

Numen: the Nature of Plants A Resource Guide

There is a tremendous amount of information available on the Internet and in books exploring different issues raised in the film. Our goal in creating this resource guide is to make it easy for viewers to act while the film is still fresh in your mind - not to re-create the wheel! We hope these handouts and questions will get you started and inspire you to seek out the herbalists and teachers in your own communities.

The most important take home message from *Numen* is, as Bill Mitchell and Rosemary Gladstar and so many others in the film say, to step outside, spend time in your garden, in the woods, in the meadow outside of town. Be grateful and open your heart to the mystery that is around us all, each moment.

This resource guide has been compiled with the help of two amazing community herbalists, health educators and medicine makers, Dana Woodruff of Dandelioness Herbals and Sandry Lory of Mandala Botanicals, both of whom generously shared the educational resources they have put together for their students. With deep gratitude for the good work they are doing for the plants and for us all.

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Growing and Making your own Medicine

by Dana Woodruff

In this fast paced culture of quick fixes, herbal remedies are being marketed in highly concentrated, standardized pills and liquids, as replacements for pharmaceuticals. Making your own herbal remedies from the whole plant is simple and for the same price as a store-bought preparation, you could make enough for you and many more. By preparing herbal remedies for yourself and your circle of friends and family, you are continuing a long history of using herbs for food and medicine. You are taking your health and healing into your own hands and encouraging self- and community-sufficiency, which is incredibly empowering. Also, when you make remedies by hand, you are infusing these remedies with your love and intention, which will make good, strong medicine.

Gardening Resources

by Sandra Lory, Herbalist and Food Educator, Barre VT
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- **Seed and Plant Nursery Catalogs are the best 'books on gardening'!** Request catalogs from companies that specialize in local and hardy plants. High mowing, Horizon herbs, Fedco, St. Lawrence Nursery, Johnny's, Seeds of Change. Local Heirloom seeds are special because they have been handed down for generations and are adapted to the local growing season and climate. There is an abundance of germinating, planting, growing, harvesting, storage and seed saving tips to be found in seed and plant nursery catalogs.
- **Volunteer at an organic farm, herbalist's garden or friend's garden** to accelerate your learning. Schedule garden field trips locally to view plots of land similar to yours, and what is appropriate for the size, slope, moisture, exposure and soil type. Bring a notebook or camera to record your inspirations.
- **Talk to vendors at farmer's markets** they have the experience with locally appropriate plants.
- **Participate in a hands-on garden program or workshops** in your area.
- **Get dirty and start growing** your garden – don't worry about making mistakes! Country mouse and City mouse, seeds want to grow and most are quite resilient. You can read about gardening for years but will not feel the rhythms in your body and understand the process for yourself until you just do it!

The best mentor you'll find is a single seed: Pick one plant, (be it tomatoes, basil, calendula, cucumber, etc) and follow it from seed to seed one whole year. Plant it, watch it grow, harvest it and save it's seeds for next year. Don't be discouraged if you have to re-plant, you find you've picked a plant that doesn't form a seed at the end of the year, it dies early, etc. – that is the process of life and death that *is* nature, the best teacher

Harvesting Your Medicine

by Dana L Woodruff~ Community herbalist, Dandelioness Herbals,
Montpelier, Vermont ©2010

Once you've properly identified a plant that you'd like to harvest, check out the land that you're on. Is there a busy road nearby? Are you close to the town dump, fields sprayed with pesticides, or another source of toxins? Do the plants look healthy and vital? Are there lots of pollinators buzzing around the plants? If the land and plants feel good, you can begin gathering. There are many traditional practices for harvesting plants. Some people find the largest plant - the grandmother plant - and ask its permission to harvest. If you receive a yes, you can proceed, harvesting the surrounding plants while leaving the grandmother plant be. You can also sit with the plant, observe and listen, draw or photograph it, sing to it, or you can just get down to business (i.e. you're bleeding and need the yarrow pronto!). The important thing is to harvest with gratitude, appreciative that the plant is sharing its life force with us. You can show your appreciation in whatever way feels good to you. If you wish, you can leave an offering of a piece of your hair, water or spit, a song, or a pinch of an herb that is special to you.

Plants are affected by the moon and seasons, changing throughout the month, as well as throughout the year. Plants have different qualities according to the phase of the moon. Like the pulling of the ocean tides, the energy of the plant shifts, affected by the lunar cycle. The full moon is the optimum time to harvest aboveground parts (leaf, flower, stem, and bark) and the new moon is the time for harvesting the roots. In general, the aboveground parts of plants are best harvested in the spring and summer, before or during flowering. Roots are best harvested early in spring or late in the fall, when the plants' energy is down in its roots. The ideal time of day for harvesting is after the morning dew has evaporated, and before the full strength of the sun has potentially wilted the plant in late afternoon. The best harvesting weather is a clear, sunny day, since rain can wash away some of the very constituents you're hoping to gather. When harvesting, you want to be sure to take only what you need from each plant.

