

Introduction

Within every science and branch of knowledge there is a group of ‘forgotten heroes’, people who have said very worthwhile things and contributed to the advancement of thought but, either because the time was not right or because they made their points in a rather unorthodox way, their thoughts were marginalized, ignored or discredited by the professionals of their day.

Edward Bach is already a ‘forgotten hero’. He was one of the brilliant physicians of his generation who set out to find the causes of many of the ailments affecting his patients and, little by little and without meaning to, found himself confronting psychology. There is no doubt that the words he used and his attitude to curing them were radical. His way of thinking evolved from the surgical treatment of diseases into the treatment of states of mind.

When he died at the early age of fifty, Dr Bach bequeathed us a system for diagnosing and treating emotional and mental states and the most usual personality traits through psychology which passed almost unnoticed. His system includes a group of flower essences prepared by floating flowers in water in the sun or boiling them. The action of these essences is based not on the active chemical properties of the components of each plant but on the transmission of a pattern of information stored in the water.¹

1 To explain the mechanism that activates flower essences is extremely complex and, thanks to the advances being made in physics and chemistry, it will not be long before a definitive answer to the question will be found. An interesting study on that subject has been produced by the researchers Jingong Pan, Kang-Nian Zhu, Mengchu Zhou and Zhi Y. Wang: *Almacimiento y transferencia de baja frecuencia resonante en clusters de agua estructurada* [Low-frequency resonant storage and transfer in clusters of structured water] (from the Centre for Bio-Signalling and the Department of Research into Electrical Engineering and Computerisation Systems, Technological Institute of New Jersey, and the Chinese Association for

However, Edward Bach bequeathed us more than his thirty-eight remedies; he left us a thinking mechanism for interacting with our patients or ourselves that enables us to understand the cause of our ailments. He left us a therapeutic plan that has been eclipsed, because many people use those essences without the ideas that gave them life.

Let us imagine for a moment that Edward Bach had never prepared flower essences, but was inspired only by the names of the flowers in order to compile his classification of personalities and later of states of mind. Even so, his work would have been extraordinarily valuable.

To realize that his system of thought goes far beyond his flower essences we need only glance at the two books he brought out in 1931: *Ye Suffer from Yourselves* and *Heal Thyself*. When he wrote those works, Dr Bach had found nine of his first twelve flower remedies

Health Care), who worked on the hypothesis that ‘the structured water cluster can be not only an excellent means of transporting nutrition and energy, but also an excellent carrier of low-frequency information’. Another research project worth quoting is the work of Jacques Benveniste and other writers (1988): *Desgranulación de los basófilos humanos desencadenada por el antisuero contra la Inmunoglobulina E muy diluido* [Degranulation of human basophiles set off by the anti-serum against very dilute Immunoglobulin E], published by *Nature* (333: 816-818), although that work gave rise to intense debate in the scientific community and some have hinted that it was ‘fraudulent’. Later studies (1999) by four European laboratories in France, Italy, Belgium and Holland redesigned Benveniste’s experiment, examining other aspects of the activation of basophiles that tested ‘ghost dilutions’ of histamine against a ‘control’ of pure water and obtaining significant results with three of them as compared with the control group (*Inhibición de la desgranulación del basófilo humano por diluciones sucesivas de histamine: Resultados de un ensayo por centros europeo* [Inhibition of the degranulation of the human basophile by successive dilutions of histamine: Results of a trial by European centres], in *Inflamm Res.* 48, Supplement I: S17-8). All this information can be found at: www.nhtglobal.com/pdf/ClusterPlus_NJInstituteAbstractSP.pdf.

(as well as another three that he later discarded). However, in those books he focuses on analyzing a group of attitudes which lead us to become ill and the steps we can take to eradicate them. He offers the doctor a set of tools with which to understand and help his patients, converting the consulting room of the future (as he called it) almost into a centre for guidance and psychotherapy where preventive measures and the promotion of good would also have to be provided.

The thirty-eight flower essences come into the plan as therapeutic catalysts that accelerate the healing process, for it is apparent that by pure self-analysis or through interaction with a therapist that process is usually slower. Unfortunately, in practice flower-essence therapy has strayed far from Bach's original plan (although people say the opposite), becoming cloaked in mystery and distorted for purposes that are more commercial than scientific.

To return to the cogwheel of Bach's ideas and connect it to the clock where it belongs, that of psychology, is the purpose of this book.

I shall therefore describe the evolution of his initial concept of the *Healers*, the *Helpers* and, although he did not explicitly call it that, the *Second Nineteen*, in relation to the most consistent plans for the study of personality.

At the end of this introduction, a plan will be suggested to integrate these principles with those of diagnosis and the formulations of psychotherapy, and a few clinical cases will be presented to serve as a guide.

Lastly, some of the clinical experiments conducted in Cuba will be described to give an idea of the reaction this kind of treatment has produced among professionals in the health sector and the general public and to demonstrate how systematically and seriously this subject is being viewed today.

For all the reasons set out above, I believe that this text may become the in-depth study that is so much needed if we are to understand the work of Dr Bach for what it is: a system of diagnosis and therapy.