

# Annie's Story

## Recovery Through Herbal Remedies

By Candace Wingo L.M.T., C.A.T.  
(Licensed Massage Therapist, Certified Animal Therapist)

This story is about a huacaya alpaca named Annie. When she came to our ranch, she was three years old with health issues and weighed 77.8 pounds. The veterinarians ominously called her: "Walking Dead."

### Some History About Annie

Initially, Annie was a healthy, award-winning alpaca with no known health issues. Then, at about age one and a half, she started losing weight and had bouts of diarrhea. The diarrhea would get cleared up and then start all over again. She drooled and had a foamy mouth. She was checked by veterinarians but nothing appeared abnormal in her blood work or physical exams. During all of this, she was treated for parasites, given additional food, and was also given antibiotics. Nothing seemed to help.

The most Annie weighed was 112 pounds. After she was 18 months old, she bred and was pregnant but lost the cria early in her pregnancy. She continued to lose weight and then would gain some; but a slow decline was how she continued with constant bouts of runny diarrhea. She was a mess.

Poor Annie looked terrible. This condition lasted for over two years, when the owner contacted me to see what natural therapies I could recommend to help with what the veterinarians were doing. I always recommend that the rehab animal stay with its herd, if possible. In this case, however, it worked out better for Annie to come to our ranch. Sometimes a friend from the herd will be brought with a rehab animal and that can make a huge difference. Alpacas are all different and usually the owners know what is best for their animal. But the goal is to not introduce another stress for an animal that is already having issues by moving them away from their herd. Unfortunately, Annie did not have a close friend to come with her and we hoped this would not work against her.

Annie was brought to our ranch for rehab after a current vet check. His diagnosis was possible irritable bowel syndrome. She arrived at our ranch in May 2008 weighing 77.8 pounds with runny diarrhea.

### Month One:

Annie was put in a quarantine area so we could observe her, do a fecal check, and work one-on-one with her. Her quarantine area had shelter with fans, green grass, hay, fresh clean water, and was close to other alpacas. We hoped she would be able to go in with the rest of our herd of 40 plus females soon. Especially because, where she had been boarded previously, they isolated Annie away from the other alpacas, since they were concerned that her condition might be contagious.

### Our first observations of Annie:

- She was skin and bones and weighed 77.8 pounds.
- Her fiber was dull and coarse.
- She had runny diarrhea. Her back end and legs were covered with caked, dried, and matted fiber.
- She had a foamy mouth and drooled constantly.
- Her eyes were messy with mucus secretion collected in the corners of her eyes.
- She picked at her food but ate a good amount very slowly.
- Her teeth were long and needed to be trimmed.
- Annie was friendly but tender to the touch and would almost go limp when touched.
- She liked attention, but her spirit was almost gone.
- She seemed depressed, sad, and disconnected.

### Annie's Rehab Begins

Annie needed to get balanced, relaxed, and connected so the rehab could start. First I gave her an oral remedy and also added a dropper full to her water bucket. I started with Distress

Remedy, which is part homeopathy and part flower essence. This was selected to help with her emotional and physical health. The label reads – “soothing relief from minor pain and associated mild emotional distress.” This was a perfect remedy to begin with and I continued to add this to her water bucket for the first week.

Her fecal check showed coccidia and a small count of whipworms. Consulting with our veterinarian, Dr. Ben Buchanan at Brazos Valley Equine Clinic, we used Safeguard to get rid of the whipworms and Paravac (herbal blend liquid) for the coccidia. Both took care of these parasite problems within the normal time frame.

We washed and scrubbed her back end using water, organic soap, and a cattle groomer glove to get the mess off. I also used the cattle groomer glove, which has rubber bumps on it, to gently dry-brush her fiber all over the rest of her body. This was not easy since she was so bony.

As a massage therapist, I know dry-brushing is very good for the skin and would also be good for her fiber, too. Dry-brushing brings circulation to the skin and helps get rid of toxins in the body. Annie was tender, so we did this procedure very gently and only as much as she could tolerate. She responded to the clean up job very well and you could sense a sigh of relief from her and see “thank you” in her eyes. Even though she still had runny diarrhea, she was clean and felt better.

The next day I did some cranial massage and auricular therapy work. Cranial massage work is a

great technique to help relax and balance the animal – massaging gently, with a soft touch, all around the head and upper neck area. She enjoyed it.

