Bach Flower Essence Therapy: A New Instrument for Emotional Support

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Abstract

As helping professionals, it is a responsibility as well as a privilege to continuously seek out methods or tools that will assist clients in their healing. We hope these methods and tools to be most beneficial: safe, non-complicated, easily applied, and preferably quick in having positive results. This searching process often involves several elements: the searcher’s intents, her willingness to learn and try out new or strange things, time, the encounter between the searching and the searched, and also, a little bit of luck. Driven by an intent to find ways to help heal human emotions, to help people live a less stressed and happier life, the author has encountered the Bach Flower Essence Therapy and found it to have tremendous values in emotional healing. This paper reports the results of the author’s search.

Keywords: Bach Flower Essences, Flower Essence Therapy, emotional equilibrium
In the evolution of mankind through the last Century, an important contribution is made by psychotherapy to help people keep up mentally with the increasing speed of life and chaotic lifestyles of modern man. The insights by Siegmund Freud and the host of psycho-analysts, therapists and counselors that have followed his footsteps, have made possible the treatment of many psychological disorders that have come to trouble human beings trying to deal with the increasing demands of life. Through the decades, psycho-analytical or psychological theorists and therapists have addressed many aspects of the troubled mind and developed new or refined theories for treatment. Most modern insights in the psycho-analytical field have come to focus no longer exclusively on the drives of sex and death as Freud proposed, but on the core problem of an empty or troubled self that will at many times stubbornly resist the final step or breakthrough in psycho-therapy. This has been called Narcissism: the difficulty to know and deal with the ultimate or true self (Epstein, 1995).

Sofar, modern psycho-therapy has fallen short in proposing a method to reach this final breakthrough. The analytical strength to define the problem reaches its limits in the method to overcome it. This is the main cause for the relatively low success rate of traditional psycho-therapy as it has been researched from time to time. In recent years, more methods are explored to support or complement the existing counseling theories to reduce the fast-developed number of mentally troubled individuals. These methods try to cover human problems involving body, mind, and spirituality. They also try to integrate more disciplines to provide more flexible healing ability. Nevertheless, modern psychotherapy would still be greatly helped by finding additional methods to help people make their breakthrough and complete the final stage of treatment of working through and terminate the process of therapy. This method must meet the need of being able to assist in allowing the most essential blocking feelings to emerge in therapy and help both the counselor and the client to be with these emotions as and when they do surface.

With the above mentioned background and professional intent, the author has encountered the Bach Flower Essence Therapy. We believe that Flower Essence Therapy is one of such methods. The first part of this paper will include a presentation on the finder of the flower essence, Edward Bach, the discovery and making of the flower remedies and Bach’s philosophy of healing. As more than 60 years of experience with worldwide application of the Flower Essence Therapy documents, Flower Essence Therapy is an effective method in helping to find emotionally balanced states of mind. To illuminate this, we will present a scientific model integrating various classical and new theories to support the working of flower essences. Case studies, including those documented by other practitioners and the author, are given to provide a picture of how a flower essence therapy consultation proceeds. A specific concern on the difficulty of providing flower essence
therapy in Taiwan is also discussed. Finally, a question for contemplation will be the conclusion for this paper.

INTRODUCTION

Edward Bach and his search for healing; philosophy of healing

Dr. Edward Bach (1886-1936) was born in England and originally a medical physician specialized in bacteriology, immunology, and homeopathy. He was highly considered by his medical fellows and patients as working industriously and having great professional achievement. Among much success, his first major achievement was the development of a set of seven homeopathic vaccines to treat patients' colon and related chronic diseases (such as arthritis, rheumatism, headaches, and so on). Dr. Bach found that there exists a connection between certain types of bacteria in the patient's colon and chronic disease. By injecting the intestinal bacteria into the patient's blood stream, which would have the effect of cleansing the system of the poisons causing the chronic disease, Dr. Bach found the results beyond expectations. Not only did the general health condition of the patient improve, so had the chronic complaints disappeared. In homeopathy, they were named as Bach Nosodes and are still being used today (Howard, 1990).

However remarkable was the medical finding, Dr. Bach was not satisfied with the treatment method and the unpleasant process patients have to go through (physical pain, swelling, discomfort from the syringe needle, and so on). He then made a most important and significant discovery. That is: all the patients suffering from the same emotional difficulties needed the same nosode, irrespective of the type of physical disease. Those patients who were subject to violent emotional outbursts all needed the same nosode; those who were apprehensive, nervous, all needed another but the same nosode, no matter from what physical complaint they suffered. From then onwards he prescribed the nosodes according to the patients' temperamental difficulties only. There was no need for a physical exam of the patient, laboratory tests were unnecessary and treatment could begin at once without delay. The results were excellent. He reached an understanding that physical disease was not of physical origin, but that it was 'the consolidation of a mental attitude' (Bach, 1933/1999; Bach, 1931/2003; Howard, 1990, pp10).

He confirmed the principle of his new treatment method: treat the patient and not his disease, for when the negative thoughts had been overcome, the body would also respond. Start the diagnosis not from the symptoms of the disease, but from the person of the patient and his emotional state (Bach, 1933/1999; Bach, 1931/2003). His next action signified a completely new way of helping patients. He wanted to look for a purer way to make up the
treatment. With his great love for the nature, he sought out the solutions from the plants.

The concept of using plants as a healing method for a certain ‘mental attitude’ did not start from Dr. Edward Bach. A research on the history of the use of healing plants for human emotions shows that much earlier than Bach, people or cultures have recognized the unique quality and values of plants. For example: one hundred years before Bach, a German poet, Friedrich Schiller wrote “Are you searching for the Highest, the Greatest, looking to the plant, it will be able to teach you. What it is without a will of its own, you must intend to be, that is all” (Scheffer, 2001). C.G. Jung called plants “beings of light” (*Lichtwesen*), and the blooming part of the plant was his symbol for the Self (Scheffer, 2001). The highest, most energy-laden potential of a plant is embodied in the flower at its peak of maturity. The founder of Anthroposophy, Rudolf Steiner, noted that the flowering process in plants corresponds to metabolism in humans. According to Tibetan Buddhism practitioners, there is a direct link between our unconsciousness and the plant kingdom. We are able to contact our own Higher Self at an unconscious level through the plant world and thereby restore harmony within ourselves (Scheffer, 2001, pp.28). Whether it is by inspirations or by coincidence, Dr. Bach shared the same fundamental ideas with these people or cultures. At the peak of his medical career, he dropped the practice and laboratory in London in order to concentrate fully on studying the different personality types and finding the corresponding healing plants.

**The discovery of the flowers and the making of the remedies**

Before the discovery of the flower essences, Dr. Bach spent a lot of time studying plants in the countryside. He was convinced that the plants with the right medical properties were to be found amongst the simple wild flowers. He knew he could eliminate the primitive varieties, such as the cactus, the seaweeds, the dodder; and the poisonous plants, the henbane, deadly nightshade, aconite; also those plants used by man as food (Weeks, 1940). Although many plants possess medicinal properties which soothe and relieve the sufferings of the human body, and certain of them were already being used in medicine, Dr. Bach believed the true healing plants held a greater power than that. Their work is not to palliate, but to cure; to restore health to mind and body. These plants are with high vibrations (Weeks, 1940; Scheffer, 2001; Scheffer & Storl, 1995). He called them “plants of higher order” (Scheffer, 2001).

