

BACH FLOWER REMEDY GARDEN

Offshoots is a permaculture project, based in Burnley, Lancashire, which is a particularly deprived area of the UK. Also a charity, Offshoots offers therapeutic horticultural activities to people with on-going health problems.

In conjunction with Jackie Stewart, a locally based Flower Essence Practitioner, they plan to create a Bach Flower Remedy Garden and run courses to teach local residents the benefits of using the remedies. They have successfully secured an 'Awards for All' lottery grant to begin the garden.

Jackie Stewart applied to Twelve Healers Trust for a grant to purchase teaching materials e.g. cards, books and tapes, and also funds to design and erect an Interpretive Panel, describing all the remedies and their location in the garden.

They listed these aims in support of their application, which we granted:

1. to empower the local community with training courses and practical experience of growing and using Bach Flower Remedies;
2. to create a Bach Flower Remedy garden open to the public who will learn about this wonderful system of healing;
3. to grow sustainable sources of the less common flowers that can be re-established in the wild and shared with flower remedy producers.

The garden is to date, incomplete, so the panel is not as yet in situ, but the first courses have successful run and there is a waiting list for the second.

Below is the first report received from Jackie Stewart, updating the Twelve Healers Trust on the progress of the garden and courses. Following on are some heartening comments from her students, indicating they all benefited greatly from the experience.

Vivien Williamson – Trustee



THE BACH FLOWER GARDEN IN BURNLEY - REPORT TO TWELVE HEALERS TRUST

Introduction:

The Bach Flower Remedy Garden at Offshoots in Burnley has been established to grow the 37 plants and raise awareness of how Bach Flower Remedies support health and wellbeing.

Aims:

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Progress Report:

We developed and delivered a 12 week training course on the Bach Flower Remedies which began on 4th February 2011.

It was advertised locally and all 8 places were filled within 48 hours of publicity going out with a waiting list of almost 40. 6 people completed the course, 1 dropped out after two sessions due to pressure of work. The other dropped out half way through because of mental health problems that made it difficult for him to attend.

We asked participants for entry and exit data about mental health and wellbeing. We asked them for feedback about the course and were particularly interested to know whether they'd used Bach Flower Remedies beforehand. We hoped that Bach's vision would come true for participants by placing 'in their hands the power to heal amongst their own families, friends and all around them'¹ so we encouraged them to make up combinations for friends and family. (Small sample size for results since of the 6 who completed the course only 5 completed feedback. Findings are attached along with a blank feedback form for information.)

The 12 week course was a mixture of indoor and outdoor learning, with the Healing Herbs DVDs proving a popular part of the course. Activities have included essence making by the boiling and sun methods, meeting the Bach flower remedy trees on site, cultivating plants by seed and preparing the ground for planting. We have spent time with the Bach flower remedy plants as they've come into flower and recorded many group activities on the Offshoots permaculture blog (www.offshootspermaculture.wordpress.com).

In addition to the 12 week training course, community workshops have been offered. All of these were fully booked with 8 attendees on each: 'Meet the Bach Flower Remedy plants at Offshoots', 'Select your Bach Flower Remedy Blend' and 'Make a Flower Remedy at Offshoots'. Most workshop participants have borrowed books from the library.

(Publicity posters about the 12 week course and community workshops are attached).

¹ Wallingford Lecture: Collected Writings of Edward Bach, ed. Julian Barnard

Ongoing Bach flower remedy workshops will be offered through the **Branch Out project**, a local initiative that provides ecotherapy to people who have experienced mental ill-health. This is a social inclusion project which seeks to improve the confidence of participants and provides opportunities for them to learn alongside others who have not had mental health problems. Offshoots has been offering ecotherapy activities to **Branch Out** participants for well over a year. Bach flower remedy workshops are now on the menu of activities offered at Offshoots, integrating Bach Flower Remedies well within the local community.

News From the Garden:

Approximately a quarter of Bach Flower Remedy plants were already growing on the site and in the neighbouring woodland. The remainder have been donated by nurseries around the UK (as trees, plants and seeds) and grown successfully. We lost Star of Bethlehem due to late frost and Crab Apple for unknown reasons. The project had existing vines which perished due to the cold winter. The vines will be replaced once a new glasshouse is available on site in autumn 2011. Crab Apple and Star of Bethlehem will also be replaced.

We've had advice from national wildflower charity Landlife about growing gentian and water violet on-site. It may take a few years to establish a healthy population of these before we're in a position to supply seeds/plants to others.

The Offshoots site will be extended from October 2011, so some trees won't be planted until the full site design has been completed. This affects the planting location of aspen, larch, pine, and new elms which we currently have as saplings on site.

We intend to design the display board once all the trees are in situ showing a map of where to find the plants on-site. This will be supported by individual plant labels next to each Bach flower remedy plant on-site to increase public awareness.

Feedback Comments from Course Participants

How have you benefited from this course?

'More aware of my emotions and feelings and who I am'

'I have felt the course has helped me identify feelings and emotions which before the course I would not acknowledge. I now feel more able to deal with life's ups and downs'

'I feel much better after taking the remedies. I think a lot more about causes for feelings.'

'I feel like I can notice more about my emotions, can tune in better to how I am feeling'

Which part of the course did you enjoy most?

'Being outside with the plants and trees'

Discover the **Bach Flower Remedies**



Fridays: 10am-2pm from 4th February 2011
at Offshoots Permaculture Project, c/o Towneley Hall,
Towneley Holmes Road, Burnley, Lancashire, BB11 3RQ

We're growing the **Bach Flower Remedy** plants. **Join us** to learn how these natural remedies support health and wellbeing.



Make your own **natural remedies** from flowers and trees growing at Offshoots.

Learn how to choose **Bach Flower Remedies** for yourself and your family.

Discover the best **Bach Flower Remedies** to release stress, anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, relationship problems and a range of other issues that can affect us all.

Practice **relaxation** and meditation techniques that you can use at home.

Contact Jackie on 01772 740932 or email info@offshoots.org.uk to book your place. Course costs £12 unwaged/£40 low income/£80 waged

