

The Beauty of Flowers

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Flower essences are one of the most beautiful, gentle and powerful forms of healing. Like the opening of the petals of a bud, flower essences encourage the unfolding of ourselves- our true and whole selves. Flower essence therapy focuses on the mental, emotional, and spiritual imbalances we all work through during our lives.

Flower essences are vibrational or energetic remedies made from flowers. They are made by floating the desired flower in pure spring water in the sun (thus incorporating all four elements of earth, water, air and fire). After the flowers are removed, the water is used as the flower essence. Essences are simply the vibration or resonance (or "essence") of a particular flower transferred to water; they are so dilute that they have no real "active ingredients" remaining. They are not essential oils or aromatherapy; they are more subtle and work \ more deeply.

Each flower has its own individual healing vibration or frequency which resonates with specific soul qualities. If a certain soul quality is out of balance or blocked, taking the corresponding flower essence will provide a healing frequency which gently shifts the imbalance or blockage. They basically re-establish connection between you and your higher self.

Flower essences can be helpful for many problems in animals. They can be used to assist an animal through acute problems such as surgery, anesthesia or trauma. They can also be used to help with more deep-seated, chronic problems such as past abuse or trauma, anxiety, fear, abandonment, training problems, new conditions, will to live, depression, senility or dying. I have prescribed them for many cases of cystitis, inflammatory bowel disease, and other conditions which can have an emotional component.

As a caretaker, you might wish to try flower essences to help your pet with non-medical conditions such as past trauma, fear, or jealousy. Since flower essences are very safe, you can feel confident that you are doing no harm. Essences are chosen based on descriptions of the properties of the essences. Repertories and books are available and make selection of essences fun and easy. I have listed some references at the end of this article.

One would pick about one to five different essences to cover the primary issues you want to address. It is best to pick only 1-2 issues to work on at a time, otherwise one can stir up too many things at once. It is often necessary to use your intuition or anthropomorphize to get a picture of what the animal might be experiencing. The list below is just a starting guide for some common problems and possible remedies. Remember, each animal is an individual. Read the descriptions in one of the reference books and combine the ones that fit the best into one formula.

Past trauma or abuse; lack of trust: Rescue Remedy, Five Flower Formula, Star of Bethlehem, Mallow

Abandonment: Mariposa Lily, Rescue Remedy, Five Flower Formula, Star of Bethlehem, Baby Blue Eyes, Chicory, Holly

Stress: Rescue Remedy, Five Flower Formula, Cherry Plum, Chamomile, White Chestnut

Fear or anxiety: Rescue Remedy, Five Flower Formula, Cherry Plum, Aspen, Mimulus, Red Clover, Rock Rose

Depression, long-term stress or severe illness, loss of hope: Borage, California Wild Rose, Gentian, Gorse, Hornbeam, Mustard, Olive, Penstemon, Self Heal, Wild Rose, Yerba Santa

Jealous or needy animals: Holly, Chicory; possibly some of the essences listed under abandonment

Nervous or high-strung animals: Vervain, Impatiens, Chamomile

Aggressive or dominant animals: Tiger Lily, Snapdragon, Vine

To introduce new animals: Quaking Grass, Walnut, Chestnut Bud

Rescue Remedy Cream can be applied to the inside of the ear flaps (the hairless area) for any trauma, anxiety, fear, some travel sickness, visit to the veterinarian, etc. The cream is great when it is not convenient to give something orally or for cats who hate alcohol.

Flower essences are purchased as "stock" bottles, which contain about 65% alcohol. Just add 5 drops of Rescue Remedy/Five Flower Formula or 3 drops of any other remedy to a one ounce dropper bottle of spring water. You can add

one to five or so essences to the same bottle. This new bottle is called a “dosage” bottle, and it is from this bottle that you treat yourself or your pet. For people, I usually add brandy or apple cider vinegar as a preservative. For animals, I usually just use straight water, leaving the remedy virtually tasteless.

The essences are given orally, about 4 drops four times a day. They are best given directly by mouth or on the gums or lips. For cats, you can tip the nose up and drop the drops just below the nostrils, letting the drops roll into the mouth, or scruff the cat gently and squirt the essences directly into the mouth. For dogs, you can put the drops in the cheek pouch. They do not need to swallow the drops; the essences are absorbed directly through the gums. Keep the dropper clean; if the dropper gets saliva on it, rinse with tap water before replacing the dropper back in the bottle. If the animal is only semi-tame, the essences can be applied to the skin of the inside of the ear flap. If the animal is completely wild, the drops can be given in the food and water, but I believe that they are less effective this way.

Flower essences can be made into a room spray. This is ideal for animals in cages, kennel situations, where one is treating a household (people included), or wild animals. Flower essences can be incorporated into a cream and applied topically, although this is more appropriate for people than animals.

You can purchase the Bach Flower Remedies and many other remedies at health food stores such as Whole Foods. The less common remedies can be purchased directly from the companies, such as Flower Essence Services at (800) 548- 0075.

Several books are available to help you choose an appropriate set of essences for you or your animals. My favorite book is *The Flower Essence Repertory* by Patricia Kaminski and Richard Katz. This book has an excellent introduction to flower essences, including principles of energetic healing and how to choose remedies, as well as a repertory section specifically for animals. The repertory includes not only the Bach flower remedies, but also many other helpful essences. The book is available through Flower Essence Services. *Bach Flower Therapy* by Mechthild Scheffer is an excellent and more in-depth guide to just the Bach flower remedies.

For a full experience and understanding of flower essences, I would encourage you to try flower essences for yourself. Only then can you truly understand their gentle but powerful effects. Besides providing the specific qualities listed in the

repertories, flower essences really do begin a process of awakening and unfolding on many and subtle levels. In addition, a caretaker who is on a path of growth and self-exploration will provide a much healthier environment for their animal charges. I am a big believer in “Heal yourself, heal your pet”!