

Master's Flower Essences for Obsessive Compulsive Disorders in Animals  
By Lila Devi Stone

“If I didn't see it with my own eyes,” Becky said of her dog, “I don't think I would have believed the change in Lou after a day on Pear Essence. And there was even more improvement over the next few days. There was no barking on his part.” (Please note that since the words *it*, *that* and *which* refer to inanimate objects and denote a lack of consciousness, the author refers to animals as *he*, *she* and *who*.)

In the case of Lou, Pear Essence helped to dispel his habit of excessive, self-directed barking, one form of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) in dogs. This remedy is the emergency essence in the Master's range of 20 remedies and may be used for any stress, trauma, or disturbance to an animal's well-being and emotional nature. For animals who are placed in new homes, or who feel displaced by events in the home such as the presence of new people or animals or the absence of existing residents; for illness, accident, or surgery; or for any sudden changes, including transportation, Pear Essence is strongly recommended. Pear is especially helpful for rescue animals of any species or breed where the past history is unknown.

Obsessive Compulsive Disorders may be defined as normal behaviors gone awry, or abnormal expressions of normal activities. They are repetitive by nature, out of context, and without any apparent purpose. They can also be quite disturbing to the owner. OCDs will most often occur in animals who are stressed, anxious, or even bored. Often in these cases, a veterinarian will recommend behavior modification along with medication. Whereas this approach is sometimes successful, it also carries certain contra-indications. Several pet owners have reported that psychotropic drugs have actually blotted out their pets' personalities! Negative reactions to flower essences, contrarily, are virtually nonexistent, since they cannot be overdosed or contraindicated. If your client or your own pet exhibits a negative response, it is helpful to assess whether other variables in the animal's life may be responsible. It is also true that some pedigrees are more genetically prone to OCD than other animals.

Pear, Almond and Lettuce for OCD

In the Master's line of 20 essences, three in particular have been reported useful for OCDs: Pear as mentioned above, and also Almond and Lettuce. One owner of an exotic bird reported that he ceased his obsessive calling on Almond and Lettuce Essences. “He is changing day by day,” she said, “and our house is so peaceful!”

Almond Essence, when given to people, is for calmness through self-control. For animals, it helps to dispel excessive, repetitive behaviors, which may be their attempt to calm themselves when something has disturbed them. Animals may be distressed by being confined in too small a living space, being left alone too often, or living with other animals with whom they may not get along. Current research reveals that repetitive actions trigger the release of endorphins, much like the “high” experienced from exercising.

Almond is for unbalanced or immoderate actions over which the animal seemingly has lost control. This essence was recently given to Callie, a rescue cat who exhibited OCDs that did not respond to veterinary care. “In one day on Almond,” the vet reported, “Callie stopped crying and pacing and returned to her normal behaviour with the other cat in the household.”

Lettuce Essence, likewise, has a calmativive effect. The lettuce plant itself contains minute amounts of a mildly hallucinogenic chemical. Whereas this property is absent in the flower remedy form of *lactuca compositae*, Lettuce Essence does possess the ability to help animals and humans alike to relax the tensions that cause restlessness, nervousness, and emotional agitation. It is especially helpful for younger animals who may tend to get too wound up and over-excited. While it does not dampen their natural enthusiasm for life, it does help them to stop bouncing off the walls!

One dog trainer not only gave Lettuce to her puppy, but to her husband as well. “He trains dogs,” she said, “and the dogs were driving him crazy—he was a time bomb ready to explode. Even though he was quite skeptical, I gave him some Lettuce Essence and we both noticed results immediately.” Their 3-month-old puppy in training was barking incessantly, and “nothing was going to stop him. I went outside and put 2 drops of Lettuce on his nose and we did not hear a word from him the rest of the day.” Flower essences in conjunction with loving and consistent training are a highly successful combination. By treating our pets with respect and regularity, and by setting gentle but firm perimeters, we create environments and relationships in which they can learn to trust profoundly and love unconditionally.

Knowledge of animals’ instinctive behavior is of paramount importance in order to understand their natures and their needs. Dogs, for example, are pack animals. Separation anxiety syndrome, a prime cause of OCDs, is one of the problems most commonly reported by dog owners. Although some canines handle being left alone better than others, many will go into a state of panic. They may feel as though their very lives are threatened by what to them is a highly unnatural situation. Wired into their genetic makeup is the instinctive wisdom that their very survival is dependent on their pack, in which their people play important roles. Common OCDs for dogs are pacing or spinning, tail chasing, inappropriate suckling, fence running, self-mutilation and hair biting.