Starting from 1930, Dr. Bach searched for the Flowers. He came to a conclusion that these plants would be most appropriate to pick up when they bloom on the days that are longest and the sun is at the height of its power and strength. And to obtain the flower’s medical properties to the full, he would need to use the flower-heads alone, for the life of the plant is concentrated in its flower (the embryo seed) --- that holds the continued life of the plant (Weeks, 1940.) With strong intuitions, he started discovering the flowers. His body and mind also started to develop extreme sensitivity. Before finding a particular flower, he would suffer in himself very acutely, the negative state of mind for which that flower was needed.
Sometimes, Dr. Bach would suffer from some physical complaint, he then would wander about the fields until he found, or was led to find, the flower which would immediately restore his serenity and peace of mind, and within a few hours the physical discomfort would also be healed (Howard, 1990.) His sensitivity was such that only to place a single petal of a particular flower on his tongue, could he experience specific reactions on his body, mind, and emotions (Scheffer, 2001.)

Within the following six years, Dr. Bach discovered 38 different flowers for the making of the essences. His chosen plants were less noticeable species that were often referred to as weeds. They were mostly found in the Thames valley of England. These locations are where the Flowers are still collected today. A few were found in Switzerland, Italy, and Spain. According to Dr. Bach, it is important to gather the plants from the wild, where the nature’s forces are very strong. If they were cultivated, they would lose some of their “divine” healing power (Scheffer, 2001.) These plants are Agrimony, Aspen, Beech, Centaury, Cerato, Cherry Plum, Chestnut Bud, Chicory, Clematis, Crab Apple, Elm, Gentian, Gorse, Heather, Holly, Honeysuckle, Hornbeam, Impatiens, Larch, Mimulus, Mustard, Oak, Olive, Pine, Red Chestnut, Rock Rose, Rock Water, Scleranthus, Star of Bethlehem, Sweet Chestnut, Vervain, Vine, Walnut, Water Violet, White Chestnut, Wild Oat, Wild Rose, and Willow. Dr. Bach also formulated the Rescue Remedy which consists of five particular flowers, being Cherry Plum, Clematis, Impatiens, Rock Rose and Star of Bethlehem. This combination is usually prescribed for an acute situation of shock, panic, fainting or stress.

To make up the essences from the chosen flowers, Dr. Bach employed two methods: the sun method (for most of the flowers) and the boiling method (for some remedies, where Dr Bach found that more parts of the plant needed to be used, as with several of the tree flower remedies). The sun method is used with plants that bloom in the late spring or in summer, when the sun has its greatest strength. As many plants as possible are collected during the morning of a sunny day with cloudless skies, when the plants are in full bloom. To pick the flowers, a leaf is folded between thumb and index finger to protect the blooming petals from contact with human skin. Then, enough flowers to crowd the surface are placed in a bowl of spring water. The bowl is left in the sun for twenty minutes up to three or four hours until a wilting of the flowers occurs and bubbles form in the water, indicating that the essence or essential energies of the flowers have transferred into the spring water. This water that has been “impregnated” or "energized" in this fashion is then poured into a bottle and is topped off with an equal amount of grape alcohol. This essence bottle or “mother tincture” keeps its potency indefinitely. Its contents are the basis for the Bach remedy stock bottle, each of which contained 1 part of mother tincture to 240 parts of brandy (Scheffer, 2001; Weeks & Bullen, 1964/1998).
Dr. Bach thus discovered the 38 Flower Essences as a result of his own search for healing. As he neared his death, he felt the system of 38 Flower Essences was complete. The 38 Flower Essences were found and put into the system to address, either by themselves, or in combinations, all emotional states in the experience of human beings. Over time, even though mankind has evolved, basic human emotions have not changed. So this system of Flower Essences was built as a system complete in itself. There is no need to complicate any use of the method by continuously finding and adding new flower remedies. Dr. Bach wanted his system to be essential and simple. He believed very strongly in the prevalence of self help and the possibility for everybody to heal themselves. That is why Dr. Bach set up the system with a very simple method of use. And with a limited number of Flower Essences. Dr. Bach died very briefly after the discovery of the 38th remedy from the consequences of his life long sickness.

**The basics of the way to make Flower Essences are not new**

Although Dr. Bach set out to find a new method of healing disease through the balancing of emotions, the ways of making the flower essences, are not new. Already in the 16th century, a similar method was used by Paracelsus, a famous physician and astrologer (a very common combination in those times) born in Switzerland (1493 - 1541). For Western hemisphere purposes, he pioneered the use of chemicals and minerals in medicine. Paracelsus is credited with the discovery of the element zinc, giving it its name "zincum" (http://en.wikipedia.org). Paracelsus believed in the basic world concept of the four elements and he thought that sickness and health in the body relied on the harmony of man (as representation of the microcosm) and Nature (the macrocosm). This view is later shared by Dr. Bach.

Paracelsus also felt that diseases were caused by disharmony and "poisons brought from the stars", meaning that the substances that create disease, can also cure them. Therefore Paracelsus laid the foundations for the theory that poison can have a beneficial medicinal effect, depending on its dosage. Through this, Paracelsus prepared the way for homeopathic medicines that use the principle of "like cures like" (Scheffer, 2001).

For the purposes of Bach Flower Essences, the practice of Paracelsus was most influential because of his attempts to use flower essences as medicine. The method that Paracelsus used however, was not very efficient: he tried to extract the flower's essence by collecting the dew drops from the flower petals at dawn. It took the insights of Dr. Bach on the potentiating process of the sun and boil methods, to make the methods more accessible (Scheffer, 2001).
As is more known, the approach to medicine is called Homeopathy as discovered by Samuel Hahnemann (Germany, 1755 - 1843), uses dilutions also of possibly toxic substances to treat sickness. Most commonly, these dilutions are so high that no more molecules of the relevant substances can be found. These dilutions are prepared through the processes of succussion (which is a systematic mixing through vigorous shaking) and potentization. Although the Bach Flower Essences are prepared through a process of potentization, no succussion is used. Also, the Flower Essences are not diluted to the point there is no mother tincture traces left. Homeopathy has now a recorded history of more than 150 years. Today, many medical professionals in Taiwan accept the homeopathic remedies and many countries establish a homeopathic medicine alongside the classical medicine.

The application of the Bach Flower Therapy

Before we go into the interdisciplinary scientific model on how the Flower Essences work, we want to clarify the way the Flower Essences are used in practice. The basic application method as prescribed by Dr. Bach himself, is very simple. We take a 30ml treatment bottle with a dripper lid that can be obtained at any drugstore. This we fill with pure springwater. To this, we add the Flower Essences, by dropping 2 drops of each Flower Essence that we want to use, to the water. It is generally recommended not to put more than 6 or 7 different Flower Essences together in one treatment bottle, as Dr. Bach felt that it is not wise to deal with too many emotions at the same time. From this treatment bottle, put 4 drops in a glass of water and drink the water, by preference at least 4 times per day. In situations where there is no water to be found, the drops can also be put directly on the tongue, although it is felt that with that the important messenger of the water is missed. Every treatment bottle usually will last about three weeks, after which a new Flower Essence combination will be recommended.

In Flower Essence Therapy, the leading principle is that of guidance. The person who is treated, is supposed to work through his own emotions in his own time. The role of the practitioner is limited to help the person to identify and label his own emotions and to advise the person on which Flower Essences can deal with these emotions. In this, the process can be compared with peeling the layers of an onion (Ball, 1998/2001). As each layer of emotions is worked through and comes off, a new layer surfaces. This will continue until the person has reached an emotional equilibrium that will give him a basis to be more aware of his own emotions and the way they influence his being. Then the person will be able to identify less and less with his emotions so that breakthrough can be achieved. In this way, the Flower Essence Therapy is mostly relevant in the early stages of the use of Flower Essences. Once the person has found a stable onset on the way to the emotional equilibrium, he can very well
use the system of Flower Essences by himself, as it was intended by Dr. Bach.

