

HOME-BASED HEALTHCARE FOR THE SOUTHERN WILLAMETTE VALLEY

IN MANY INDIGENOUS CULTURES, LIVING WELL IN PLACE, AND MEDICINE-MAKING, ARE CONSIDERED ONE AND THE SAME. PUT ANOTHER WAY, QUESTIONS SUCH AS "WHAT HERB DO I TAKE FOR...?" OR "WHAT HERB WILL CURE MY...?" REVEAL A CRIPPLING CULTURAL

BIAS ABOUT THE NATURE OF BOTH AILMENT & HEALING.

EVEN IN THE CONTEXT OF A DOMINANT CULTURE OF ISOLATED INDIVIDUALS & REDUCTIONIST MEDICINE, EMERGING TRENDS IN HERBALISM ARE EMBRACING THE DEEPER INSIGHTS OF HOLISM.

AS IT HAPPENS, HOME-BASED, LAY HEALTHCARE IS WHERE WE ARE SEEING THE INTEGRATIVE POTENTIAL OF HERBALISM MOST POTENTIZED AND ENLIVENED. THIS IS NO MISTAKE, GIVEN THAT HOME IS WHERE WE LIVE.

MUCH OF THE EXPERIENTIAL KNOW-HOW AT THIS VITAL CROSSROADS IS FAITHFUL TO THE COMMUNION OF THE WISE WOMAN'S & PERMACULTURE TRADITIONS. HERE ARE SOME THOUGHTS:

✱ "THE MAKING IS THE TAKING OF HERBAL MEDICINE." Herbal medicine might more rightly be considered a verb, than a noun, and one which encompasses a full range of experience from observing / stewarding a plant, all the way through to include harvesting, processing & use. On this point, all deep herbalists are clear, the active ingredient of herbal medicine that truly supports health & healing is the integrity of your relationship with your 'ground of being.' Relating with plants provides a tangible pathway into harmony.

✱ "THE GARDEN IS THE GURU." The garden itself gives us the clearest hints and clues as to which medicinals are most relevant to our lives. If a plant is close by & thriving, use it regularly. If it is hard to find or difficult to grow, use it sparingly. If it is not available year-round, don't use it all the time.

✱ "HONOR THE PERSONAL. TRUST YOURSELF." Never ignore any plants you are attracted to or that 'notice you.' How you and the plants 'plug into' one another's lives will be a story entirely unique & precious to you and your garden's ecologies. No matter what your level of experience in the garden, it has validity and will inform your life healthfully.

✱ "BE MODEST." You need only a few plant allies. Begin with one plant. Commit to small steps but be conscious and do it with as much awareness as you can muster.

✱ "BE PATIENT." Developing a relationship with a plant takes time. Don't be discouraged by the total initial mystery ("What on earth am I looking for here?") IF the dialog doesn't kick in, even for a long time, do not worry. Keep at it. It will.

✱ The clarity of purpose that comes from living with & choosing precisely when to harvest our own medicine affords us a form of quality management that no one else, somewhere else, can match - one reason why the herbal preps you make will be better, profoundly better, than those you bring home from the store.

✱ "SIMPLE LIVING: SIMPLE MEDICINE." High technology has never increased the nutritional power of good food, simply prepared. The same goes for medicine. Freed from the non-local dictates of the market, lay herbalists are moving consciously toward simpler processing of plants, in the process creating herbal pharmacies better tailored to their own lifestyles. Some excellent herbal texts explain clearly how your kitchen provides you with everything you need to make a wide array of herbal products.

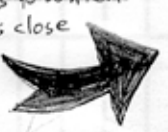
"I FAIL TO SEE HOW WE HAVE IMPROVED MUCH ON UNFILTERED HERBAL TEA... AS A POTENT TONIC & PLANT BEVERAGE." - SAMES GREEN

KEY MEDICINALS SAYING A BIG, FRIENDLY HELLO!

