but instead on the emotions.

**KEYWORDS:** Bach flower remedies, Bach flower therapy, Herbal remedies, Flower essence therapy, Alternative and complimentary therapy, Homoeopathy

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## INTRODUCTION

### Flower in the crannied wall By - Lord Tennyson

"Flower in the crannied wall,  
I pluck you out of the crannies,  
I hold you there, root and all, in my hand,  
Little flower if I could understand  
What you are, root and all, all in all,  
I should know what God and man is."

In all parts of the world since the earliest times flowering trees, shrubs and herbs have been used for healing purposes. All parts of the plant have been used. However throughout history flowers, the crowning glory of plants, have been considered to embody the fundamental nature, or essential character of the plant and to have particular healing properties. The Tibetans believe that there is a direct link between the essential nature of plants and our own essential nature or soul and that at an unconscious level we can make contact with our own essence through that of plants and so restore harmony within ourselves. Flowers therefore have a vital healing function.

There are numerous systems of healing with flower essences, most based on long standing healing traditions. The first modern therapeutic system based on flower

essences was developed by the distinguished Physician and Homoeopath Dr. Edward Bach (1886 – 1936). He was greatly influenced by Hahnemann. "Disease will never be cured or eradicated by present materialistic methods, for the simple reason that disease in its origin is not material. What we know as disease is an ultimate result produced in the body, the end product of deep and long acting forces, and even if material treatment alone is apparently successful this is nothing more than a temporary relief unless the real cause has been removed."

Homeopathy is the belief that the body can cure itself. It uses small amounts of natural substances like plants and minerals to treat the body or mind. The idea behind Bach flower remedies is similar to homeopathy. But they use fewer materials and don't work directly on physical symptoms, but instead on the emotions. Bach believed that healing negative emotions helps the body heal itself. His system contains 38 remedies that each address a specific negative emotion. The emotions are grouped into seven broad psychological causes of illness:

- Fear
- Uncertainty
- Lack of interest in present circumstances

- Loneliness
- Oversensitivity to influences and ideas
- Sadness or despair
- Cares for others at the expense of self

**Cause of disease:** Not materialistic but the result of conflict between Soul and Mind.

**Some fundamental truths:**

1. Man has a soul which is his real self, a divine mighty being, immortal and invincible.
2. We are here for the purpose of gaining knowledge and experience through earthy existence, To develop those virtues that are lacking in us and wiping out all that is wrong in us.
3. This life is not the beginning and death will not be the ending.
4. As long as our souls and personalities are in harmony all is joy and peace, happiness and health.
5. Understanding of the unity of all things. The creator of all things is love.

**Two fundamental errors:**

1. Conflict between soul and personality.
2. Cruelty and wrong towards others.

These two fundamental errors causes disease. Through realising and correcting these by spiritual means, disease can be prevented. Action against unity can be various types, therefore disease can be various types. The nature of illness will guide us to discovering the type of action which is being taken against unity. Primary diseases of man are such defects like pride, cruelty, hate, self love, ignorance, instability and greed.

**Effect body and produce illness:**

Pride which is arrogance and rigidity of the mind will give rise to diseases that produce stiffness of the body.

Cruelty results in pain, whereby patient learns through personal suffering not to inflict it on others either mental or physical.

Hate: loneliness, violent uncontrollable temper, mental nerve storms, hysteria.

Self-love: neurosis, neuroaesthesia.

Ignorance and lack of wisdom: Impairment of vision and hearing.

Instability of the mind: Same in the body which effects movement and co-ordination.

Greed and domination of others: A slave of his own body, with desires and ambitions restricted by the body.

Prevention and cure of disease can be found by discovering the wrong within us and eradicating this, not by fighting the wrong but by bringing in a flood of its opposing virtue.

By operating at subtle energy levels, these healing herbs can act as a catalyst for reintegration and healing. He went on to identify 38 healing herbs, which he believed could be used to remedy all the known negative states of mind that afflict

mankind. He considered his remedies to be a complete system of treatment requiring no extension or alteration. Initially he discovered 12 healing herbs, each with a natural affinity to certain mental traits. These herbs showed the same vibrational character as the quality concerned but without distortion and at the normal rhythm, and could be used to re-establish its harmonious vibration through the principle of resonance.

Bach's research led him to conclude that positive health state of mind could be restored by the energies found in flowering plants, trees, bushes, and special waters.

**SOURCES OF BACH FLOWER REMEDIES:**

All herbs collected from English countryside, exceptions were Cerato, a native of Tibet and Olive and Vine which grew in the Mediterranean.

