

An Introduction to Flower Essences



What Are Flower Essences?

Flower essences are subtle liquid extracts which assist in balancing the emotions. The modern development of flower essences was first undertaken in the 1930's in England by Dr. Edward Bach. While his "Bach Flower Remedies" are the most well known, other practitioners continue to develop flower essences around the world. Flower essences are prepared by first infusing flowers in water in the sun, then preserving this liquid with alcohol (this is called a stock solution). Essences are also made from other items from the natural world, such as gemstones. Like homeopathic medicine, flower remedies work on an energetic level, nudging the body's energy system back into balance. Unlike herbs and allopathic drugs which work on a chemical level, the effectiveness of flower essences is in the frequency of use rather than the measured dose. This means they are just as effective when diluted as they are in their concentrated state.

How Can Flower Essences Help My Dog's Behavior & Health?

Since we can't ask dogs the same questions we ask ourselves in times of emotional difficulty, we have to rely on observing and understanding dog behavior and what it tells us about the possible emotions that drive it. No organism wants to be stressed, and emotional imbalances can cause chemical stress responses in the body. In some cases emotional imbalances are also tied to physical issues, and longstanding emotional tensions can be held in the body. While we may not be able to describe exactly what happens when flower essences are used, their ability to clear energetic blockages, renew energetic flow and restore the body to an energetically balanced state allows the animals to behave in a more comfortable and balanced way. Dogs do what works, so when they have a positive experience they want to repeat it. Flower essences help them achieve this.

How Are Flower Essences Administered?

They are usually taken orally, though they are also effective when applied to the skin, which is a useful alternative when treating animals. The standard minimum dose is 4 drops taken 4 times a day, but they can also be used more often if needed as there is no danger of overdose. There is no absolute dose amount, follow instructions detailed on your Custom Remedy form, and remember that dose is increased by frequency of administration, not by amount. The emphasis is on regularity of use, so continue to use them for the duration suggested on your Custom Remedy Form.

A customized combination of essences is made up by mixing a few drops from each essence's stock bottle into a treatment bottle, which is then filled with filtered water, and sometimes a little vodka to help preserve the remedy for long-term use. The drops are administered from this bottle.

There are several ways to give essences, it's usually best to employ more than one, and spread them out through the day.

- Adding it to drinking water daily (filtered water is best) and food. Water shared by other pets is no problem, they won't be negatively effected.
- Misting around their body, bedding, or living space with a light spray.
- Applying to their skin by hand by putting a few drops on your fingertips and wiping onto the body.
- Administering it directly into their mouths (taking care to protect the dropper) – I generally advise this method only in emergencies.

When offering the remedy it's beneficial to set a positive intention by thinking positively about the changes you're working toward. It can even be helpful if the dog's owner takes the flower essences along with the dog. This is because dogs often closely connect with their owner's emotions (stress during aggressive moments, for example), and by connecting in a positive way improvement can be effected more smoothly. Flower essences will not interfere negatively with other natural remedies or pharmaceutical medications.

How Will I Know If The Flower Essences Are Working?

Flower essences are not drugs, they don't suppress behavior or act as sedatives. The wonderful thing about flower essences is that if the proper essences have been chosen, change will occur. If the choice is incorrect there is simply a lack of change. Since they can have an effect on both acute and long-term emotional states the time it takes to observe changes in your pet can vary from as little as a minute in an emergency to a month or two for longstanding problems. Sometimes the choice of essence changes as the dog is treated; like peeling an onion, when you remove one layer another is revealed. When combined with behavior modification the changes achieved with the flower essences are often imperceptibly mixed with the changes achieved through training; it may feel as though the training is going smoothly, nothing more. If the flower essences are being used for very overt behavior problems such as aggression, you may see the result as a softening of the aggressive response, and a reduction over time of incidents (again in conjunction with training). The changes should seem easy and seamless, you should start to notice that your dog is going through life with less strife and discomfort.

Some Examples of recent clients

Dobbie, dealing with painful hips and spine, allowed me to do extensive acupressure and tui na after a few weeks of his custom essence blend.

Maddie's terrible anxiety during bombing exercises at the nearby military base was reduced through the a combination of essences and herbs.

Mitzi's urge to snap and snarl at approaching dogs dissipated within days of starting her custom essences.

Harleigh's pain due to hip and back problems made him terribly worried about others causing him more discomfort, leading him to lash out as a defense. Energetic essences not only helped him stay centered and calm, he began going up and down stairs in his home for the first time on his own.

From a client owner: "I'm particularly impressed with the intellectual process and critical thinking that goes into your flower prescriptions. As an academic, I appreciate the vast body of knowledge and thorough research that goes into each customized bottle!"