When gathering leaves, flowers, stems, and bark, you want to take the most vital parts of the plants. If a leaf is chewed up by insects, leave that one and find ones that look healthy. One way to harvest is to pinch off the new growth -the top leaves and flowers or buds - which stimulates the plant's growth. Another way is to harvest the entire stem, cutting it close to the ground or just the top few inches. Having a good knife helps you to harvest the parts that you want, and to not harm the plant by pulling or tearing. Roots are potent medicine and should be harvested with respect since the plant must be killed for its root to be gathered. When we harvest roots in the fall, the plant has time to flower and go to seed. This ensures more plants for the future. Some slower-growing roots can be gathered, and its new growth or buds can be replanted after you've harvested what you need.

When harvesting roots, you want to loosen the earth around the plant with a shovel or trowel, so that you can lift the whole root system out gently. Some plants with taproots are

difficult to harvest whole because they are so rooted that they usually break before letting go of their hold, such as Burdock. Once you've dug up the roots, remember to fill space back in with soil, leave-no-trace style.

Drying herbs

by Dana L Woodruff~ Community herbalist, Dandelioness Herbals,
Montpelier, Vermont ©2010

When you gather the whole aboveground part of the plant, including the stem, you can dry them in bunches. You want these bunches small enough for air to circulate so that the plant can dry thoroughly. You can tie the bunches with string or use rubber bands, which will adjust as the water evaporates and the stems get smaller. Your bunches can be hung in any area out of direct sun with good air circulation. If your indoor space is damp or doesn't have good ventilation, cars make great drying rooms. In my backseat I tie a string between the handholds to hang the bunches from. The bunches can be hung up on the line with paperclips that are bent to create two hooks. The rubber band or string that holds the bunches can also be looped around the line. If the weather's not rainy, leave your windows down a bit for air circulation, and either park in the shade or drape cloth up to protect the plants from direct sunlight. Leaves, flowers, stems, and bark can also be dried by laying them in baskets or on screens (nylon, not metal). Depending on the weather and the herb's moisture content, your herbs may be completely dry in just a couple days, while others may take several days.

For drying roots, you first want to wash the soil off of them. When washing, remember not to use water that's too hot. As an herbalist I once apprenticed with told me, "We're washing roots, not making tea!" Some folks choose to dry roots whole, but I like to slice roots with knife while they are fresh and easier to cut. You can dry your whole roots or root slices in baskets, on screens, or in the oven, as described above.

Storage: Dried herbs should be stored in airtight containers, preferably glass jars. To help the dried herbs maintain their vitality, store them in a dry area away from direct sunlight and extreme temperatures. Be sure to label your jars and bags! Really! Just do it! I know every harvest is so special that we'll never forget it, but you'll be so happy when you don't have to make a 'what is *this*?!' pile of herbs. Many herb books will tell you to use your dried herbs within 6 months or a year, and your dried roots within 3 years. However, I know an herbalist who comes from a long line of medicine makers who said she has herbs and roots that are many years old and still good medicine. Use your judgment and your senses (sight, smell, taste) to decide whether an herb or root still possesses its vital essence.

Medicine-making: How to make a Medicinal Tea?

by Dana L Woodruff~ Community herbalist, Dandelioness Herbals, Montpelier, Vermont ©2010

Infusions or Tisanes extract medicinal properties from the leaf, flower, certain seeds, and a few roots that are high in volatile oils (such as valerian). Fresh herbs can be chopped, torn, or bruised. Dried herbs can be broken up or rubbed between your palms. This helps to break down the plants' cell walls to release more of their medicinal properties, including the oils that give herbs their scent and taste. Place the herb(s) into a vessel such as a cup, teapot, or mason jar, and then fill with hot water. Cover the container to maintain the tea's medicinal qualities that may otherwise escape with the steam.

Decoctions extract medicinal properties from the roots, bark, medicinal mushrooms, and hardy seeds. We have to work a bit harder to get to the medicines of these plant parts, by boiling and chopping/grating/grinding, too, if possible. Chop or grate fresh parts (if whole, break up or grind dried parts) into a glass, enamel, or stainless steel pot, and cover with cool water. Bring the water to a boil, and then reduce the flame and simmer for 20-45 minutes, covered. If possible, let the herb soak for a few hours or overnight, before decocting the herb in order to extract the most properties possible.