**METHODS OF PREPARATION:**

The bach flower remedies are made 100% naturally from spring water infused with wildflower, either by -

- A. **Sun steeped method-** was used for flower blooming in late spring and summer when the sun is at its height.
- B. **Boiling method-** for flower from trees, bushes, and plant that bloom early in the year, before there is much sunshine.

**PRINCIPLES:**

The Bach Flower remedies are not homoeopathic. They are not potentized according to homoeopathic practice, nor are they prescribed according to the law of similar on which homoeopathy is based. They could be classified as herbal remedies because of their origin. Their action is not chemical or pharmacological.

- They work on the mental level purely through their "vibration".
- They contain the "signature" or vibration of a particular substance. That vibration resonates with the vibration of human cells.
- It cancel out the negative human emotion and the patient's life force flows freely again and the body can heal itself.

**PREPERATION:**

Pick flowers and step them in a bowl of 50:50 water and brandy under sunlight or maybe boiled, this make the "mother essence" which is then diluted at 2 drops per 15 ml into "stock bottle". Which are further diluted at 5-7 drops of stock per 30 ml. If it is required to keep for sometimes a little brandy may be added as a preventive.

**METHOD OF DOSAGE:**

Since the remedies are pure and harmless, there is no fear of giving too much or too often, through only the smallest quantities are necessary.

- To dispense take a few drops in a little water or milk.
- Repetition in acute cases can vary from few min. to half hourly or 2-3 hrs.
- In unconscious cases moisten lips frequently, in pain, stiffness, inflammation application can be done.

**WHEN TO PRESCRIBE BACH FLOWER REMEDIES:**

- In psychosomatic illness.
- In pathological cases they an assist as they greatly alleviate the mental component which may be causative or reactive to the physical problem.

- Helps relatives of patients to alleviate their anxiety like red chestnut.
- Very useful in chronic illness but can also be used in acute illness.
- As a preventive i.e. to treat the Mental attitude as well as Physical problem if they are in the early stage will be reversed.
- These remedies are more for healthy people rather than very sick people. They are not for advanced states.

**THE 38 REMEDIES ARE PLACED UNDER 07 HEADINGS:**

1. **FOR FEAR** - Rockrose, Mimulus, Cherry plum, Aspen and Red chestnut.
2. **FOR UNCERTAINTY**- Cerato, Scleranthus, Gentian, Gorse, Hornbean and wildoat.
3. **FOR INSUFFICIENT INTEREST IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES**- Clematis, Honeysuckle, Wild rose, Olive, White Chestnut, Mustard and Chestnutbud.
4. **FOR LONELINESS**- Water violet, Impatiens, Heather.
5. **FOR THOSE OVERSENSITIVE TO INFLUENCES AND IDEAS**- Agrimony, Centaury, Walnut and Holly.
6. **FOR DESPONDENCY AND DESPAIR**- Larch, Pine, Elm, Sweet Chestnut, Star of Bethlehem, Willow, Oak and Crabapple.
7. **FOR OVERCARE FOR WELFARE OF OTHERS** - Chicory, Vervain, Vine, Beech and Rockwater.

**MATERIA MEDICA OF BACH FLOWER REMEDIES**

**A. REMEDIES FOR FEAR**

1. **ROCKROSE:** The remedy of emergency where there appears no hope. In accident or sudden illness or when the patient is frightened or terrified or if the condition is serious enough to cause great fear to those around.
2. **MIMULUS:** Known fears, fear of wordly 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 speak of it to others.
3. **CHERRY PLUM:** Fear of mind being overstrained, of reason giving way, of doing fearful or dreaded things, not wished and known wrong yet there comes the thought and impulse to do them.
4. **ASPEN:** Vague unknown fears, for which there can be given no explanation, no reason. Yet the patient may be terrified of something terrible going to happen, he knows not what. These vague unexplainable fears may haunt by day or night. These sufferers are often afraid to tell their trouble to others.
5. **RED CHESTNUT:** For those who find it difficult not to be anxious for other people. They do not worry about themselves but about those whom they are fond of, anticipating that something unfortunate may happen to them.

**B. REMEDIES FOR UNCERTAINTY**

6. **CERATO:** Those who do not have sufficient confidence in themselves to make their own decisions. They constantly seek advice from others, and are often misguided.
7. **SCLERANTHUS:** Indecisive. They are usually quiet people, and bare their difficulty alone as they do not like to discuss it with others.
8. **GENTIAN:** Those who are easily discouraged. They may be progressing well in illness or in their daily life but any

small delay or hindrance to progress causes doubt and disheartens them.

