Bach flower remedies

Dr Edward Bach's system

Edward Bach studied medicine at Birmingham University and University College Hospital, London. He qualified in 1912 and worked as a house surgeon, pathologist and bacteriologist. He also carried out original research into immunology and vaccine therapy.

In 1919 Bach took up a post at the Royal London Homeopathic Hospital. Inspired by his experiences there, he began using plant-based preparations to try to address the emotional causes of disease. He left London in 1930 to dedicate himself to finding new healing plants. The essences that he discovered over the next few years - a complete system - came to be known as the Bach flower remedies.

Bach's system gives you a simple way to manage everyday emotions and feel more yourself. You can use it alongside any other approach to well-being.

Selecting Bach flower remedies

Dr Bach believed in treating people as individuals. The best mix is always one chosen for you personally. Start by thinking about the way you feel right now. Look through the list of remedies -

there are only 38 - to see which ones best match those feelings. You could also think about your basic personality - the sort of person you are underneath everything else.

You can select up to seven different remedies and mix them together. Don't worry if you make a wrong selection, because if a remedy isn't needed it won't make things worse.

If you have selected more than seven remedies you are probably including some that you don't need. Leave out any that relate to feelings that were in the past, and any that aren't really needed because another remedy is more accurate.

Consult a Bach Foundation Registered Practitioner via www.bachcentre.com/refer if you need personal advice to help you use the system.

Dr Bach's system is based on emotions. Consult a qualified medical advisor if you need help with a physical problem.

Taking Bach remedies

For short-term use put two drops of each selected remedy in a glass of water and sip as required. For longer-term use sip from the glass throughout the day, at least four times a day, and make up a fresh mix each day.

A more economical method is to make up a personal mix in a dropper bottle. Add two drops of each selected remedy to an empty 30 ml dropper bottle (try the local pharmacy) and top up with non-fizzy mineral water. From this mixing bottle take four drops at least four times a day.

A mixed bottle can last up to three weeks if you keep it cool and avoid touching the dropper with your fingers or tongue. Some users include a teaspoon of brandy, cider vinegar or glycerine in the bottle to help preserve the contents.

The 38 remedies

The indications here are very short and can't get every nuance across. Look up the remedies at www.bachcentre.com for longer descriptions.

Agrimony - mental torture behind a cheerful face
Aspen - afraid but not sure of what
Beech - lack of tolerance
Centaury - the inability to say 'no'
Cerato - lack of trust in one's own decisions
Cherry Plum - fear of doing something irrational
Chestnut Bud - failure to learn from mistakes
Chicory - selfish, manipulative love
Clematis - dreaming of the future without acting in the present
Crab Apple - feeling dirty or unattractive
Elm - overwhelmed by responsibility
Gentian - discouragement after a setback
Gorse - losing hope before trying every possible solution
Heather - self-centred chatter and self-concern
Holly - hatred, envy and jealousy
Honeysuckle - living in the past
Hornbeam - tiredness at the thought of doing something
Impatiens - impatience
Larch - lack of confidence
Mimulus - being afraid of something specific
Mustard - deep gloom for no reason
Oak - working steadily past the point of exhaustion
Olive - exhaustion following mental or physical effort
Pine - guilt
Red Chestnut - anxiety about the welfare of loved ones
Rock Rose - terror and fright
Rock Water - self-denial, rigidity and self-repression
Scleranthus - inability to choose between alternatives
Star of Bethlehem - after hearing bad or unexpected news
Sweet Chestnut - extreme mental anguish, when everything has been tried and there is no light left
Vervain - over-enthusiasm
Vine - dominance
Walnut - protection from change and unwanted influences
Water Violet - self-reliance and solitude becoming loneliness
White Chestnut - unwanted thoughts and mental arguments
Wild Oat - uncertainty over one's direction in life
Wild Rose - drifting, resignation, apathy
Willow - self-pity and resentment

The Bach Centre

The Bach Centre is housed at Mount Vernon, Dr Bach's home for the last two years of his life and the base from which he found the final 19 remedies in the system. Bach replanted the garden himself and made his own furniture, much of which still fills the house today. Several remedy plants also grow in the semi-wild cottage garden, many of which are still used to prepare MotherTinctures.

Edward Bach died on November 27th, 1936 and left his work in the hands of his assistants Nora Weeks and Victor Bullen. He asked them to keep the system simple and make it available to everybody. Nora and Victor lived at Mount Vernon until the late 1970s, making and supplying remedies, writing and teaching, and doing all they could to spread the word. The house and the activities in it became known as The Bach Centre.

