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Surviving With Natural Remedies

By: Susan Curtis

Winter Press, Kent, 2003. 116 pp., p/b

ISBN 1-874581-32-0

(5% of the cover price is donated to Frontline Homeopathy)

Reviewed by: Meg Brinton MARH

This book is described as a practical guide to self-reliant health in the wake of a catastrophic event. It aims to provide strategies for practitioners and anyone who needs to cope with such eventualities as exposure to radiation or chemicals, anthrax, natural disasters and so on.

The book is physically small - 135mm wide, 215mm tall and only 7mm thick - hence it is compact enough to carry for emergencies and travelling. There are useful blank pages at the back for adding your own notes.

The Introduction tells us that the book was written out of the thought 'What happens when there are no reliable emergency services or effective medical help?' It wasn't apparently inspired by the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, but that tragic event does bring the need for the sort of advice it offers into sharper focus. Rather, I think the stimulus for the book was more the idea of dealing with natural disasters and this is presumably why 5% of the cover price is donated to Frontline Homeopathy, the registered charity that provides homeopathic treatment and education in developing countries suffering the effects of war, natural disasters and poverty. For more information, see their website: (www.frontlinehomeopathy.org).

The book has four main sections and appendices:

-Introduction: explains what the book is about and how to use it.

-Part I: 'If the Worst Should Happen', surveys the worrying range of catastrophes that we may have to face in the modern world.

-Part II: 'How to Make and Use Natural Remedies', has two sub-sections, the first on herbal remedies and the second on homeopathic remedies.

-Part III: 'The Remedies/Materia Medica' is a guide to the various remedies (herbal and homeopathic) and what they are used for.

-The six Appendices include: 'Herbal Remedies for First Aid', 'Homeopathy for Acute Illnesses', 'Survival Kit' (a basic list of what it should contain), 'Contacts and Suppliers', 'Suggested Reading' and an Index.

The text of the book is relevant and helpful and it provides a very good summary of the way in which natural remedies can be used as a viable alternative or supplement to more conventional approaches. As the book rightly points out, **in** many countries conventional medicines and medical support may just not be available; and even **in** developed countries, the emergency services may be initially swamped in the

aftermath of a major disaster. One odd omission, I thought, was that no mention was made of Bach Rescue Remedy - surely one of the most used, and easily accessible, emergency remedies?

My main problem with the book, though, was not with the content but with the contents page and the index. I tried to envisage how one might use the book in practice. Clearly in an emergency situation, it is vital to be able to find the right remedy or reference quickly and accurately. I found many omissions in the index, and in other cases it directed me to the wrong page. I did wonder if owing to the general uncertainty in the world at the moment, that the book had been rushed out, leaving insufficient time for careful proof-checking and indexing.

I think that a qualified and experienced homeopath would probably know most of the remedies anyway but the book would still provide a convenient summary to carry to far-flung places where one might not want to lug the usual clutch of reference books. The herbal remedies may be less familiar to many of us. A non-professional would find the book useful as an accessible guide to the remedies.