It should be noted, that in taking the role of guide, the practitioner has a very different function from a counselor or psychotherapist, with certain training background such as the more directive approaches, who in modern times, seem to want to actively lead the client to discover past emotional traumatic events to achieve breakthrough or direct the client to a certain image of true self that should be achieved as result of the therapy. All this, Flower Essence Therapy does not want to do. The practitioner provides merely the referential parameters within which the process of self healing by the person seeking Flower Essence Therapy, can take place. The practitioner should refrain completely from putting his judgments or interpretations into the emotions of the person. The practitioner merely helps identify the emotions so that the correct Flower Essences can be administered. For example, if a person experiences fears, the practitioner will ask questions in order to find out whether the fears are more object-specific (for example, being afraid of dogs or a certain person) or whether the fears are difficult to pinpoint to a known fact. This difference is important for the choice of the relevant Flower Essence.

As each individual is different and has his own emotional characteristics, each case stands by itself. As Dr. Bach noted, the same disease may have have different effects on different people. Each person has also his own typical reaction to the Flower Essences. Nevertheless, on the basis of case studies, general conclusions can be made on the experiential workings of the Flower Essences. This we will address in the paragraphs on case studies that will follow our presentation of the interdisciplinary scientific model of how Bach Flower Essences work.

INTERDISCIPLINARY SCIENTIFIC MODEL ON HOW FLOWER ESSENCES WORK

The scientific model of how Flower Essences work will borrow elements from both classical science (especially from thermodynamics, materials science and phenomenology) and new science (in particular quantum physics and water resonance). This model is presented as the following diagram:
As we promised to start from the classical science and this body of knowledge generated by this method has originated from the West, we have placed the contributions from the classical science to our scientific model, as our starting Theory 1. Phenomenological science and plant morphology as Theory 2, will focus on the scientific findings on form and structure of plants, based on observational methods. Working ourselves down to Theory 3, where our model locates the new sciences of Quantum physics and Water resonance, we reach the last part of our model, where we place the Teachings of the Buddha.

We will describe each field of science and knowledge or insights that are mentioned here in brief and in particular to the extent that they are relevant to the subject of this paper that is placed in the heart of our model. We then will make the connection with Flower Essences in conclusion of this section.

**Classical science: thermodynamics and materials science**

**Thermodynamics**

In classical physics, thermodynamics is the study of the transformation of energy into different forms and its relation to variables such as temperature, pressure and volume. The term "thermodynamics" is taken from ancient Greek language words "therme" and "dynamis", respectively meaning "heat" and "movement" or "power". The foundations for the science of thermodynamics were laid in the attempt to improve the mechanics of steam engines. The historical background of the learnings on thermodynamics start from Otto von Guericke who was the first to build a vacuum pump in 1650, that was later used as the working model for an air pump built by Robert Boyle and Robert Hooke (1656). These scientists derived insights on the correlation between pressure, temperature and volume which insights lead to Boyle's law that states that pressure and volume are inversely proportional at constant
temperature. All this lead Sadi Carnot (1796 - 1832) some 170 years later in 1824, to publish a discourse on heat, power and engine efficiency. This gave Carnot the title of "father of thermodynamics" (http://en.wikipedia.org).

The science of thermodynamics, including the science of chemical thermodynamics that studies the interrelation of heat with chemical reactions or with a change of state within a certain system (like a body of water stored in a bowl), works on three basic and widely accepted laws of thermodynamics.

The first law of thermodynamics is the law of preservation of energy: energy cannot be destroyed or created; it can only change form. This postulates that the amount of energy gained through a process, cannot exceed the amount of energy lost or put in. It is the law that clarifies the nature of energy. The second law of thermodynamics says that the entropy (which can be defined as the measurement of the energy dispersal or "loss" at a specific temperature) of an isolated system will increase over time until a maximum value is reached at equilibrium of the system. The third law of thermodynamics says that the entropy of a system will approach a constant minimum as temperature will approach absolute zero (http://en.wikipedia.org).

Scientific findings within the parameters of these three laws of thermodynamics, roughly summarized for the relevance to this paper, include the following.

Energy is a stored quantity which is independent of any particular process, meaning that the amount of energy is independent of a certain system's history. If a system (like a body of water stored in a bowl) goes through a thermodynamic cycle, for example by warming, cooling, expanding or contracting, this system's total amount of energy will not have changed from before the initiation of the process. It is found that increased energy flow, dispersal or transference is experienced in the form of increased heat or pressure, shown by bubbles in the water. Generally, energy in the form of heat flows from high to low temperature systems or environments. Energy has the structural tendency to actually dissipate and therefore will at all times dissipate depending on variables of temperature and pressure. All this explains that unless an environment is achieved at absolute zero temperature point, there will always be a certain higher or lower "loss" or "leak" of useful energy in the process of transference of the energy. For this reason, depending on the properties of a certain system that will receive the energy transference from the surroundings, entropy values may differ.

A special case of increase in entropy values occurs in the process of the entropy of mixing two or more different substances to achieve energy transference. If the substances are
at the same temperature and pressure, the resulting increase in entropy value can come entirely by the mixing of the different substances, without exchange of heat or work (http://en.wikipedia.org).

Materials science; the structure of water and epitaxy

As to the research done on water and its properties under variable circumstances, most attention over time has been given to the studies made by the science field of chemistry. Almost all discussions on water and its properties have been determined by the outcomes of chemically approached studies. Unfortunately, practically 100% of these studies have focused on the composition of water. This is understandable, as the science of chemistry is largely built on substances and their composition. The studies on the composition of water, have resulted in the common belief that the properties of water are determined by its composition. Water is considered a mere solvent, that carries molecules of substances to a certain dilution point and the workings of these substances through the carrier of water, are fully dependent on the level of dilution or dosage.

In the long established field of materials science, the properties of matter and its applications to various areas of science and engineering are central themes. This science investigates the relationship between the structure of materials at atomic or molecular scales and their macroscopic properties. Part of this science is the nanotechnology, but also the study of fluids like glasses and water. Materials science uses the main method of taking together the major determinants of the structure of a material, which through the laws of thermodynamics, govern a material's (micro) structure and thus its properties. The industrial applications of materials science are naturally many, including for the purposes of this paper, the process of crystal growth (http://en.wikipedia.org).

As follows from the above descriptions, the approach of materials science to a substance is completely different from that used in the science of chemistry. Materials science is not concerned much by the composition of a substance, but mostly by its structure. These are two separate and different things. Composition is determined by the kinds of molecules of substances and the ratio of their presence in the substance. Structure refers to the 3-D arrangement of the units that make up a substance in space. All the things that structure of water can tell us, have been completely neglected by the scientific studies on its composition so far.

In a comprehensive paper published in 2005, Roy, Bell, Tiller and Hoover provided a complete overview on the materials science perspective on water (Roy and colleagues, 2005). The head of research on this paper is Professor Rustum Roy, who holds five Professorships at
three major American Universities, is founding Director of the Materials Research Laboratory at Penn State University, is elected to five separate National Academies and who is regarded as one of the world's leading materials scientists.