Solar infusions draw out the medicinal/energetic properties of herbs with the sun. Pour fresh water over your herbs and set out in the sun for a few hours, with or without a lid.

Lunar infusions draw out the medicinal/energetic properties of herbs with the moon. Place herbs into a glass bowl or jar of fresh water and set out in the moonlight, uncovered.

Containers When making an infusion or decoction, choose containers (mugs, kettles, teapots, French presses) made of glass, stainless steel, or enamel. Other materials (aluminum, plastic) may react with the herbs or leach harmful chemicals into your brew.

Steeping time and temperature Herbal infusions can be steeped for any length of time, from just a few minutes to all night long. Some herbs, such as chamomile, become bitter if left to steep more than a few minutes. Other herbs such as nettles and oats become more mineral-rich (and better-tasting, I believe), the longer they steep. I prefer to steep my nutritive herbs such as oats and nettles overnight in room-temperature or hot water. It's a nice bedtime ritual to prepare the next day's blend and let it infuse as you sleep. When you wake, it's ready for you to just warm and drink.

Intention At any point in your tea-making process you can take time to breathe, unwind, and focus on the changes you'd like to welcome into your life. As the photos in [The Hidden Messages in Water](#) show, water physically responds to energy. The waters that we take into our bodies, swim and bathe in, and contain in our bodies can carry negative messages that we've received and replay inside ourselves, or we can infuse our teas, baths, and self with new messages of gratitude, love, and growth.

Dosage *Since the water has been evaporated out of dried herbs, their medicinal properties are more concentrated than fresh herbs and less is needed. These measurements are only a guide. There are herbs that you may want to use by the handful or pinch. If in doubt, just look them up in a good herb book!*

Dried herbs : 1 tablespoon per cup or 4-6 tablespoons ($\frac{1}{4}$ +cup) per quart

Fresh herbs : 2 tablespoons per cup or 8-12 tablespoons ($\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ cup) per quart

Chronic conditions (i.e. muscle tension): 3-4 cups daily, one cup at a time, for several weeks

Acute conditions (i.e. headache, fever): $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup throughout the day, up to 3-4 cups

The longer you infuse or decoct the herbs, the stronger your tea will be. You can use the same herbs more than once, especially roots and barks. Each brewing will be less potent than the last, so you can add a bit of fresh herbs with the old, if you'd like.

How to make a tincture?

by Dana L Woodruff~ Community herbalist, Dandelioness Herbals,
Montpelier, Vermont ©2010

Tinctures are concentrated liquid extracts of medicinal herbs. The most common liquid (or menstrum) used to extract the medicinal properties of herbs is alcohol, but you can also use vinegar and glycerine, in combination or on their own. You can tincture plants when they are in full bloom or when the roots are ready, capturing their medicine when they are fresh and most vital, to use throughout the rest of the year. Tinctures are easy to use, especially if you're traveling, working, or sick in bed and can't make your own teas. Once in tinctured form, they are all prepared and ready to use. You don't need to heat water or carry around any fresh or dried herbs. The menstrum (alcohol, vinegar, or glycerine) not only draws out the medicinal properties, it also preserves them.

You can place tinctures directly in your mouth, or dilute them in water, tea, or juice. Some people like to add their alcohol-based tinctures to a cup of very hot water, so that some of the alcohol is evaporated off.

There are many methods for making tinctures. You can do it by ratios and percents, using scales, measuring cups, and blenders. While it's fun to experiment with different methods, the way I was taught and my favorite way is to harvest the herbs I've grown in my garden or found in fields and forests and tincture them fresh, letting them macerate (soak) for at least one moon cycle of 28 days.

Tincturing Fresh Herbs

- Find the herb in a place that feels good, away from busy roads and pesticide-sprayed lawns. Harvest only what you need and give thanks to the plants, however you wish.
- Chop/tear the herbs finely and fill a clean jar, leaving a couple inches from the top. Don't pack the herbs down - you want to leave space for the herb and menstrum to move around. You can also leave some of the leaves, flowers, or roots whole if you like.
- If you are using grain alcohol and/or glycerine and you'd like to add a percentage of water, combine your fluids in a jar, bowl, or measuring cup, and shake or stir to blend them together.
- Pour your menstrum over the herbs, until there is at least 1" of liquid over your herbs. Seal with a tight fitting lid.
- Let your tincture sit. Some say you only need 10 days-2 weeks to fully draw the medicine into the menstrum, while others leave it for one month, or until they need it, as long as a few years (for alcohol-based ones). I like to give it time, at least one full month. During this time you can shake it daily. The more connected you feel throughout the process (growing, harvesting, making medicine, taking the medicine), the more powerful the medicine will be.
- When you're ready, strain the herbs and squeeze it to get out the most medicine you can. You can strain your herb using fine-mesh metal strainer or a funnel lined with a piece of cheesecloth or muslin. Compost the herb and pour your tincture into bottles. Amber colored glass will protect your tincture from sunlight, which may

cause it to lose its potency, and dropper-tops make it easy to get the right dosage. You can reuse amber glass vitamin bottles or tincture bottles. Store your tincture in a cool, dark place like a cabinet, and be sure to label it well, with the name of the herb, date, and any other info you'd like to include ~ phase of the moon, where you harvested it from, what you saw that day.

