

From the ancient bath houses of Egypt to those in the know in Hollywood today – flowers are much more than just a pretty decoration. Their petals have been made into teas to relieve everything from insomnia to flu and other disorders, and for thousands of years their essence has been used to heal.

Most ancient cultures have utilised flower essences for a range of physical and emotional health problems, including the Egyptians and Australian Aboriginals.

In the 1930s, England's Dr Edward Bach pioneered their use in the mainstream.

His philosophy was: 'A healthy mind ensures a healthy body' – a notion now widely accepted by modern medicine.

Bach Flower Remedies are still very popular, and his Rescue Remedy (a firm favourite of Princess Diana) is a must for many celebs including Jennifer Aniston and Victoria Beckham, who use it to help them cope during stressful situations.

'Bach flowers are a type of energy or



FLOWER power

Unleash the hidden healing power of petals

vibrational medicine,' says Dr Lisa MacDonald from YourHealth in Sydney. 'The medical profession is just starting to understand how they work, but it is similar in some ways to spiritual healing.'

'I use them because they are so safe, simple and inexpensive. Flower essences are specifically directed for the mind, emotions and soul, but often have surprisingly powerful physical benefits.'

Other experts agree.

'They are powerful catalysts for helping people heal themselves,' says Ian White, a naturopath and homeopath, founder of Australian Bush Flower Essences and the

author of *Australian Bush Flower Essences* (Random House, \$37.95).

'Illness and emotional problems are indicators we are out of balance. Flower essences assist us to work through these imbalances, leading to physical health.'

There are 65 ABFE essences, all with different physical or emotional effects, as well as a range of beautifully combined products in drops, mists and creams.

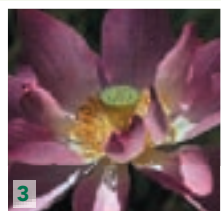
'They address anything from relationship problems to the effects of abuse and radiation therapy to regulating hormones and mood swings. They're used around the world in hospitals in fertility treatment,

as an alternative to HRT, to combat the effects of radiation at Chernobyl and by flight attendants to combat jetlag.'

Ian's company has also initiated the first double blind scientific trials ever conducted on flower essences with she-oak, as they have had astounding results in treating fertility and conception issues.

'There are no side effects, and they can be used by adults, children and even pets,' Ian says. 'And there is no danger if you do take one that does not apply to your condition – the worst thing that will happen is that nothing will happen.'

By Serene Conneeley



1. DAGGER HAKEA Helps with feelings of resentment and bitterness towards family members (mountain devil is for general resentment), and aids forgiveness and expression of feelings. Physically it can help with gall bladder and liver problems caused by resentment.

2. DOG ROSE Helps with feelings of insecurity, niggling fears and nightmares, and encourages confidence and dealing with phobias. It has been shown to help kidney and stomach problems and insomnia.

3. RED LILY Aids concentration, focus and memory, and can be beneficial for people with autism (Emergency Essence has had great results too).

4. SHE-OAK Helps with hormonal imbalances in women, PMS, conception and fertility. Works on the emotional factors inhibiting fertility.

5. STURT'S DESERT PEA Works on releasing deep emotional hurts and encourages catharsis. It motivates and re-energises, and helps you let go of pain. Ian says it is the most powerful of the essences. It has also helped many physical conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis.

6. ISOPOGON Helps with memory, and has been used to treat senility and Alzheimers disease. Emotionally it can help bossy, stubborn and controlling people to learn from experience and be more tolerant.

◆ *Ninety per cent of health food stores and 30 per cent of pharmacies stock combination essences. You can buy individual essences through the ABFE website (www.ausflowers.com.au), which lists the properties of each essence, or call (02) 9450 1388. Phone consultations are available.*