The core argument of that paper by Roy and colleagues was, that the materials science literature establishes that common highly covalent liquids including water, exist in many, many very different structures, even thermodynamically stable ones. The paper establishes the plausibility of causing structural changes in water - or one could call it imprinting it - by many common vectors, which include not only temperature and pressure, but also epitaxy, succussion, electric and magnetic fields and the like. An important example vector in this is the phenomenon of epitaxy.

**Epitaxy** is a phenomenon very little known even in the scientific field, but used on a daily basis worldwide in materials technologies and is defined as the process through which transference occurs of structural information (so as not to relate to composition of substances whatsoever) from the surface of one usually solid material to a liquid material. The information that is transferred is a template of structure. No matter is transferred in this process of "imprinting". This makes any argument on the level of dilution for properties, completely irrelevant. As the process of epitaxy has shown in industrial application, by providing a specific structure as a template (usually solid but sometimes even liquid), one can induce an entire body of liquid (like contained in a bowl of water) to precipitate or crystallize in that very preselected structure or morphology. Information and "memory" are transmitted from the seed or substrate to the liquid phase, which can completely control the structure of the material that is formed from it. No chemical transfer of whatsoever occurs (Roy and colleagues, 2005; Roy, 2004).

The most used application for this process is growth of crystals and the seeding and growth of semiconductors (which is part of the heart industry of Taiwan!). The conclusion from this is very obvious: the structure of water can and will be influenced by that of solids with which it is in contact.

Apart from this, pressure and temperature are the most important of the intensive thermodynamic variables in deciding what structure is stable and/or will form as a result of these processes. All of this leads to the certain fact that liquid water consists of a changing aggregate of clusters of different size and shape in a 3-D arrangement that can easily be changed by energetic influences from other materials and liquids.

**Plant morphology and phenomenology**
Plant morphology "represents a study of the development, form and structure of plants, and, by implication, an attempt to interpret these on the basis of similarity of plant and origin." (Bold, Alexopoulos & Delevoryas, 1987, pp. 3). In this field of science, the physical form and external structure of plants is studied and held to have meaning. It is used for the help of identification of plants. It uses a comparative study method, examining structures in many different plants of the same or different species, drawing comparisons and formulating ideas about similarities. Both the vegetative and reproductive structures are studied, this on a wide range of scales, from the cell structure to the growth habits, which often leads to study and conclusions on the development of plants.

The modern founder of the science of plant morphology is Wolfgang Von Goethe (1749-1832, Germany) who is mostly known for his contributions to literature, but who in his own time, was considered an exceptional scientist. He had strong interest in the world of plants and thereby laid the foundations for the science of plant morphology. Von Goethe’s work on plant morphology was a great influence on Charles Darwin for his major work “On the origin of species” of 1859. Von Goethe was also a recognized philosopher who spurred the development of many great philosophers, including Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Carl Jung, Wittgenstein and Rudolf Steiner, the founder of Anthroposophy (http://en.wikipedia.org).

The method that Von Goethe used for his science studies on plants and colors and that he transpires in his writings, is a method of close observation. Von Goethe developed a 5 - step observational method that he described in his book in 1722 as "the experiment as mediator between subject and object". With this method, Von Goethe was a front running phenomenologist and also quantum physicist proverbs, as quantum physics currently postulates the importance of the subject of the observer in any experiment as the subject is not only involved in the experiment but also choses the experiment. Such choice is considered by current quantum physics the main decisive factor on the outcome of the experiment. All this is deducted from the famous experiments that show that light can be both wave and particle, depending on the method of measurement.

In the study on the Bach Flower Essences, new importance is given to plant morphology. Especially the work of Julian Barnard (2004), focuses on the study and comparison of the structure and growth habits of the Bach flowers to give additional meanings and interpretations to the curative properties of the Bach Flower Essences based on plant qualities:

An essence prepared from one of Bach's flowers modifies a particular emotion. If the way that plant grows illustrates objective information about the emotion, a reconsideration of
science is called for. Linnaeus devised a system of taxonomy based upon the reproductive structure of the flower. A further system could be based upon the quality of the plant's gesture: its root, its stem, leaf flower, seed and way of growing. Observations could be used to agree a new language of evaluation to describe emotional states (like fear, anger, doubt, resentment) in terms accurately and consistently reflected in the gesture of the plant.

For example, a flower essence made from Gorse acts upon a person in a particular state of mind (hopeless and in despair) as a spur to renewal and a spring to new life. The spur and the spring are graphically represented in the gesture of the plant. Similarly, thorns on the stem of the Wild Rose illustrate the need for stimulus to overcome apathy in that remedy state. The fact that Water Violet grows floating in water, without a root anchor, shows the detachment of this type of person. The explosive temperament of the Impatiens flower type is reflected in the exploding seedpods of the plant. At its simplest this means that yellow flowers hold in common certain ideas. Plants with hairy leaves have common attributes. The structure of a shrub or tree indicates the idea constructed within the physical and vibratory body of a species. This forms part of the identity of the plant (pp.14-15).

Here plant morphology meets the philosophical approach of phenomenology. The three most famous phenomenologists are Husserl, Hegel and Heidegger. The most generally accepted definition of the approach, would be the one given by Edmund Husserl as "the reflective study of the essence of consciousness as experienced from the first person point of view". [source: wikipedia] In this, Husserl found that the main characteristic of consciousness is that it is always intentional. Through intention, consciousness in any form (belief, desire, emotion) is always directed towards an object. The property of being intentional and having an object of intention is the key feature that distinguishes mental or psychological phenomena from physical phenomena, because the latter lack intentionality completely. On this basis, phenomenological studies try to overcome the object/subject separateness that has plagued modern Western thinking ever since Descartes. In this, phenomenology seems very consistent with Buddhism psychology.

As stated above, the new science of quantum physics seems to embrace the phenomenological standpoint.

Quantum Physics

It would go way beyond the limits of this paper (and the understanding of the author) to go very deeply into the details of quantum physics, especially in setting out a model for how Flower Essences work. However, we think there is a strong benefit to mention the new science of quantum physics in this context. The benefit will arise in the form of a basic understanding what the stuff of our Universe is made of. For these purposes we will briefly

In physics, there are 4 foundational forces: gravity, electromagnetism and the strong and weak nuclear forces. Albert Einstein described these forces as "the tail of a lion that is shown to us by nature" (Kaku, 2008). From there, the search was on for the lion that should belong to the tail: the theory that explains everything, that is supposed to unify all 4 foundational forces in one short equation. Today, physicists believe that the force of gravity can adequately be described by the theory of general relativity as discovered by Einstein, treating gravity as a smooth bending of a space-time fabric. The science of quantum mechanics has established the scientific propensities of emptiness and form by finding that atoms are made of mostly empty space in which the smallest material particles (electrons, protons and neutrons) fly in and out of existence more than 1 million times per second; they do this from what is called the 0-point field (Chopra, 2006). There is a gap between the particles that can be observed with our current day equipment and the "place" where the particles go to and appear from. This gap is also called "the event horizon", a horizon beyond which our every day perception cannot reach (Chopra, 2006).

So with this, Niels Bohr's old atomic model that resembles the planetary system has been outdated. All this is currently commonly accepted science. What is remaining to be achieved, is the unification of the theory of gravity with the other three forces. To achieve this, scientists have come up with the model of (super)string theory. Based on the theoretical construction of multidimensional models, scientists have presented us with the thought that the Universe is made of ultra-small particles that have the properties of strings: they vibrate at certain frequencies and these various vibrations create the different kinds of particles that scientists can observe with the currently most advanced equipment today. It is found that these strings warp the space-time surrounding them in precisely the way that is predicted by general relativity when they move through a multi-dimensional space-time. Thus uniting the models for the 4 foundational forces, bringing the lion into sight.