Before she passed, Nora left the responsibility for continuing the Centre's mission to to her personally appointed successors, John Ramsell and Nickie Murray, who had worked with Nora and Victor for several years. When Nickie approached retirement, John's daughter Judy (Ramsell Howard) joined the Team working alongside her father who in turn chose Judy and later her colleague Stefan Ball as the current directors.

Since the Centre is no longer involved in the commercial manufacture of remedies, its focus is on education, the registration of practitioners and the preservation of Dr Bach's name, system and heritage.

Education and training

The Bach Centre is the heart of a world-wide system of courses, all run to standards that accurately reflect the methods taught, recommended and used by Dr Bach. We are the only organisation in the world that insists its partners work strictly to the original method.

The Centre approves four levels of training. Level 1 covers the basics of the system. Level 2 provides a deeper and more personal understanding. Level 3 is aimed at people who want to work with the remedies in a professional practice, and is assessed by means of examination and coursework including the preparation of written case histories. The fourth level, called BC-ACE (Bach Centre-approved Continuing Education) is a series of workshops led by practitioners that give post-Level 3 students access to specialist skills and knowledge that could be useful in their practice.

For students who are able to travel to Oxfordshire, the Bach Centre offers courses at all levels at Mount Vernon itself. Studying at the Bach Centre provides a unique opportunity to learn about the remedies at Dr Bach's home, the place where so many of the remedies were first prepared.

For more information and links to education partners around the world go to www.bachcentre.com/learn.

Bach Foundation Registered Practitioners

Graduates of Level 3 courses can apply to the Bach Centre to join its Bach Foundation International Register of Practitioners, which validates the work of Bach practitioners in more than sixty countries.

Members of the Register are called Bach Foundation Registered Practitioners (BFRPs). BFRPs are people from all walks of life who share a dedication to Dr Bach's ideals of simplicity and self-help. They work under the Bach Centre's Code of Practice, which sets out the standards expected of professional practitioners and provides a safe framework for practitioners and clients.

Consulting a BFRP is easy and is a good way to get started with the Bach system. BFRPs aim to teach you the remedies during the consultation process, so that you will be able to help yourself and your family in future – but always be able to call on your practitioner for help and assistance when you need it.

Practitioners on the Bach Foundation International Register are entitled to use the Bach Foundation logo and to use the letters BFRP after their names. BFRAPs listed on the Register are Bach Foundation Registered Animal Practitioners - practitioners with specialist training in working with animals.

To find a Bach Foundation Registered Practitioner go to www.bachcentre.com/refer.

Visiting the Centre

People come from all over the world to visit the Bach Centre, walk in the garden and see the remedy plants and where Dr. Bach lived and worked. Dr. Bach's consulting room and the two museum rooms upstairs, filled with historical artifacts, help visitors explore and appreciate the Bach Centre's history. There is a small charge to visit the Centre and bookings can be made online via www.bachcentre.com/visit. The Centre is open to visitors year-round, Tuesday to Friday, apart from public holidays and limited opening times during the winter.

As well as the house and garden, visitors to the Centre can buy remedies and Bach-related items in our shop, and also enjoy a visit to *Nora's Kitchen*, the Bach Centre's own café, serving drinks, sweet treats and light lunches. There is seating inside as well as outside on the decking where you can enjoy the garden under the dappled shade of the Aspen tree.

Groups of six or more may like to book a Bach Centre Experience, a half day visit which includes a personalised tour of the Centre, a film and the opportunity to ask questions and prepare a remedy mix to take home. You may also like to take some time to explore the village: Dr Bach is buried in the St. James' churchyard only 50 yards from the Centre, and one of his favourite pubs, The Red Lion, is a short walk away.

For opening times, bookings and other visitor advice including how to find us see the links at www.bachcentre.com/visit.

Access

The Bach Centre is a Victorian cottage standing on a raised garden. Access to the front is via steep steps. A wheelchair ramp gives access via the side of the house. Parts of the garden are difficult for wheelchair users and for partially-sighted people because of the narrow and uneven paths. There are also two ponds which may sometimes be hidden by the plants growing around them.

Apart from the museum rooms upstairs, all other facilities are on the ground floor, and one of the toilets is accessible for users in wheelchairs. The museum rooms are up a steep flight of stairs so unfortunately they are not at present accessible to people in wheelchairs.

Well-behaved dogs are welcome in the main house and must be kept on a lead in the garden. Guide and assistance dogs are welcome in training rooms as well.

Children are welcome if accompanied by a responsible adult, but due to the important nature of the garden and the unfenced ponds, younger children must be supervised at all times.

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