

Bach Flower Remedies

By Ellen Farrell, MA, NCC, LPC

Is it a spray? (NO!) - A tea? (NO!) - Do you smell it? (NO!) - Does it make people like classical music? Well... no - but it may help one attain a calm and clear disposition in just the way a Bach Bourree might! How? While not a replacement for medical care, they are similar to homeopathy - using natural plant and flower-based substances to affect the body's subtle energies. The difference is that the essences comprehensively treat states of disharmony rather than physical symptoms. Also, there can be no overdose, no side effects, and no method of treatment with which it is incompatible. Bach Flower Essences, also called remedies, act on a "disharmony of the soul" according to Mechthild Scheffer's 1st chapter, "...A Holistic Approach to Treatment" from her book, *Bach Flower Therapy* (which is an excellent resource, as is her new book, the *Bach Flower Encyclopedia*). She quotes a 1934 writing by Bach stating that one's energy is harmonized, not by "attacking the disease" but by changing the outlook so that the disharmony is released and replaced with "the beautiful vibrations of our Higher Nature".

Now, before you run screaming "Get me away from this New Age bunk!!!" consider that Dr. Bach's work took place in the early 20th century. In 1930, he was a highly regarded bacteriologist and homeopathic physician. He gave up his London, Harley Street practice to continue his research, which culminated in the development of 38 remedies, and the well-known Rescue Remedy (a combination of 5 remedies, helpful in situations of trauma and panic). I've seen too many positive results to list in working with these remedies for over 20 years, and despite initial skepticism now know they are potent change agents. Each of the remedies addresses a specific state, and brings balance and clarity. They address such issues as fear, control, career, exhaustion, confidence, anxiety, trauma, despair, loss, guilt, grief, transition, and many more.

A self-test to determine your needs is available on-line, and may be available at your local health food store. To learn more about it, you can also check out the FES (Flower Essence Services – *Bridging Body and Soul*) website, www.fesflowers.com/healing_herbs - the site states, "The Healing Herbs essences are made by Julian Barnard, who is considered among the world's leading experts on the English Flower Essences, having studied their effects in clinical practice for two decades. For several years Julian worked closely with Nickie Murray, former director of the Bach Centre. From Nickie, Julian learned the methods of flower identification and preparation given to her by Nora Weeks, Dr. Bach's devoted assistant." The original Bach essences are retained through Julian Barnard's work.

Scheffer recommends Dr. Bach's book, *Heal Thyself* – however, Scheffer's book is one of the definitive guides - giving the background, description, and supportive measures of each remedy, as well as how to mix your own personal formula. She proposes that "it can only be a matter of time" before these subtle energies will be measurable as advancements in molecular chemistry and atomic physics may lead to a greater scientific understanding. Meanwhile, double blind trials have revealed that the emotional tones of individual essences have been correctly identified. To close, I quote Ralph Waldo Emerson, "I believe in the existence of the material world as the expression of the spiritual, and I await the insight which our advancing knowledge of material laws shall furnish". Until then, continued exploration of these fascinating, safe, and helpful remedies is recommended!

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