The commonly used easy to understand example for this, is that of the strings of a guitar. When picked at different tensions, the strings will give higher or lower notes that we can hear. This principle of harmony created by ratio of string length was discovered already by the ancient Greek mathematician Pythagoras. He discovered this by looking and listening as he played the lyre, as he was considered in his time, to be an excellent lyre player. Now this ratio
is also mathematically explained.

Without going into any of the controversies or explanations that have arisen regarding the details of the string theory, the important thing to note is, that the heart of the theory lies with the principle that our Universe is vibrational.

**Resonance of water and water memory**

According to extensive research done at the Prof. Dr. Reinhard Mecke Institute of Freiburg University, Germany, dielectric constants of water depend on the history of the water. In other words: water has memory. The renowned physicist Dr. Wolfgang Ludwig (1998/2007), explains this phenomenon by means of the structure of water, as is proposed by materials science. The basis for this lies with the Oxygen atom that usually has 6 electrons in its atomic shell, but can actually admit up to 8. This makes the element O an electron acceptor, allowing the input of electric information.

Water molecules consist of varying clusters of molecules; it is not a single molecule type substance. Every water molecule has many vibrations of different levels, in a wide frequency region. At room temperature, the atoms are not at rest, but vibrate all the time. The energy to do this, comes from the environmental heat, as is explained by thermodynamics. For example, the atomic nucleus vibrates in the microwave region. The electric shell vibrates in the low frequency region. The distance between the O and H elements of the molecule, vibrates in the infrared region. Most importantly, daylight through the sunshine, activates the electrons of the element O in higher energy levels, making the electrons emit photons (light particles and/or waves, being electromagnetic vibrations) with a frequency of about 10 to the 15th power Hz. This is the highest frequency in water (Ludwig, 1998/2007).

Based on this emittance, water has a much larger number of photons than material particles. These photons act as interaction particles, called bosons (named after the discovering Indian scientist Bose). These bosons determine the cohesion of matter and the structure of a substance. Changes in structure can be stable and result in an ability of water to store information. This is shown in extensive research by Prof. Cyril W. Smith (2004/2007) of Salford University, England who experimented with treatment of allergy patients using structure-modified water as an agent. These experiments reflect that the frequency spectrum of water that results from the input of energetic information, has effects on the human body.

The fact that water can absorb structural energetic information from other substances and vibrational sources, is the basis for the work of Dr. Masaru Emoto, Tokyo, Japan. Emoto
(2007) has developed the theory that water is the messenger for higher level energy to create or influence life development. He has called this the resonance of water. Emoto believes that this message shows in the form of a "blueprint" through crystallization upon freezing the water after it has been exposed to an energetic influence, including sound, images, written and spoken words, prayer and electromagnetic fields of for example, televisions, computers, mobile phones and micro waves. The way Emoto has recorded these "blueprints", is through photography of the water crystals that briefly form on the tip of the frozen water as it melts under the influence of the heat emitted from the camera-equipment. These factors have been researched and made constant in his laboratory. Emoto has been invited by the United Nations to speech on this and his work is widely publicized.

The teachings of the Buddha

With the introduction of the event horizon by quantum physics and the theoretical computations of multi-dimensions that go beyond the four dimensions that we use as our reality, science has met spirituality. Science recognizes that there is a "place" where it up to now, cannot reach. This is the dominion of our true mind.

One can also say that modern Western science is finally coming full circle with its Eastern roots. Naturally, with advanced equipments and apparatus, wonderful measurements can be made and knowledge can be obtained. But, as quantum physics shows, this knowledge is mostly dealing with the outside shell of our material reality. When it is asked what our Universe is really made of, scientists are still making models and have no means of showing any proof. The same goes for the question on consciousness and mind.

In this we note that from as early as the teachings of the Buddha, and probably even before that, insights appear that are now only re-discovered by modern scientists. The Buddha has taught the very important Buddhist teaching on emptiness: nothing material has its own independent arising, emptiness is form and form is emptiness. This He expounded in the Great Wisdom Sutra (大般若经), which is summarized in the Diamond Cutter Sutra (金剛經) and further essentialized in the Heart Sutra (心經). A table is not a table. And that is why it can be a table; we call it a table because we like to use concepts. Science now confirms: if you look at a table, you do not see really a table. In the smallest parts of a table, actually the only thing you can see, is empty space with particles jumping in and out of perception.

In the Avatamsaka (Flower) Garland Sutra (華嚴經), the Buddha presents a cosmology model that is strikingly similar to the string theory:

The Flower Bank Ocean of worlds
is equal to the Universe
In this ocean of worlds
are inconceivably many world systems

The sounds of Buddha's displays
are the substance of various systems...
[translation: Thomas Cleary]

According to the Buddha, the Universe is created by sound, which is nothing more than vibration. Modern string theory would at the current state of theory add, that these vibrations are made by string particles. Even the principles of Resonance of Water as currently discovered in materials science, have already been taught by the Buddha. Two examples of that can be found in the Medicine Buddha Sutra (藥師經) and the Ksitigarbha Bodisattva Sutra (地藏菩薩本願經). In the Medicine Buddha Sutra, the Buddha teaches Manjusri Bodisattva (文殊師利菩薩) how to cure disease with the Dharani (陀羅尼) of the Medicine Buddha:

Manjusri, if you come across any man (or woman) suffering illness, you should constantly cleanse him, bathe him and rinse his mouth. You should single-mindedly recite this Dharani 108 times on his behalf, over his food, medicine or water from which insects have been removed. Once he has consumed the food or drink, his illness and suffering will disappear.

[translation: Minh Thanh and P.D. Leigh, for BDE Ass. Inc.]

In the Sutra of the Vows and Attainments of Ksitigarbha Bodisattva (地藏菩薩本願經), the Buddha makes such reference twice:

...but when they hear the name of Ksitigarbha Bodisattva or see his image or likeness, and make various offerings to him and place a cup of pure water in front of him for one day and one night, then with clasped hands and with deepest reverence, facing South, they may drink the water with great faith. After drinking the water they must abstain from all evil deeds and observe the precepts, piously for seven days or twenty one days. By so doing, these persons will see the Ksitigarbha Bodisattva in various manifestations in the dream state, showing the Bodisattva pouring water of wisdom on their heads. Ksitigarbha Bodisattva will endow these persons with wisdom.

And:

If people make a vow to chant Sutras and lead erring beings to
salvation, although they make a very good vow, but owing to their
previous Karma they are forgetful through bad memory, if such
persons make offerings to Ksitigarbha Bodisattva such as scented
flowers, clothing, food and drink or by placing a cup of pure
water on Ksitigarbha Bodisattva's altar for one day and one night
and then drink the water after praying, and if such persons
observe the five precepts for twenty one days, remembering or
thinking of Ksitigarbha Bodisattva's name with deepest reverence,
they will attain wisdom.
[translations: Pitt Chin-Hui, for BDE Ass. Inc.]

It can be said that the Buddha is the very first quantum physicist!