Tincturing Dry Herbs

- Check the color, scent, & taste of your herb to be sure that it has maintained its vital energy.
- Fill your jar one-third to one-half of the way with dry herb. Since dried herbs have had their moisture removed, the medicine is less dilute and more potent.
- Add enough menstrum so that there is 2-3" of space to the top of the jar. This allows the herb room to expand as it rehydrates, and space if you need to add more menstrum to keep the herb covered.
- Follow #4 and 5 from above.

Some folks choose to make tinctures individually, and then create formulas as needed. Others make blends that are tinctured together from the beginning. There's definitely some magic/synergy that happens when herbs join and blend together. However, tincturing herbs separately is a good way to start, to get to know the herbs on their own.

Michael Moore, may he Rest in Peace, was all about medicine for the people. You can download his material medica for free off his website at www.snsbm.com. Here you'll find out which herbs to tincture fresh or dried and what percent alcohol to use. If there's an herb that's new to you, that you'd like to make medicine from, it's a good practice to research it in at least 3 herb books written by trusted herbalists (see booklist at end).

Tincture dosage depends on the herb, person, and situation. In general, 1/4-1/2 teaspoon (15-30 drops, 1/2-1 dropperfull) of tincture is used 3 times daily for chronic situations. For acute ones, you want to take smaller and/or more frequent doses, such as 1/4 tsp every hour. For children, when an adult would use 1 teaspoon:

6-12 months	4 drops
9-12 months	5 drops
12-18 months	7 drops
18-24 months	8 drops
2-3 years	10 drops
3-4 years	12 drops
4-6 years	15 drops
6-9 years	24 drops
9-12 years	30 drops

Menstrums

Alcohol extracts many of the plant's constituents and is rapidly absorbed into the bloodstream. Many people use vodka, brandy, or gin. Divide the proof # in half to determine the alcohol content; 100 proof alcohol is 50% alcohol (and 50% water), 80 proof is 40% alcohol (and 60% water). The alcohol extracts certain components, the water others.

To preserve your tincture you need at least 25% alcohol by volume, and it will last for years. Some folks prefer using Everclear or organic grain alcohol, which are both 190 proof (95% alcohol, 5% water) then adding distilled water or fresh well water to get the desired ratio. Feel free to keep it simple by using what you can get at the liquor store. I began by using 100 proof vodka with fresh plants. Then you can experiment from there. Just remember that you need at least 25% alcohol to preserve a tincture. If you're tincturing an herb that's resinous (i.e. myrrh) or more water-soluble (i.e. marshmallow root), check a solvent chart to find the optimum alcohol to water ratio.

Glycerine is sweet and soothing to our mucous membranes (such as the throat and gut). Like alcohol, it is a natural preservative, but it does not extract as many of the herb's components. However, if you want a sweet tasting remedy, especially for little ones, or a tincture for folks who don't want any alcohol, you can explore glycerine as a menstrum. Glycerites (glycerine-based tinctures) don't last as long as alcohol-based ones, so keep an eye on them. You can refrigerate them if you wish, to extend their shelf life. Be sure to use 100% pure vegetable glycerine, available at herb shops, coops, natural food stores, and through mail-order companies such as Mountain Rose. If you choose to combine your glycerine with water, just be sure that the majority of your blend is glycerine in order for it to keep. Most people keep their glycerine ratio around 80% (adding 20% water), or even 100% for particularly juicy fresh plants.

Vinegar, like alcohol and glycerine, is a natural preservative and extracts certain properties. While it doesn't draw out medicine from plants as well as alcohol, it is very good for digestion and it can be easily incorporated into your daily routine as a food – in soups, salads, stirfries, on greens, or just on its own. I like to make vinegars infused with *tonic* herbs - herbs that are nourishing and safe to take every day. If possible, try to use organic/locally grown apple cider vinegar. The distilled white vinegar is best reserved for cleaning.