DANDELION (<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>)	The defining personality at the heart of local materia medica in temperate zones, the world over. "There is probably no existing condition which wouldn't benefit from regularly consuming dandelions." - S. Wardell. Perennial food plant, tolerates all soils, and full sun to shade. Safe and available all year-round.
YELLOW DOCK (<i>Rumex crispus</i>)	A well-known herbalist calls this plant large & ugly, hence to be kept away from the garden; then recommends it more commonly than any other herb. A dichotomous perhaps. With broad-leaf dock, all parts of the plant are edible, though the roots are favored. Tall flower stalks seed prolifically, & root segments generate entire plants.
PLANTAIN (<i>Plantago</i> spp.)	Both varieties of plantain, lance-leaf plantain, <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> , & broad leaf plantain, <i>P. major</i> , have v. similar medicinal qualities. A familiar plant, especially in lawns and paths (Native Americans called it 'white man's foot' because it appeared to fellow settlers) it is available year-round and is a primary first-aid as well as tonic herb.
BLACKBERRY (<i>Rubus armeniacus</i>)	Reference here is to the inaptly named "Himalayan blackberry." A key food plant (young shoots peeled, as well as berries) trends in bio-regional herbalism are beginning to reflect the commonality of this plant - we are seeing it used as a substitute for red raspberries. No literature reflects it but there are actually 2 almost identical varieties growing here. One of them produces bigger fruit earlier & is not susceptible to rust.
CHICKWEED (<i>Stellaria media</i>)	Beginning to show its head in early fall, chickweed becomes prolific enough to eat by late October. One of Nature's key winter cover crops, chickweed will cover garden beds with riotous abundance. An annual that self-sows very readily, it is easily transplanted and naturalizes quickly. Very cold hardy 'despite' its softness. Read Susan Weed's 'Healing Wise' for details.
CLEAVERS (<i>Galium aparine</i>)	Sometimes referred to as 'goose grass' this is another plant that works as both a key first-aid and tonic herb. An annual, growing 2-5 feet in height (depending on what it can climb) cleavers likes the edges of garden deep grass, the sun splashed shade of trees. Dig side roots & plant in new stands, or seed v. early in Spring. Dries in summer, then used as mattress filler.
RED CLOVER (<i>Trifolium pratense</i>)	This perennial nitrogen-fixer has been highly regarded medicine in cultures around the globe, since ancient times. If harvested & dried well, the flowers keep their color and add great beauty to any herbal shelf or tea. Begins flowering in the Spring & continues through mid-summer. The plant sprawls and will get 3 feet high. Easily grown from seed collected in late summer.
RED DEADNETTLE (<i>Lamium purpureum</i>)	An emerging medicinal on the global stage (the old herbals talk about it) this plant is used to reduce bleeding both internally & externally, with an affinity for the reproductive system (painful periods, for example). Along with Chickweed, it is a key winter cover crop, growing in thick masses which are easy to weed when it is time to Spring plant. It is an annual.
WILD LETTUCE (<i>Lactuca</i> spp.)	A very common garden plant, highly nutritious, yet remarkably little discussed. Medicinally, it is touted as a nervous sedative, but the effect seems so mild as to be barely noticeable. Its great value is as a food. With an erect, robust habit, the two main local varieties have large (oblong to lobed) leaves & like to be harvested. Don't let the soft spikes on the underside of the leaf-rib put you off.
SHEPHERD'S PURSE (<i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i>)	A powerful blood coagulant & vasoconstrictor, watching shepherd's purse grow is metamorphosis in action - the young plant looks nothing like its final form. The distinguishing features are the heart-shaped seed pods - hence the plant's name. A Spring-Summer plant, it grows 1-1 1/2 feet high. It has a peppery bite going great in salads. Above-ground portions are used.
PIGWEEED & LAMB'S QUARTER	Pigweed (<i>Amaranthus retroflexus</i>) & Lamb's Quarter (<i>Chenopodium album</i>) are two of the most nutritious foods available to us. Prolific, fast-growing & highly palatable annuals, both appear in late Spring but come on very strong in mid-summer. Confusingly, both plants are referred to as pigweed - both are key summer wild edibles that love garden homes.
MORE...	CHICORY (<i>Chicorium intybus</i>) Medicinally & nutritionally similar to dandelion. Perennial. No poisonous lookalikes. MALLOW (<i>Malva neglecta</i> / <i>M. sylvestris</i>) The mallows are much under-utilized medicinally. BITTER CRESS (<i>Cardamine oligosperma</i>) A small plant, but usually grows in a 'mat', hence salad adequate. PINEAPPLE WEED (<i>Maticaria discoides</i>) Along with English daisy, children love these medicinals. CRANEBILL / STORKSBILL (<i>Geranium</i> spp.) Key medicinals, but diff. for non-bonahists to tell a part. ENGLISH DAISY, QUACKGRASS (yes!), TEASEL

KEY MEDICINALS THAT LOVE AN INVITATION TO STAY!

COMFREY (<i>Symphytum uplandica</i>)	Will be where planted forever, but unless tilled, won't drift.
NETTLES (<i>Urtica dioica</i>)	Can be fussy to get established in first year, slow from seed, transient, easier
BURDOCK (<i>Arctium lappa</i>)	Fussy the first year, but seeds prolifically. This community likes space!
OATSTRAW (<i>Avena sativa</i>)	A ready self-sower. Food-bin oats don't cut it. Get reputable seed.
CALENDULA (<i>Calendula officinalis</i>)	Reseeds readily & flowers throughout the winter!
MULLEIN (<i>Verbascum thapsus</i>)	Sticky, but loves neglect. Biennial & this community likes to walk!
YARROW (<i>Achillea millefolium</i>)	From root divisions or Fall/Spring sowing. Not picky re soil type.
MILK THISTLE (<i>Silybum marianum</i>)	Grows fast & big from seed, first year. Likes space. Readily self-seeds.
CALIFORNIA POPPY (<i>Escholtzia californica</i>)	Grows quick, self-seeds readily. Super drought-tolerant.
ST. JOHN'S WORT (<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>)	Can be difficult to establish at first. Slow from seed.
LEMON BALM (<i>Melissa officinalis</i>)	Not fussy, from root division or seed in Fall/Spring. Robust.
CHAMOMILES (German, annual, <i>Maticaria recutita</i>)	Needs large area to provide 'adequate' harvest.
ELECAMPANE (<i>Inula helenium</i>)	V. easily established. In good tilth, it gets huge in 2-3 years.
VALERIAN (<i>Valeriana officinalis</i>)	Easily established & self-sows very readily.
BORAGE (<i>Borago officinalis</i>)	From seed or transplant grows well & self-sows prolifically.
FEVERFEW, VIOLETS, PURSLANE, PENNYROYALS, HORSE TAIL, SELF-HEAL, MARSH MALLOW, MOTHERWORT, O. POPPY, FENNEL, MINTS, MUGWORT, CATNIP, ANGELICA, THE AROMATICS.	



Corrections, etc. to:
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