Horses too can experience OCD. It is estimated that 15% of domestic horses express OCD through pawing, weaving, pacing, cribbing, blanket-chewing, or head-bobbing. Cribbing, for example, describes the behavior of a horse grabbing an object and pulling back his neck to gulp air. Wild horses in their natural habitat spend most of their time grazing, whereas domestic horses can easily become stressed if they are unable to graze.

Cats, especially those kept indoors, exhibit OCDs through excessive meowing, pacing, over-grooming, self-mutilation, tail chasing, and suckling or chewing on fabric or plastic. They too need an active and engaging lifestyle to ensure their happiness and well-being.

## Other Factors Contributing to OCD

Animals in their natural habitat do not, for the most part, suffer from OCD. Although clinical trials are difficult, if not impossible, to conduct with a population in the wild, it is safe to say that abnormal behavior stems from what, to the animal, is an abnormal environment. OCD is often their coping mechanism for dealing with a foreign environment and an unnatural lifestyle. The root cause of an animal's disturbed behavior most often lies not with them but with the environment to which we are asking them to adapt. Many pet owners may not even be aware of their contribution to the problem. Fortunately, they can easily correct the situation.

Key sources of tension for any animal are understimulation, excessive confinement, and neglect. An understanding of their instinctive natures, both the species and breed, can give us an infinite number of clues about how to keep them happy and, as a result, healthy. In truth, our pets are our guests, in our homes and in our yards. We must remember that our world is not naturally their world, and do our best to accommodate them.

We can achieve this through holistic treatment such as flower essences; proper diet and regular feeding times; exercise; excellent veterinary care; an accommodating environment in the home and yard; consistent training, as mentioned previously; and our love, expressed through spending both quality and quantity time with them. Having examined several of the most important Master's Essences for OCD, let's have a look at these other important elements in natural pet care.

**Food:** Proper diet means the freshest foods that meet the nutritional needs of the animal. Dr. William Pollack, a veterinarian in Iowa, USA, says, "By changing the diet, 85 percent of common disease is gone." Beware of additives, by-products and other harmful ingredients that can cause physical illness as well as behavioral imbalances. Many pet foods are designed to entice the animal yet are lacking in nutritional benefits. The saying "you are what you eat" applies equally well to our pets.

**Feeding times** are another important aspect of diet. Many pets are overweight—a highly unnatural condition caused by the unnatural availability of food throughout the day. The rule of thumb is to mimic their normal feeding times in nature. Animals in the wild do not have access to bowls of dry food. Generally, they hunt and feast followed by periods of fasting, when their digestive systems can rest and tone, thus allowing the maintenance of a proper pH balance.

**Exercise:** A tired animal is a happy animal—meaning one who has exercised to his heart's content. Regardless of age, our pets need aerobic workouts as much as we do! There's nothing like an interactive toy to simulate the hunt, a good race through the park, or a run through the pasture.

**Veterinary care:** As we practitioners and pet lovers know, medical attention is vital to our animal's well-being and can help us better assess their flower essence needs. It is

important with OCDs to rule out medical causes such as parasites or skin disorders. Flower essences are an excellent adjunct to veterinary treatment, and more vets are now incorporating holistic treatment methods into their practices—simply because they see the results.

Environment: How animal-friendly are our homes and yards to our pets? Do our cats have their own furniture that provides height as well as views to the outdoors? Do our dogs have proper sleeping and outdoor areas for their comfort? Are our horses comfortably housed with ample acreage? And are their areas of feeding and elimination kept immaculately clean?

Loving companionship: Now we come to the main point of all the issues above. Loving pet owners tend to have very few problems with their pets. Yes, occasional behavioral issues may surface, and veterinary problems do happen. But these people are committed to the best possible care for their animal friends. Attention to the many facets of natural pet care, along with the sensitive application of flower essences, creates a genuine and profound quality of life for the animals we so dearly love.

*Lila Devi Stone founded Master's Flower Essences in 1977 and has authored 2 books: Flower Essences for Animals and The Essential Flower Essence Handbook. Both books are texts for their respective Formal Home Study Courses. For more information please visit [www.mastersessences.com](http://www.mastersessences.com).*