How to make an herb infused oil?

by Dana L Woodruff~ Community herbalist, Dandelioness Herbals,
Montpelier, Vermont ©2010

The process of making your own herb infused oil is similar to making tea, but instead of extracting the herb's medicine into water, you're using oil. Whether you're making a medicinal oil to heal wounds, a massage oil to soothe sore muscles, or an oil to anoint yourself with after bathing, the process is all the same.

Making herb infused oils from fresh plants:

- Find the herb in a place that feels good, away from busy roads and pesticide-sprayed lawns. Harvest only what you need and give thanks to the plants, however you wish. You can let the herbs wilt in a basket for a few hours or overnight first, so that some of its moisture can evaporate and it will be less likely to grow bacteria in your oil.
- Place the fresh herbs in a dry, clean glass jar.
- Cover your herbs with oil and use a clean knife or chopstick to release all the little air bubbles and to completely surround the herb with the oil.
- Screw on the lid and place the jar in a warm space under 100° F and let infuse for an entire moon cycle (if not possible, then for at least 2 weeks). In the summer, you can keep your oil in a sunny windowsill or out in the sunshine. In the winter, you can keep your oil near the stove or heating vents. The warmth and time draws certain properties from the herb, infusing your oil with medicine. You may want to put a rag underneath the jar, as some of the oil may seep out and make a mess.
- Keep an eye on the oil. If at any point moisture appears on the exposed edges of the jar, wipe it out with a piece of cloth or paper towel. Mold may begin to grow if there is too much moisture, either from the fresh plant or if your container was not fully dry. Even if mold appears, don't throw it out! Just spoon off the mold and keep an eye on the oil.
- Strain the oil through a metal strainer or cloth (muslin works great).
- Compost the herb and bottle the oil in a widemouth jar. Water and gunk may settle on the bottom of the jar after a day or two. If this happens, siphon or pour the good oil on the top into another dry, clean jar. You may have to do this a couple of times, but it's important. If you leave the gunk, the oil will go bad.
- Label your oil, including the name of the herb, the date, and any other details you wish to add (moon phase, where you harvested the herb, your purpose/intention for the oil), and store in a cool, dark place. It should keep for many months, up to a year. You can add vitamin E or essential oils such as lavender or rosemary to lengthen the oil's shelf life – this is a good idea if you're giving oil as a gift and the person may not use it right away.

Making herb infused oils from dry plants:

- Choose the dry herb you'd like to use. You can use herbs that you dried yourself, or buy them at a co-op, natural food store, or by mail order. When buying herbs, crush the herb between your fingers and smell it, and notice the color and appearance. Every herb is different, but in general, it should maintain its scent and have some of its color left. If you are unsure whether it still possesses its vital energy, move on and find another herb that clearly does.
- Place the dried herbs in a dry, clean glass jar. As dried herbs are more concentrated, you only need to use about ½ the amount that you'd use fresh. Fill the jar halfway.
- Follow the instructions above. As long as you make sure your jar is dry, you should have no trouble with mold growing.

The double boiler method:

- If you don't have the time to let the oil draw out the herb's medicine slowly, you can use this method:
- Place the herbs and oil together in a double boiler. If you don't have a double boiler, you can rig one up by resting a metal bowl over a pot of water.
- Slowly warm the herbs at the lowest temperature for at least 30-60 minutes. Check often to make sure that the oil is not too hot. You don't want to cook your herbs in the oil, just warm them. The longer you're able to warm the oil at a low temperature, the stronger medicine your oil will be.
- Let the oil cool and then strain it through a cloth and label, as described above.

Choosing your oil:

For medicinal oils, the most commonly used oil is Olive oil. Extra virgin cold pressed is best. Olive oil lasts longer and is less expensive than most other oils. Grapeseed oil is also commonly used and is more lightweight than olive oil. Sesame oil is commonly used in Ayurvedic medicine, for its warming and medicinal properties, both on the hair and skin. Jojoba oil is the closest to our body's own natural oil. Almond oil is good for dry, mature, and sensitive skin.

Some possibilities for infused oils:

- **Wound-Healing Oil** with herbs such as Calendula blossoms, Yarrow leaf and flower, St. Johnswort blossom, and Plantain leaf.
- **Sore Muscle Soothing Oil** with St. Johnswort and Ginger oils, and a touch of Cayenne to increase circulation.
- **Breast Massage Oil** with Calendula, Dandelion blossom, Evergreen needles, Plantain leaf, and Red clover blossom.
- **Energetic Protection Anointing Oil** with Yarrow leaf and flower or St. Johnswort blossom.
- **Dreamtime Oil** with Mugwort, Lavender, and Chamomile.