9. **GORSE:** Great hopelessness, they have given up belief that more can be done for them. Under persuasion, they may try other treatments but at the same time believing that there is very little hope for them.
10. **HORNBEAM:** For those who feel that they do not have sufficient strength mentally or physically, to carry burden of life placed upon them. Everyday affairs seem to much for them to accomplish, though they generally succeed in fulfilling their task.
11. **WILD OAT:** Those who have ambition to do something of prominence in life, who desire to have much experience, to enjoy life to the full. Their difficulty is to determine what occupation to follow. Although their ambitions are strong they have no calling which appeals to them. Dissatisfaction.

**C. REMEDIES FOR INSUFFICIENT INTEREST IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES**

12. **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 present; living in hopes of happier times, when their ideals may come true. In illness some make little or no effort to get well, & 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.
13. **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.
14. **WILD ROSE:** Those who without any apparent 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 life without complaint.
15. **OLIVE:** Those who have suffered much mentally or physically and are so exhausted and weary that they have no more strength to make any effort. Daily life is hard work for them without pleasure.
16. **WHITE CHESTNUT:** Brooding, persistent unpleasant thoughts, worries which interfere with their work or pleasure.
17. **MUSTARD:** Feel gloomy, despair as though a cold dark cloud overshadowed them and hid the light and the joy of life. There may be no reasons for such attacks.
18. **CHESTNUT BUD:** Do not learn from their experiences, keep on making the same mistakes repeatedly. May realise after repeated errors.

**D. REMEDIES FOR LONELINESS**

19. **WATER VIOLET:** Those who like to be alone. Very quiet people, who move about without noise, speak little and gently. Independent self-reliant. Free of opinion of others. They are aloof, leave people alone & go their own way. Often clever and talented. Their peace and calmness is blessing to those around them.
20. **IMPATIENS:** Those who are quick in thought and action and who wish all things to be done without delay. They find it very difficult to be patient with people who are slow, as they consider it wrong under waste of time. They often prefer to work and think alone, so that they can do everything at their own speed.



**21. HEATHER:** Those who are always seeking the companionship of anyone as they find it necessary to discuss their own affairs with others. They are very unhappy if they have to be alone for any length of time.

**E. REMEDIES FOR THOSE OVERSENSITIVE TO INFLUENCES AND IDEAS**

**22. AGRIMONY:** Those who love peace and are distressed by argument or quarrel and will go to great lengths to avoid it. Though they may have troubles and are tormented, restless, and worried, they hide their cares behind humour and jesting and are consider very good friends to know. They often take alcohol or drugs in excess to stimulate themselves and help them to bear their trials with cheerfulness.

**23. CENTAURY:** Kind, quiet, gentle people who are over anxious to serve others. They are good natured leads them to do more than their share of work, and in so doing they may neglect their own particular mission in life.

**24. 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.

**25. HOLLY:** For those who are sometimes attacked by thoughts of jealousy, envy, revenge, suspicion. Within themselves they may suffer much, often when there is no real cause for their unhappiness.

**F. REMEDIES FOR DESPONDENCY OR DESPAIR**

**26. LARCH:** For those who do not consider themselves as good or capable as those around them, who expect failure and so do not venture or make a strong attempt to succeed.

**27. PINE:** For those who blames themselves even if it is not their fault. They are discontented with their efforts or results and fill they could have done better.

**28. ELM:** Those who are doing good work and who hope to do something of importance, often for benefit of humanity. At times there may be depression when they feel that the task they have undertaken is too difficult and not within the power of a human being.

**29. SWEET CHESTNUT:** For those moments when the anguish is so great as to seen 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.

**30. STAR OF BETHLEHAM:** For those in great distress/shock or hearing serious news, loss of someone dear, the fright following an accident. For those who refuse to be consoled this remedy brings comfort.

**31. WILLOW:** For those who have suffered adversity or misfortune and find this 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.

**32. OAK:** For those who are struggling and fighting with the affairs of their daily life. They are brave people, fighting against great difficulties, without loss of hope or effort.

**33. CRAB APPLE:** This is the remedy of cleansing. For those who fill as if they had something not clean about themselves. It may be of little importance but in their minds it is very big and should be cured.

**G. REMEDIES FOR OVER CARE FOR WELFARE OF OTHERS**

**34. 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.

**35. VERVAIN:** Those with fixed principles and ideas, which they are confident are right, and which they 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.

**36. 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.

**37. BEECH:** For those who have the ability to see the good and beauty that surrounds them, although much may be wrong. So as to be more tolerant, lenient and understanding of the different way each individual and all things are working to their own final perfection.

**38. 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 may interfere with their work. They are hard masters to themselves. They hope to be examples which will appeal to others who may then follow their ideas and be better as a result.

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