Auricular therapy is reflexology on the ears where you gently massage the ears starting at the base of the ear and with a soft touch, moving up each side of the ear in small circular massage movements between your finger tips. By stimulating certain reflexes on the ears, energy is released and blockages are removed. All the nerve endings or reflex points relate to every organ and system of the body. This can improve function and balance of organs and the results is a total relaxation of the nervous system and improved nerve to blood supply to all areas. Auricular therapy is used to restore and maintain the body’s natural sense of balance and to encourage healing. I would do this type of massage work when needed, according to how Annie progressed. Sometimes she would come and stand by me, as if to say, “Do that ear work on me, please.”

Next on the list, Annie needed some extra nutrients to help her gain weight and we needed to get rid of that diarrhea! Annie grazed in the pasture, ate hay, and was fed twice daily. The feed was alpaca/llama pellets that are milled locally at our cooperative. Several times a week, I would give her moistened beet pulp, which she loved. I soaked the beet pulp in water until it plumped up, drained the water off and put it in her bowl. In addition to her feed, I gave her an herbal mixture that I mixed with filtered water. This was given orally with a dosing syringe.

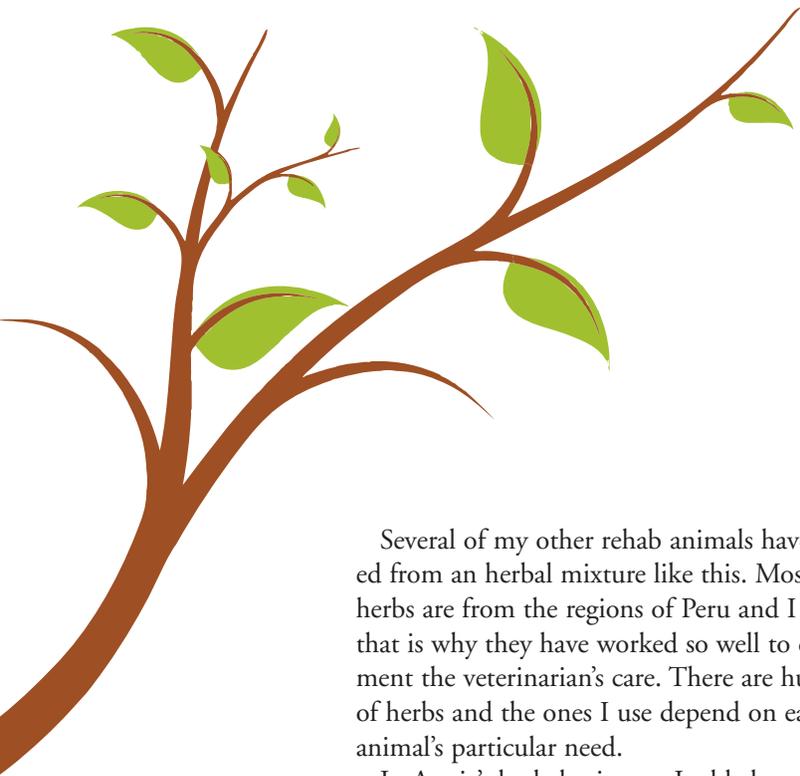
Photos courtesy of Candace Wingo



Annie, the day she arrived at our ranch.



Rehab begins – needing some love and care.



Several of my other rehab animals have benefited from an herbal mixture like this. Most of the herbs are from the regions of Peru and I believe that is why they have worked so well to complement the veterinarian's care. There are hundreds of herbs and the ones I use depend on each animal's particular need.

In Annie's herbal mixture, I added essences, vitamin/mineral mix, enzymes, probiotics, and colloidal silver.

I gave this mixture orally once a day, every other day, for the first week to let her system get used to it. The second week, I gave the mixture every day and would weigh her daily to record the results. She started to gain a few pounds! After four days, Annie weighed 79.7 pounds – a 1.9 pound gain which was at least a step in the right direction.



After three months of treatment, Annie was feeling better, gaining weight, and ready to smile for the camera.



Annie likes her "Herbal Mixture."