Herbal Salves and Balms

by Dana L Woodruff~ Community herbalist, Dandelioness Herbals,
Montpelier, Vermont ©2010

A salve is a blend of oil, herbs, and wax, used externally to soothe and protect the skin. Depending on the herbs you choose, you can make a heal-all salve for cuts, dry skin, burns, stings, and scrapes, or you can make ones for specific ailments such as bites, diaper rash, and fungus. There are many methods for making herbal salves. Here is one way:

Warm 1 cup of herb-infused oil in a double boiler or a pan over very low heat. Add 4 tablespoons of grated or chopped beeswax, stir, and let the wax slowly melt into the oil. Dip a spoon into the mixture and blow on it until it's solid or put in the freezer for a few minutes to cool quicker. If the salve is too hard, add more oil. If it's too soft, add more beeswax. Once you get it to the consistency you're seeking, remove from heat and pour it into dry, clean containers right away. If you wait too long, the salve will begin to harden in the pot.

Either just before or just after you pour the salve into containers, you can mix in extra ingredients such as vitamin E oil or essential oils. Each essential oil (e.o.) is different, and each person is more or less sensitive to them than the next, but in general you can add 1-2 drops of e.o. per lip balm tube and 2 or 3 drops e.o. per ounce. Let the salves harden slowly, allowing them cool completely before moving them. Be sure to have plenty of extra jars because when the oil and wax warm and blend all together a magic alchemical reaction always seems to happen, somehow making more salve appear.

Most salves keep for about a year. They last longer if kept in a cool, dark place, rather than letting it melt and remelt in a hot car, for example. You can use an array of herbs, oils, waxes, and other ingredients. Lip balms are made as above, but usually with more beeswax, for a harder consistency.

Some possibilities for salves and balms:

- **Heal-All Salve** with Calendula blossoms, Plantain leaf, and St. Johnswort flowers.
- **Anti-Fungal Salve** with Calendula blossoms and Black walnut hull oils, and Tea tree essential oil.
- **Decongestant Salve** with essential oils of Peppermint, Eucalyptus, Thyme, Rosemary, and/or Pine.
- **Mint Chocolate Lip Balm** with cocoa butter & essential oil of peppermint.
- **Lip Gloss** with oil infused with alkanet root, which gives a red color.

Immune Support: Preparing for Winter Health with Food and Herbs

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Immunity is the boundary of protection and integrity that interfaces your body and the larger world. Your immune system is your Ozone. Winter, the dark side of the year, is the time of the year for building and storing energy like a seed in the ground does in preparation for springtime's melting snow and sprouting green. Hibernation regenerates your strength and endurance.

If you feel a cold or flu coming on:

- Simplify your diet to veggies, grains, soups, bone/seaweed/and/or miso broths, tea, and fresh water. Take an immune tincture every 1-2 hours; dot diluted tea tree or other immune essential oil on your body and around your home/office. Sleep a lot.
- Keep warm – cover up your feet, neck, ears and lower back.
- Flu virus is transmitted in the nose and mouth, so keep them clean with light sea salt water rinses or a drop of tea tree oil in water as a rinse.
- Do an electricity or media fast to let your nervous system recuperate, and give your adrenal glands a rest: Turn off the radio, TV, computer, cell phone, newspapers, magazines, junk mail and shopping. This practice helps you slow down, hear your internal voice and de-stress.
- AVOID sweets and milk products, (raw milk ok) for a few days. Sugar feeds bacteria and increases inflammation, pasteurized cold milk increases mucus and congestion.

HEALING FOODS & HERBS FOR IMMUNE HEALTH~ Increase circulation and elimination with hot liquids while feeding your body healthful foods.

- Homemade veggie and miso broth with kombu or wakame seaweed, and long simmered bone broths are super healing to the digestive, immune and nervous systems. Miso tea/broth – alkalizes, grounds the body and reawakens intestinal flora. Stir a teaspoon of miso paste into hot but not boiling water (to preserve live enzymes and beneficial bacteria), and drink.
- Lacto-fermented veggies like sauerkraut and kim chi are anti-viral and probiotic, a traditional way to enjoy fresh veggies in winter.
- Tasty Immune Strength Miso Spread/instant soup paste: 1-2 T minced raw garlic and ginger, ½ c raw honey, mix. Add a pinch of cayenne and turmeric powder. Mix ¼ c miso paste, and ½ cup tahini. Use as a spread on celery or carrot sticks, toast or crackers.
- Top a fresh lemon wedge with local raw honey, and suck out the juice. Repeat.
- Garlic Honey- chop raw garlic into a spoonful of raw honey. They must both be raw for their medicinal, natural anti-biotic qualities.
- Garlic-honey-vinegar – chop 5-10 cloves garlic into 1 cup apple cider vinegar. Steep over night and add honey to taste in the morning. Drink by the heaping spoonful throughout the day. Cures lung and throat infections, soothes a cough.