In the heart of the model is the flower
So now let us look at how this interdisciplinary scientific model that we have presented, comes together and how it relates to the Flower Essences. As we have seen, Flower Essences are obtained by the sun or boiling method. In both methods, the positive energy of the flowers, through the workings of thermodynamics, imprints its template on the structure of the water. Through this process, the information is carried forward in the form of vibrations. These vibrations will upon putting the Flower Essence in the water or on the tongue, through intake, transfer the positive energy of the flowers to the human body. This is all scientifically and spiritually, shown in the above elements of the model.

However, even though there is full scientific evidence for the ways of working of the Flower Essences, we believe that the experience of the working of the Flower Essences by each individual cannot be replaced by such evidence. The Flower Essences are spiritual by nature and will therefore connect directly to the spiritual nature of human beings. To seek for the scientific tail of this lion is a mere matter of practical convenience and serves only the purpose of theoretical discussion.

APPLICATIONS AND LIMITAIONS OF FLOWER ESSENCE THERAPY

Practitioner case reports
To illustrate the working of the flower essences, the following two case reports are taken from a senior and highly-recognized Bach practitioner, Mechthild Scheffer. After that, we will present one case study performed by the Author and one case study made
by Taiwan physician Li Ying-Che.

Scheffer is one of the pioneering Bach flower practitioners who is practicing the therapy for more than 40 years in Europe, gives practitioner training and often receives referrals from medical doctors, teachers or psychologists when those professionals encounter obstacles dealing with their clients, or when they wish to bring in additional help to facilitate the recovery process of their clients.

First case (Scheffer, 1996)--- A severely disabled young man and his mother

This case was treated by both a doctor and a psychologist.

Bert, twenty-four years old, had been cared for at home by his mother since birth. During the day he was looked after in a therapy center.

Diagnosis: severe disability and retardation. The patient used a wheel-chair and had limited use of his hands. He had been subjected to an EEG (electroencephalogram) three times, having panic attacks each time. On the basis of the EEG, the doctors concluded the patient wasn’t even viable. Presumably, his panic attacks influenced the data in a negative way. Bert is the third child of four children and was born prematurely due to a fall by his mother. Before the beginning of Bach Flower Therapy, he had been treated with Convulex and Neuleptil, which had not brought about any amelioration of his state. Both drugs were continued in reduced doses after the start of the Flower Therapy.

Symptoms: Bert woke up five or six times a night and had to have his position changed. During the day he was very aggressive, and would physically attack his mother, mostly by biting her. He flew into rages when he didn’t get what he wanted. Bach Flower Therapy was started at his mother’s request, for her son as well as for herself, since she had had very good experiences with the Rescue drops in extreme situations. The diagnosis was established based on discussions with the mother and through psychological observations.

First prescription for the mother:
- Olive---- for physical and emotional exhaustion
- Pine----- for feelings of guilt, of not being able to do better
- Gorse---- for deeply smoldering despair
- Star of Bethlehem---- for the great shock suffered after delivery in finding out that her son would not be healthy
- Elm---- for the feeling of not being able to cope with the responsibility

First prescription for the son:
- Rock Rose--- for periods of panic. Since being accidentally dropped once he was afraid of every movement.
- Holly--- for jealous tendencies and strong aggression, such as biting
• Heather--- for general physical and emotional needs
• Rescue--- every night for restlessness

Observations after four weeks: the state of both patients had improved visibly. Bert slept through the night more often, and his mother felt like a weight had been lifted off her shoulders. On the basis of this relaxed situation the parents decided, for the first time in many years, to take a vacation and leave Bert with a caregiver.

Second prescription for the mother:
• Continued with Olive and Elm. In addition, Larch--- to stabilize her consciousness
• Red Chestnut--- for the fear and worries about her son’s future: “What will happen to him?”
• Gentian--- for skepticism and tending toward hopelessness

Second prescription for the son:
• Continued with Star of Bethlehem, Rock Rose, Holly, and Heather
• In addition: Willow--- for feeling of bitterness, of being in a hopeless situation
• Later: Impatiens--- for inner impatience, restlessness, and excitable states

Situation after six months: Bert continued to make progress. He slept even better, woke up around 4 A.M., and fell asleep again, needing only to be moved once or not at all. In the morning, his mother only had to look after him a couple of times. His aggression was sharply reduced; he bit very rarely. Most importantly, Bert was now approachable and seemed to understand when he couldn’t have his way.

The patient’s mother experienced a strengthening of her own emotional and physical states. Her outlook on life became more open and positive. She believed that the Bach Flower Therapy she and her son had been undergoing had had a positive effect on their lives. She was more relaxed and confident. More importantly, she accepted the situation and the role she played within it.

Apparently, this case involved three professionals: a medical doctor treating the young man’s body, a psychologist dealing with the emotions, and a Bach Flower practitioner who evaluated on existing conditions and provided further emotional help. When a severe situation happens in a family, not only the target person (in this case, the young man) is under much emotional stress, but also other family members will be emotionally influenced (the mother). Therefore, it is very important to take all members into consideration or care, then the possibility of betterment will be increased.

Second case (Scheffer, 2006)--- A student overcomes her instability and a dependence
An eighteen-year-old student grew up with her younger sister and their mother--- who was pretty young herself--- under a certain amount of deprivation, in an apartment in a large city. The father had left their mother when the patient was still very young.

She had feeling of hate for mother, was inactive, and just bummed around. She was dependent on hashish. Her mother said she had an almost obsessive need for cleanliness, and she would never touch a foreign towel.

On February 7, I prescribed the following Flower combination:
Star of Bethlehem, for overcoming the shock of the separation from her father and the earlier violent disagreements between her parents; Holly, for the feelings of hate toward her mother and society in general; Hornbeam, for lack of internal incentive and the misconception that she can only function if she smokes; and Crab Apple, for her obsessive cleanliness urges.

On March 1st, she was doing a little better. By April 11, she was a lot more active and participated in sports. She didn't seem to smoke hashish anymore and even avoided the company of the "no future" crowd. On May 31, I prescribed the same combination again, in order to stabilize the positive states. At the end of June, her mother called me and reported, "I am very happy with my daughter. She has found a new joy in life."

From this case report it may be concluded that Bach Flower Essences may be a potential solution for young people's general confusions in life, for example, internal disturbances due to parental relationship, social difficulties, addictive problems, and uncertainty about the future. In the next case report, the treatment is conducted by the author in Taiwan.

Third case--- A fifth grader who refuses to enter the classroom
On the 17th of June, 2008, a boy was brought to the author by his parents because he has not entered the classroom for the whole semester. According to the parents, from the kindergarten age, this boy has been diagnosed of different psychological problems, some doctors considered him as emotionally disturbed, others considered him lacking age-appropriate social skills or "slow" in learning. The boy was in a regular school from the first to the third grade, he had great difficulty following the school schedule. He received scolding from the teachers because of unwilling to learn. The classmates also teased him because he was not a pleasant person to play with. On the fourth grade, the parents decided to take him to an experimental school hoping that with different curriculum and environment, he can feel more comfortable learning. At the beginning, the boy's behavior was well accepted by the teachers, but gradually schoolmates found him an easy target for ridicule. The mother found out that the boy did not wash his body during boarding weekdays and only did it when returned home on weekends. It was mainly because the boy was once forced by other kids to take off his pants... He refused to tell the teachers and only told this to his mother several weeks
afterwards. Everyday, the boy wandered around on campus but very rarely stayed inside the classroom. The school teachers allowed this behavior but tried very hard to convince him to enter the classroom, eventually, all efforts failed. In the end, very patient teachers met their limits. The parents took the boy back home and registered him in the neighborhood school in the countryside. It was the parents' wish that the upcoming summer vacation could be a buffer period to settle the boy's feelings. The Bach Flower Therapy was taken into consideration.