Photos courtesy of Candace Wingo

### Here is Annie's herbal mixture:

- **Powdered herbs:** From the regions of Peru.
- **Digestive Essence:** Essences are used for healing and balancing the energetic and emotional patterns related to the specific body systems. (This was a major essence for Annie's condition.)
- **Colloidal Silver liquid:** A natural antibiotic. (I added this only the first week.)
- **Probiotics:** Beneficial bacteria (can use plain yogurt or Dyna-Pro liquid.)
- **Animal Restore Essence:** To help restore vitality during periods of recuperation. Can help restore and heal the spirit. (This was a very important essence for Annie.)
- **Alpaca Essence:** Helps them remain grounded, calm, and relaxed. Good for animals being transported or removed from their normal circumstances.
- **Stress Pack:** Full of B vitamins, minerals, probiotics, electrolytes, and immune support ingredients. (I used this once or twice a week in the mixture).
- **Enzymes:** To help her body absorb her nutrients, I used Opti-zyme every other day in the mixture. Sometimes I added it to the moistened beet pulp.

### For the chronic diarrhea:

I started with Diarrex, which is a homeopathic remedy blend for diarrhea. I gave this remedy to Annie twice a day the first two days. Diarrex usually works for diarrhea, but it did not work for Annie. I knew then I would have to determine the appropriate homeopathic remedy for this case if I was going to get rid of that chronic diarrhea.

Homeopathic remedies have been safely and effectively used for over 200 years. Remedies are very dilute amounts of animals or plants or minerals put into small tablets that dissolve quickly.

Finding the right homeopathic remedy for Annie would involve research and gathering lots of information about her symptoms, past history, emotional state, personality, and more to match the best remedy for her case. After all this case taking, case analysis, and prayer, I chose *Pulsatilla*. The disposition and mental state were the chief guiding symptoms to the selection of *Pulsatilla*. This remedy is considered a female remedy, especially for those with a mild, gentle, and timid disposition, one that seeks attention and craves company, sympathy, and fresh air. Annie would come right up and put her nose in my face seeking attention and was gentle and easy to work with. All the case taking made *Pulsatilla* look like the perfect remedy match.

To give a Homeopathic remedy, put 3-5 pills into a 3cc syringe (needle-less) and draw up about 1 to 2cc of clean water. Shake to mix and drench into the side of the mouth.

### Giving the Pulsatilla remedy to Annie:

**Day 4:** After arriving at our ranch and still in quarantine, I gave Annie *Pulsatilla* 30cc orally in the AM and PM.

**Day 5:** Gave the same remedy AM and PM. Still runny diarrhea, but I noticed her eyes were less messy and not as much discharge. This was a good sign that the remedy might be working at a constitutional level.

**Day 6:** She had clumping poop in the morning – some progress. Continued giving the remedy AM and PM.

**Day 7:** Still clumping poop but her eyes were completely clean – no mucus discharge! Remedy AM and PM.

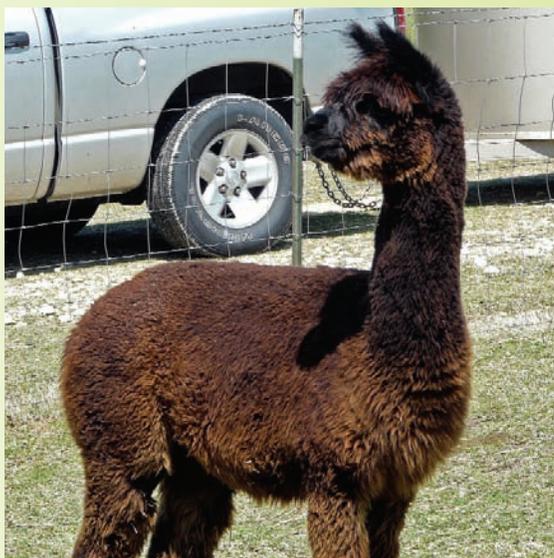
**Days 8 and 9:** Clumping poop but more solid each day. I continued giving the remedy AM and PM.

**Day 10:** Solid beans! I gave the remedy AM and PM. Then I stopped giving the *Pulsatilla* remedy. She took the remedy for seven days.

**Note:** Annie had chronic diarrhea for over two years and has not had any bouts of runny diarrhea since that day. This was very rewarding to match the right remedy to help Annie!