- Hot Ginger Honey Lemonade – Boil 2” minced ginger in 1 quart of water for 10 minutes or longer. Take off heat, add fresh squeezed lemons juice and raw honey, and sprinkle a few grains of cayenne in. Drink up and sweat it out!
- Sage gargle for strep throat - Boil 1 cup water, add 1 tsp culinary sage leaf and 1/2 tsp sea salt. Steep 5 minutes, gargle and spit. Can curb strep in a few hours.
- Horseradish condiment– mince fresh horseradish and mix with equal parts raw honey and raw apple cider vinegar. Store in fridge. Excellent lung strengthening condiment, and clears out the sinuses.
- Curried onions and greens are one of my favorite cold season foods: sauté a sliced onion with a Tbl olive oil, plus 1T each minced garlic and ginger and pinch of sea salt. Add 2 sliced shitake mushroom caps. Cover. Add a ¼ tsp turmeric, ½ tsp coriander and 1 tsp cumin powder (or 1 T curry powder), stir. Finely chop one washed bunch dark leafy greens, like collards or kale. Add to pan, add a splash of water to sizzle, and cover immediately. In 5 minutes you have a delicious side dish that’s great alone or with eggs, beans, toast, etc. Add cayenne to heat it up even more.
- Make Deep Immune Broth for use throughout the winter. This is a deeply restorative soup and excellent preventative medicine. Place several pieces of chicken (or turkey, beef, fish) in a pot with a few pieces of kombu, wakame or dulse seaweed. Add a small handful of each or any of the following herbs: codonopsis root, reishi mushroom, shitake mushroom, burdock root, astragalus root, turkey tail mushroom. You may also add garlic and ginger. Add ¼ cup raw apple cider vinegar, and cover pot contents with water. Bring to boil, then simmer for several hours, at least 2, and up to 24. Turn off heat, strain into another pot and cool. Remove meat from bones and add back to broth. You may add a teaspoon of miso paste, into each bowl upon serving. Freeze it for ready use throughout the season.
- Drink water, between 4 and 8 cups/day.
- Eat with the season. The winter storage crops of the Northeast are primarily root vegetables, (onions, garlic, carrots, beets, parsnips, turnips, potatoes, rutabega, Jerusalem artichokes, etc) dried beans and grains. Carnivores - long cooked meat stews and casseroles. Dark leafy greens like kale and collards can grow in early snowfall, freeze well, and are important vitamin and energy sources. Apples, plums and berries are our local fruits. Hot herbal teas, hot soups, roasted, cooked and baked foods instead of raw foods, sweet drinks/sodas, ice water, iced coffee, cold dairy products, cold cereal, salads, cold sweet desserts (like ice cream), fruit juice. These things are better suited for summertime.
- Make your own Echinacea tincture by filling a quart jar ¾ full with fresh or ½ full with dried herb. Fill the jar to the top with 80 or 100 proof vodka, shake and let sit for 2-6 weeks. Shake daily and strain on the last day, squeezing out every last drop of medicine before composting the herb material left (called the marc). This is a very inexpensive way to have a winter supply of tincture. I prefer to make and strain tinctures on a full or new moon to potentize the medicine. To make an alcohol-free herbal extract, use food grade vegetable glycerine (from a health food store), mixed 50% with distilled water, instead of alcohol.
- Make yummy anti-viral Elderberry Syrup. Harvest elderberries in early September, or buy dried berries. Soak in 3x their volume of water. Add ginger, rose hips, or other herbs such as elecampane roots, codonopsis roots, reishi or hawthorne berries. Cook, reducing the liquid mixture to ½ or 1/3. It takes a few hours. Strain, and

compost the pulp. As the juice cools, dissolve raw honey to taste into the mixture. Preserve the syrup with raw apple cider vinegar and tinctured Echinacea or Brandy, or pure vegetable glycerine. You need to match the volume of cooked syrup to the volume of 'preservatives' you use. Store in the refrigerator and use within 3-6 months. Delicious flu remedy!

- Cook with culinary herbs which are also highly medicinal: Parsley, coriander, cumin, fennel, dill, thyme, oregano, sage, rosemary, basil, mint, ginger, cardamom, garlic, cayenne, cinnamon.
- Awareness of your body's boundaries, listening to your inner voice, healthy self-esteem and a shield of protection are issues of immunity, this system is an energetic system as well as a physical one.
- Anti-bacterial and anti-viral room spray – use 9-21 drops of above mentioned essential oils in a sprayer bottle filled with distilled water. Shake and spray around home, office, etc. Avoid contact with eyes. Avoid near cats, their bodies cannot handle essential oil.
- Flower essences for the immune system: Echinacea, garlic, self-heal, nasturtium, morning glory, and yarrow. Flower essences work on the cellular, emotional, and spirit levels of the body. They are simple to make at home. See “the Complete Floral Healer” by Anne McIntyre for instructions.

