Flower Power

Bach remedies are music to the soul

April 1, 1997 By Carola Burroughs

Some call them “Nature’s Prozac.” Flower remedies -- diluted essences of flowering plants -- may seem too good to be true: Take a few drops a day (in water) of a harmless, pleasant-tasting, nonaddictive liquid, and your negative emotions will ease within a few hours or days. Pioneered in the 1930s by British homeopathic physician Edward Bach, there are now hundreds of these remedies, each of which is said to help ease a particular psychological imbalance. (For example, mustard helps with deep depression; crabapple with poor self-image.) Up to six remedies can be used together with no side effects.

Manhattan PWA Marlene Diaz swears by the remedies, both for her own stress and fatigue, and for her three-year-old HIV positive daughter’s “night terrors.” “Nothing by itself worked -- not herbal teas, massage or TLC -- until I added the Bach remedies,” she said. “When I did, the night terrors resolved within five days.”

Gene Stein, a Jersey City, New Jersey -- based HIV case manager, says, “I have seen spectacular turnarounds in my clients’ anxiety and depression.”

A 1979 double-blind, controlled study by psychotherapy researcher Michael Weisglas, PhD, found that those who used Bach remedies reported enhanced creativity and deepened self-acceptance.

Remedies can be purchased at health-food stores or through mail-order houses (each bottle, which lasts months, costs about $9). Consult an alternative practitioner or guidebook to help choose the appropriate combination for you.

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