### For drooling and foamy mouth:

I read an article that Dr. Anderson found a good probiotic, called Turval, which helped with foamy



After 6 months, Annie was looking great!

mouth. We ordered it, gave it to Annie in her feed and it worked great! That took about two weeks to clear up.

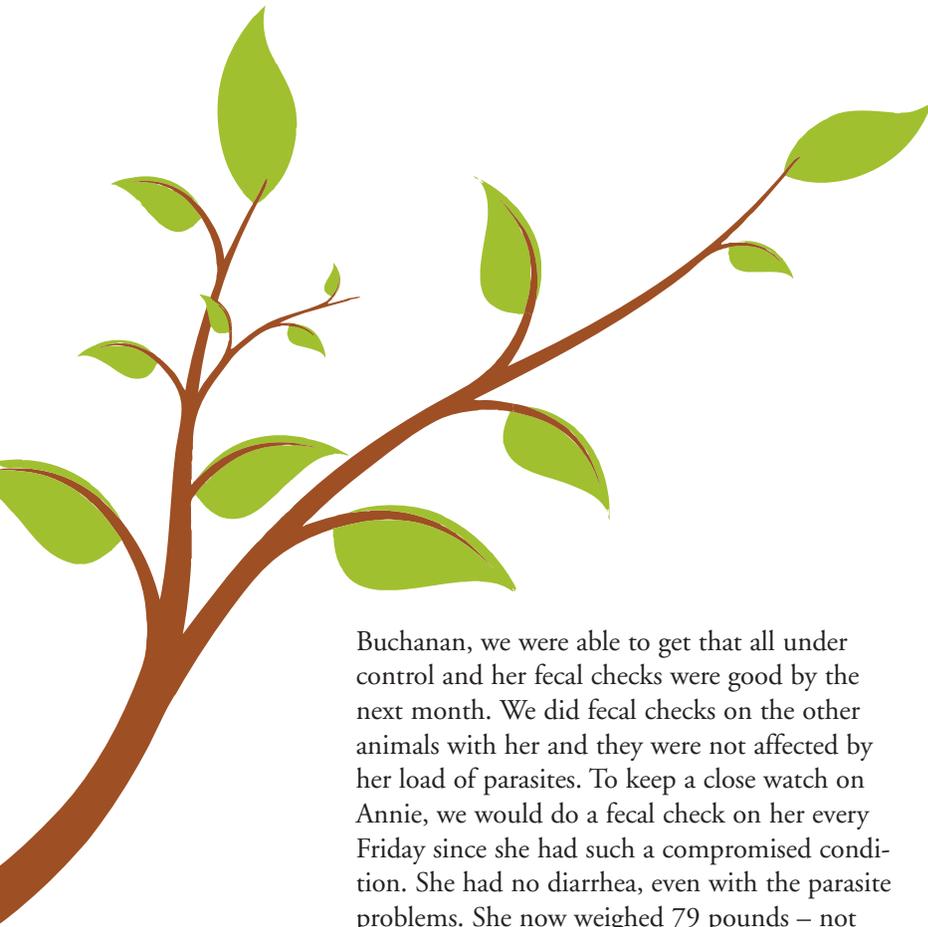
At the end of month one, Annie weighed 80.3 pounds, had no drooling or foamy mouth, her eyes were bright with no mucus discharge and she was diarrhea free! Her teeth were trimmed, she ate better and was definitely looking and feeling better! She was ready to leave quarantine and go in with some of the other girls.

### Month Two:

Annie would gain two pounds and lose one pound – her body was trying to balance. This was frustrating but we knew she was getting better. I added Soothe and Build herbal blend to the “herbal mixture.” The Soothe and Build label reads: “Helps to ease and soothe a toxic bowel. Provides nutrients that help cleanse the bowel by countering the effects of unfriendly microorganisms.” We also continued to dry brush her once a week, which she enjoyed.

Annie also started losing some fiber on her nose and the edges of her ears. I used Alpaca and Llama Insect Spray – I sprayed this natural solution on my fingers and dabbed it on the area of her nose and ears instead of spraying it on her face and possibly getting it into her eyes. We used this every other day for about two weeks. This cleared up the problem areas and the fiber started growing back. The ears and nose were completely healed and covered with fiber by the end of the month.