First meeting with the boy and first prescription:
The boy showed up with a careful attitude. He looked around the office and later played with some toys in a corner while actually listened very carefully to the conversation between the author/practitioner and his mother. The boy refused to talk about what had happened to him, but was alright that the mother told everything to the author/practitioner. He checked out the flower essences stock bottles and commented that they stink. Even though being seemly reserved, the boy agreed to take a flower essence treatment bottle home. The essences chosen were Star of Bethlehem for several emotional shocks happened in the past; Agrimony for difficulty in expressing his feelings; Aspen for anxiety; Mimulus for difficult social interactions; and Larch for self confidence.

On the 30th of July, the boy and Mother reported with better mood, more tolerance with things not going his way, and more willing to talk to people. When asked about earlier school experiences, the boy stated "let them pass". The follow-up prescription was suggested: Star of Bethlehem and Aspen, to continue their work on comforting shocks and anxiety; Honeysuckle for letting go of the past experiences; Impatiens to help continue his patience; and Scleranthus for having hesitation in talking. In addition, the boy insisted on adding Sweet Chestnut and White Chestnut into his new prescription, because upon explanation about what these two essences are for, the boy himself thought they were very applicable. Therefore, Sweet Chestnut (for peaceful mind) and White Chestnut (comforting unwanted thoughts) were included.

On the 26th of August, Boy and his mother came to the meeting happily. They were satisfied with the progress. The boy seemed happier and more open in communication with parents and other people. They liked to prepare for the new school season, therefore, a special school combination was made. This combination included Larch for self-confidence; Mimulus for overcoming fears in meeting new teachers and classmates; Honeysuckle to deal with feelings of missing home; Walnut to protect against possibly negative influences from the outside; Olive to deal with feelings of tiredness due to spending a lot of energy in school; Rescue to deal with past trauma; and Rock Water for a more flexible attitude towards the changes in his life.

During the first week of October, the mother was telephoned for follow-ups. The mother was content with her son's emotions but felt that his progress in school relationships did not
go fast enough to her wishes. By then, this boy had found the emotional strength to enter the classroom daily and to make a few friends. His learning was making progress yet still a little behind. The mother did not think that the flower essences could further help her son’s learning. She said she liked to wait and see a while.

On November 8th, the mother asked for further prescription, under the request of the boy. The boy came into the office willingly, sit down and asked for a cup of tea. He was shy to mention his recent school events but asked his mother to tell. The school teacher was not happy that he could not play the flute up to the class average level. The whole class was asked to teach him and if the mission failed, the teacher would consider giving some form of punishment to the whole class. They blamed the boy for this. The boy’s mood was very low.

On the basis of further discussion, the following prescription was made: Holly for anger; Scleranthus for hesitation; Agrimony for difficulty expressing feelings; Mimulus for shyness and fears for the punishment; Wild Oat because he felt no fulfillment in his learning in school; Larch for self-confidence; Mustard because he felt depressed about the event; and Rescue was continued.

The boy has gone and is going through different emotions while life presents itself with various changes and challenges. The development curve of taking flower essences is very often not a straight-forward and all-the-way-up line. Instead, there could be some highs and some lows depending on how the “peeling the onion” process proceeds.

Scheffer (2001) noted two typical ways of development curves. First typical reaction pattern begins with an upward trend, and about three weeks later, the client would experience the situation being worsen. This is the time that deeper emotions have surfaced and one is required to start his/her personal inner work. The person would also become more and more aware about his/her emotions and thoughts. Things seem more clear to the person. Gradually, after several smaller ups and downs, the person’s emotions become stabilized or harmonized. In the conversation between the author/practitioner at the beginning of October when the boy’s mother seemed to lose perspectives about the Flower Essences, it could be the downward period after the emotional upward in the process. Interestingly enough, while the mother did not see satisfactory progress in the boy, the boy actually found the Flower Essences helpful to his emotional life. The boy pushed the mother to continue the therapy for him. This case shows that positive changes in the emotional state of the boy from the use of the Flower Essences, have become obvious.

The second typical reaction pattern starts with a downward trend. According to Scheffer (2001), this is seen more often in people who have physical problems and some negative emotions are the consequential conditions. The person would feel that everything seems to
become worse after the first taking of the Flower Essences. Not only the physical problems but also the negative feelings intensify. This is an indication of the healing process, similar to the term *aggravation* in homeopathy and also in the Chinese herbal medicine. The author has little encounter with a client who starts the Flower Essence Therapy because of a physical sickness; many such kind of cases have been reported by practitioners who are also medical doctors (Scheffer, 1996), such as the following by Dr Li of Taipei, Taiwan. Prior to referring thereto, it should be noted that Taiwan case studies are extremely rare and mostly not published. This is mainly because there are not many certified practitioners in Taiwan. Also the correct information on Bach Flower Essences is not well available to Taiwanese people; much information on the Internet in Chinese language is not very professional nor scientific.


*Gorse, Clematis and Sweet Chestnut’ influenza*

Traditionally, the classification of influenza is based on the type of virus a host is infected with, *e.g.* influenza A, B and C, avian influenza (bird flu), etc. In the last couple of years in my clinical practice of flower remedies, I have discovered an interesting and amazing fact: almost all the patients with influenza had negative Gorse, Clematis and Sweet Chestnut states. [...] Such types of influenza have become a prevailing trend. Besides common cold symptoms, such as headache, sore throat, cough and running nose, the body symptoms of this type of influenza also include diarrhea, fever, nausea, vomiting, etc., among which the most interesting one is somnolence. The patients often feel fatigued (Clematis) regardless of how long they sleep. They also have a stiff neck, especially the two sides below the ears, and a tense sternocleidomastoid muscle. Their left neck muscles are usually more tense than the right ones (Gorse, Sweet Chestnut and Clematis reactions according to Bach flower body maps). This influenza usually lasts a long time and is difficult to cure. Without the flower remedies, it sometimes lasts several months.

This type of influenza is highly contagious and generally infects the whole family. Once a family member is infected, very soon the rest of the family starts to see a doctor for the same symptoms. Even the medical staff in the hospital are infected. The negative emotions of Gorse, Clematis and Sweet Chestnut are spread out like a virus, seemingly filling the air throughout the country.

Since the end of October 2004, we have observed this situation. In the beginning, there was only the Clematis and Sweet Chestnut state. However, from the beginning of this year (2006), we have noticed that, along with it, there was the Gorse state. Moreover, infected patients were only found in Taipei in the beginning, but since the end of last year (2005), we have also observed the same patients and a prevailing trend of the influenza in Kaohsiung. Many of the patients showed negative emotions, such as dreaminess,
depression and despair. This made me wonder what exactly the reason was that people in Taiwan were coincidentally and successively infected with this influenza.

I had to find the answer to this haunting question. These states could be explained by Jung's collective unconscious and were alleviated to a certain extent every time the appropriate flower remedies were applied externally or internally. However, this so-called 'Gorse, Clematis and Sweet Chestnut' influenza was still prevailing, easily relapsing and long-lasting. After two years of observation and interviews with the patients, I have finally discovered that the negative emotions are actually discontent with the real world, disappointment for not being able to fulfill dreams, or downheartedness and sense of loss caused by lack of happiness and satisfaction even after the dreams come true, which as a result, lead to this type of influenza.

