

Julian Barnard

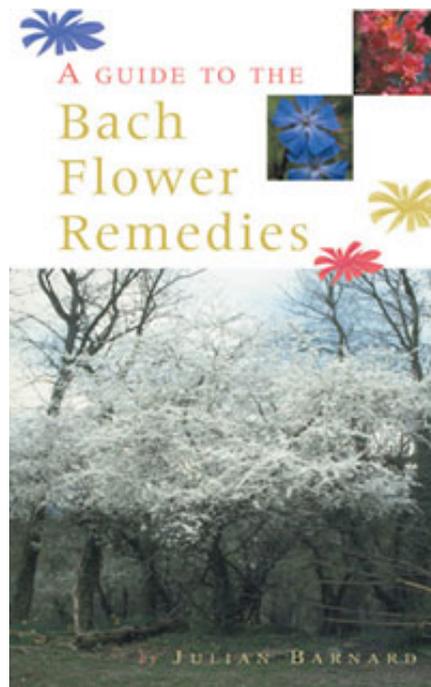
A Guide to the Bach Flower Remedies

Reading excerpt

[A Guide to the Bach Flower Remedies](#)

of [Julian Barnard](#)

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When We Take a Remedy

Although the action of the remedies is entirely benign it is not possible to exactly predict the course of their action. In many cases the patient will feel no immediate effect. Sometimes there is a sense of relief and well-being, we may feel the tension ease and so be able to observe the action of the remedy. Occasionally the patient is abruptly faced by the real nature of his personality which may be a surprising confrontation. It depends to some extent upon the sensitivity and state of the patient. There are many case histories which record a startling improvement in the illness. When dealing with an hysterical person or one who is unconscious we can expect an immediate response while a chronic condition may shift quite slowly. Since we cannot quantify a psychological state, it is a matter of quality not quantity, it is not possible to systematically predict results. Thus we do not prescribe a seven-day course as with antibiotics but deal entirely on an individual basis with the needs of the patient.

Treating the patient individually is important since it is sometimes necessary to change the remedy as the psychological condition changes. As we come to face the

reality of our situation it is possible that new conflicts may arise. In the first stages there may be a clear improvement and then perhaps a setback, the patient feels discouraged and doubts that he will ever be really well. At such a point it is very clear that an additional remedy is required - *Gentian*. This is for doubt and discouragement, a lack of faith and conviction. So the new psychological condition is tackled and resolved.

Just as the suffering of the patient has grown organically like a tree that puts out a new branch each time the diseased pattern of behaviour is confirmed, so too it is dismembered branch by branch. Sometimes it is necessary to trace back the psychological condition through many states, using first one remedy and then another. Thus we slowly cut back to the root of the problem and properly eradicate the cause of the imbalance. The physical body will gradually improve during this process until it is fully well. It is a naturally self-righting mechanism and when no longer subject to the stress and imbalance of the psyche it should automatically adjust its functions to good working order.

It would be improper to suggest that every disease can be treated with equal success. As with all healing there are some patients who cannot be cured. This may be owing to a pathological state that is beyond recall or where an organ has been permanently damaged; there may be an overriding condition that prevents the patient being healed; it may be that at the Soul level the subject knows that it is right for the illness to continue, or there

is an inborn defect in the physical body which is beyond the scope of the Bach Remedies to deal with.

So while the remedies will help to deal with the psychological condition the state of the body may not be automatically 'cured'. It may be appropriate, therefore, to work in conjunction with other techniques such as osteopathy or the Alexander method which would work to re-align the body and its energy systems or with surgery when there is extreme physical damage. In the latter case the remedies are very useful to deal with the shock and distress involved. In every situation the Bach Remedies can be helpful since the number of people whose psyche is properly balanced are few indeed.

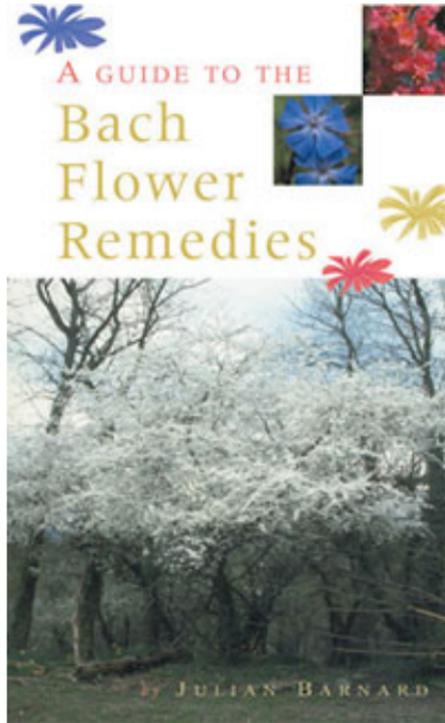
It should be remembered that true healing is not just the action of removing the physical suffering but also helping the patient to come to terms with the significance of the illness. This brings us to the way in which the remedies can be used as a means of self-development. Although this is not within the bounds of normal medical interest it is an integral part of the process of health. For the most part we only treat with sickness and pay little attention to the subject of health. We have seen that physical illness is directly related to a decline in psychological health. It is a law of existence that it is impossible to remain stationary. That which is not making forward progress must be in decline - everything is either in the process of growing or in the process of dying. So it is with our own psychological state: if we are not making forward progress in self-development then we

are literally on the way to ill health. Therefore we each have a responsibility to ourselves to work at the psychological level to improve the condition of our lives. Bach refers to this in terms of the perfection of our nature and the development of virtues.

The Bach Remedies then can be used directly as a form of psychological therapy, not just for those who are recognised as being mentally sick but for all people. To make the point again, there are very few people whose psyche is perfectly balanced. Using the remedies in this way may often be a process of 'self-encounter'. We must first face the reality of our personality and see what sort of person we are. It may be unpleasant for the ego to acknowledge that it is wilful, inflexible, possessive or proud. Other people can see these traits but we are rarely willing to acknowledge them ourselves. Then it may be necessary to face up to emotions and feelings that we have repressed and come to terms with past situations that we prefer to keep locked away in the deeper recesses of the memory. Taking a remedy may bring many things to the surface for consideration. It is as if the psyche were a river and on this river float many logs, the memories that are constantly being taken from the external world and thrown into the waters of the mind. Normally they float downstream to the sawmill as the useful material of experience for building the structure of our life. But log-jams can occur and although the water flows on we are not making use of the lessons that are daily being shown to us. An appropriate remedy can then help us to walk

out on to the river to free the logs and so set in motion again the proper flow of the psyche.

When such a situation occurs much productive work can be done by the individual. In the long run it is extremely beneficial though it can occasionally be unsettling at the time, if only because we may have a succession of vivid dreams as the logs go down river. However, this does not constitute a 'healing crisis' and we may be able to come to terms with ourselves without any conflict or upset. Certainly it should be made clear that psychological disturbance is not an inevitable side effect. The response is dependent upon why we take the remedy. If we choose to work in this way then the remedy will work with us. If the intention is not in this direction then it will not have this effect. The individual is always in control, it is not like taking drugs which upset the psychological metabolism through interference. The remedies cooperate with our guide and internal teacher, the Soul, who, as Bach said, works always for our utmost advantage.



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