This month, she also had a parasite bloom, with three different parasites that took three different de-wormers to get rid of. Working with Dr. Ben



Buchanan, we were able to get that all under control and her fecal checks were good by the next month. We did fecal checks on the other animals with her and they were not affected by her load of parasites. To keep a close watch on Annie, we would do a fecal check on her every Friday since she had such a compromised condition. She had no diarrhea, even with the parasite problems. She now weighed 79 pounds – not much gain but not going backwards, either.

### Month Three:

I continued giving the herbal mixture twice a day, she was gaining weight, and her fecal checks looked good. On herd health day, we check ears with an otoscope. We saw two ticks in one of Annie's ears. I sprayed the inside of her ear with one spray of Alpaca and Llama Insect Spray and I also sprayed the other ear for prevention. A few days later, I rechecked and it had killed the ticks and helped the inside of the ear heal. The rest of the herd got their ears sprayed that day, too, since we found some other animals with ticks in their ears.

This month, Annie started gaining more consistently and was at 84 pounds!

### Month Four:

Annie continued to gain, so I gave her the herbal mixture only once a day to see what would happen. She started losing weight, so we went back to twice a day. Mid-month, she had pudding-like poop. We tried not to think the worst. I only gave her probiotics (Probios gel) and she had solid beans the next day.

Her fiber was looking good and her body score was now a 1½ out of 5. She weighed 93.3 pounds – great progress!

### Month Five: Ready to go home

We continued giving the herbal mixture twice a day and this month she continued to gain. Annie now weighed 97.3 pounds and we felt she could go to her owner's ranch as long as they continued to monitor her and give her the herbal mixture. Dr. Buchanan agreed she was ready, too, but the owners wanted her to stay with us and continue her rehab at our ranch. Annie was part of the big family now and we were happy for her to stay. She was a pleasure to work with.

When it was time to weigh her, we would say, "Annie, let's weigh you," and she would walk in and stand on the scale. She demonstrated this to Dr. Buchanan one day – he was impressed with her progress and was pleased to see how good she looked. Her fiber felt fabulous and her body score was almost a 3 out of 5. We all were looking forward to see if she would break the 100-pound mark next month.



Photo courtesy of Candace Wingo  
Illustrations based on an original drawing by Robert Proksa, stock.xchg

Ten months later, Annie is healthy, happy and pregnant!



### **Month Six: Healthy and Happy and Over 100 pounds!**

She did it! She weighed 104.1 pounds, mid-month. I started giving her the herbal mixture only once a day and she continued to gain and was 110.2 pounds by the end of the month. She was now healthy and happy and ready to breed when the breeding season started! She was beautiful and her fiber felt like champion fleece!

### **Month Seven:**

We slowly stopped giving the herbal mixture and Annie was staying at a consistent weight around 115 pounds. She was a perfect 3 out of 5 body score. She would be bred in a few months. Yeah!

### **10 Months after arriving at our ranch: Healthy, Happy and Pregnant!**

Annie weighed 128 pounds when she was bred. This was 10 months after she came to our ranch with several health issues and weighing 77.8 pounds. She was later confirmed pregnant with an ultra-sound and weighed 134.8 pounds!

Today, as I write this article, Annie weighs 139 pounds. Dr. Buchanan, the owners, and we are all thrilled with her progress and look forward to Annie having a healthy cria. We want to thank Dr. Ben Buchanan and his staff at Brazos Valley Equine Clinic for all their assistance with Annie during her rehab here at our ranch.

The goal in Holistic Animal Care is to help the animal heal itself with different natural therapies. I believe that healing is a team effort that involves God, the animal, the veterinarian, and the people that love them. If I can help in this team effort, then I've provided a gift from my heart.

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Candace and her husband, Larry, have owned alpacas since 1998 and manage a herd of approximately 70 alpacas at their Mountain Dream Alpacas ranch in Navasota, Texas. Candace is a Certified Animal Therapist and Licensed Massage Therapist. Candace doesn't diagnose and works closely with the animal owner's veterinarian. Their new company, [www.alpacasALLnaturale.com](http://www.alpacasALLnaturale.com), carries a line of natural health care products for alpacas. You can reach Candace at [Candace@MountainDreamAlpacas.com](mailto:Candace@MountainDreamAlpacas.com) or [Candace@Holistic-Critters.com](mailto:Candace@Holistic-Critters.com).