The world has been changing rapidly in the last few years. People are under more work pressure than ever. The TV commercials and Internet media have been telling people that success is shown by living in luxurious houses, buying brand names, driving nice cars and spending holidays in 5-star hotels. Everybody is encouraged to pursue such 'success' – to seek perfection in almost everything, including health, beauty, wealth, leisure life, children's education, etc. They end up working like dogs and finding themselves running around to manage their relationships with others, but ultimately get nowhere. They have tried their best, but are still depressed because they haven't had the perfect life described in newspapers, magazines and advertisements. As a matter of fact, pursuing perfection and eternal youth and beauty will always disappoint people. The whole society is filled with such fantasies (Clematis), and people are feeling lost, depressed and hopeless again and again (Sweet Chestnut, Gorse) as they fail to make their fantasies come true.

We anticipate that this 'Gorse, Clematis and Sweet Chestnut' influenza is going to continue to prevail in the future. Facing this difficult situation, we would like to recommend that, besides the three flower remedies that provide instant help, people should also learn from the illness and examine their lives to see if they have too many expectations and desires. Maybe they are confused by the deceptive brand names and advertisements and should really change their dreams and their attitudes toward life so that a true realistic sense of happiness will come.

I hope the three flower angels, Gorse, Sweet Chestnut and Clematis, will pass on God's love to us. Now is a time to reexamine our desires and embrace a new life.

Dr Li's case reflects two things. Firstly, Dr Li noticed that even though the medicine seemed correct, there was little progress on the physical symptoms of the illness. After more study, he found that there were shared emotional causes that under lied the illness. This concurs with Dr Bach's philosophy and with the modern theories of psychosomatics. Secondly, Dr Li's findings could point towards collective emotions when people share the same culture. As such, we encounter Jung's deeper vision of sickness and healing, where the individual is part
of the collective and the collective lives in the individual. Dr Li seems to have found a connection between the collective emotional state of people and Flower Essences.

The applicational strengths of Bach Flower Essence as an emotional support

Taking the Bach Flower Essence as an emotional support has several applicational strengths. Firstly, this therapy can be used as a sole instrument for emotional support. Scheffer (2001) and other practitioners worldwide have collected many case studies to indicate such application. Secondly, this method can be combined with other physical or psychological treatments. It is shown that people with epilepsy, chronic depression, people facing acute crisis, cancer, or people overcoming addictions and psychiatric challenges have benefited from the flower essence therapy while taking their initial treatment at the same time. Case reports show that the Bach flower essences help relax client’s anxiety and worrisome mind during illness. Some also show that the recovery time needed is shortened and the dosage of medicine required could be gradually reduced (Scheffer, 2001). Thirdly, the flexible characteristics of the Bach Flower Essence Therapy, allow professionals of all fields to consider taking the flower essence practitioner training as their additional ability to better help their patients or clients. In the community of international BFRP (Bach Foundation Registered Practitioner), people hold professional titles such as teacher, psychological counselor, medical doctors, midwife, chiropractor, reflexology practitioner, homeopathy doctor, veterinary doctor, animal trainer, or personnel resource manager. Lastly, the Bach Flower Essences have been found to help animals and plants during difficult time periods such as premature departing from mother animals, animal castration, plant diseases, and repotting (Ball, 1998/2001).

Difficulties or limitations of Providing Bach Flower Essence Therapy in Taiwan

Although the Bach Flower Essence Therapy seems to have shown significant benefits on improving or balancing human emotions, the author has observed some difficulties or limitations that obstacle the appreciation from the general population or helping professionals in Taiwan. Since the introduction of Flower Essence Therapy by the Emeritus Professor Tsui Dzio (崔玖) of Yang-Ming University, Taipei, Taiwan, the idea that Nature can provide help to human emotions seems too ordinary to be impressive. With modern technology and the complexity of modern society, people seem more accepting of complicated methods and overlook the simplicity of a natural treatment or healing method. During the interaction between the author and someone who is interested in the Bach flower essences, it is observed that such simple principle of the Nature’s work takes a relatively long time to comprehend. However, if the author takes a seriously lengthy process of explaining how water and flower energy vibration works into a therapeutic quality based on thermodynamics and quantum physics, there appears even more confusion on the face of the listener.
Another difficulty surfaces when a person taking the Flower Essences for the reason of emotional disturbance, often expects a speedy cure. Scheffer (2001), based on her case studies, noted a gradual but noticeable procedure of recovery. The length of recovery period is very individualized and can range from 2-3 days, 3 weeks (approximately the amount of one treatment bottle) or 2-3 years. For an overall happy person to return to a balanced state from a temporary emotional shock, two or three days are needed. But for a person with long term emotional difficulty, the time needed for betterment is also longer. This necessary time length is what Dr. Bach called “peel off the onion” as mentioned above. In the modern days of high speed and high stress, giving time to one’s emotional balance can be a luxury. From the author’s experience of providing Flower Essence Therapy to children, patience from the parents for the Flower Essences to work with child emotions is a crucial helping factor.

Finally, although the Bach Flower Essence Therapy has been commonly and widely used by many professionals and regular people after its discovery since the 1930s, certified Flower Essence Therapy practitioners are still scarce. The number of certified practitioners worldwide up to this date is about 1700 persons. The number of certified practitioners in Taiwan today is less than ten. This situation may be due to the fact that not many people in Taiwan know about this method of dealing with disturbing emotions. And the process of learning the Flower Essence Therapy and becoming a certified practitioner also requires time and effort. According to the official training program given by the Bach Center in England, one needs to go through three levels of learning and a period of case studying in order to be a practitioner. It is understandable that the official Bach Center likes to maintain the integrity of original findings of Dr. Bach and the non-corruption of the passing on of his knowledge and teachings. For this reason, the Bach Center wants to directly monitor the higher level training. This is a very important mission because in this way there will always be a form of certainty that the basis of the Bach Flower Essence practitioner training will stay pure. However, from a practical point of view, for Taiwanese people who generally are direct result oriented, it may not be a very encouraging idea that this learning period may take more than two years. The fact that any one who wants to be a practitioner needs to go to the Bach Center to finalize one’s learning may also be considered an obstacle to enter the learning process.

**QUESTION AS CONCLUSION**

The examination of the Bach Flower Essence Therapy leads to a preliminary conclusion that this method is shown to be an experientially effective instrument for emotional support and can add substantial treatment value for a person in gaining emotional balance. However, because this method is still rarely known to most helping professionals, the simplicity of the
flower essence and the value of the healing power from the nature may be overlooked by people. When we enter the 21st century with great technology and at the same time, high-stress lifestyle, are we willing to go back to the origin of our life (i.e., the Nature) to seek refuge? If we can find a balance between the man-made world and the nature, can we also find equilibrium of our emotions?

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巴哈花精療法：一種情緒支持的新工具

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摘要

對於助人工作者來說，持續地找尋幫助個案得到療癒的方法或工具，是項榮譽的任務。這個新方法要是安全的，不複雜而容易進行，同時也能在很短時間內得到正面的結果。而這個找尋的過程也往往包含了數個因素：追尋者的動機，嘗試新奇方式的意願，找尋與學習所花費的時間，追尋者與新方法之間的互動，以及些許的運氣。在想要幫助人們找到情緒的平衡與過著較快樂的生命的初始動機之下，作者尋得了巴哈花精療法，並且發現了花精（flower essence）在幫助個人情緒平衡上的價值。此篇文章提出愛德華．巴哈發展花精療法的過程，理論基礎，使用方式，個案報告，以及其協助情緒平衡的價值。

關鍵詞：巴哈花精療法、花精、情緒平衡