References: Herbalists Nancy Phillips, Kate Gilday, Josephine Spilka, Atmo Abram, Amy Goodman, Annie Wattles, Guido Mase, Ms. Beatrice Waight, Rocio Alarcon, Hadar Sarit, Rosemary Gladstar. *The Holistic Herbal* by David Hoffman, *Full Moon Feast* by Jessica Prentice, *Healing with Whole Foods* by Paul Pitchford, *Nourishing Traditions* by Sally Fallon, *Wild Fermentation* by Sandor Katz, *The Complete Floral Healer* by Anne McIntyre.

Herbal First Aid Kit

by Sandra Lory Folk Herbalist and Food Educator, Barre VT
www.mandalabotanicalsVT.com ©2010

Miscellaneous:

- Hydrogen Peroxide to clean wounds
- Dr. Bronner's or other biodegradable soap
- Matches, needle and thread, safety pins, tweezers, band-aids, gauze and tape,
- Chopsticks, spoon, fork, bowl, a sharp knife (watch out for airport confiscation, though)
- Smudge bundle and/or Medicine/Prayer bundle, protective stone or amulet
- Hot Water Bottle – for swelling, tension, fear relief; for comfort and warmth

Herbs to include:

For Calming in an emergency:

- A flower essence remedy for calming in emergency situations, such as Rescue Remedy or Self-Heal flower essence, or Red Clover flower essence (for calm & centeredness in chaos)
- Spike Lavender Essential Oil (calming, aromatherapeutic, and can be applied directly to burns, inflammation, wounds and bites). Spike lavender is the strongest anti-bacterial lavender.

For immune boosting properties:

- Zinc lozenges – take at first sign of strep or sore throat, for up to 3 days only
- Echinacea tincture or other immunity enhancing/anti-viral tincture/anti-histamine (important for plane rides and during transport where the air is recycled – good preventative medicine) – refer to winter health hand out for a list of other appropriate immune herbs. Spilanthes (tincture or dried herb) is a great anti-viral, immune boosting, and anti-bacterial herb that can be exchanged with Echinacea. It is specific for the teeth and gums and can be squirted full strength (tincture) onto skin or teeth.
- Propolis (resin or tincture) or Organic Goldenseal Root (tincture or powder) or goldthread/coptis tincture– strong antibiotics for bad infections
- Sea salt – for gargles and soaking wounds, cold feet, etc.
- Garlic (fresh, dried or tinctured) optional
- Raw honey (optional, can be messy if not in a tightly sealed container) antibiotic and burn relief

For muscle, tissue and nerve injuries:

- Arnica Flower (homeopathic or oil or liniment) for muscle and tissue damage

- Saint John's Wort (Hypericum) Oil, tincture, liniment, or homeopathic – for nerve and blood vessel damage
- Traumeel (herbal homeopathic blend for injuries and emergency traumas) available in cream and tablets

For Pain Relief:

- Traumeel (see above) You can make your own homemade dilute tincture version with Saint Johnswort, Yarrow and Arnica.
- Crampbark or Valerian Root (dried or tinctured) – chew dry plant, drink tea or ingest tincture frequently, every hour if needed.
- Arnica homeopathic or dilute tincture
- Chamomile (dried or tincture) is antispasmodic, settles the tummy, pain relieving
- Wild lettuce leaf tincture, meadowsweet tincture, kava, valerian, or other anodyne

For Digestive Issues:

- A bitters blend such as burdock, yellow dock and dandelion root (tincture or dried), or a tummy blend like ginger, lemon/orange peel, chamomile, fennel seed, and catnip.
- Alternately to the above tincture, fennel seeds or ginger chews travel easily and are quick nausea treatments.
- Blackberry root/White Oak Bark or Meadowsweet Leaf tincture for diarrhea
- Sweet Annie, Wormwood or Epazote for intestinal parasites and worms, also Malaria prevention
- Slippery Elm Bark powder or Marshmallow root – mix with beverage or prepare as tea to soothe the GI tract and stomach lining if inflamed or raw
- Miso paste (to keep digestive flora healthy during travel. A cup of hot water needs only a teaspoon dissolved, is very grounding and alkalizing)
- Seaweed, milk thistle seed tincture or caps, charcoal tablets, homeopathic ipecac - poison antidotes
- Spirulina, dried comfrey, dried nettles, or a green drink powder – helps rejuvenate the body tissues, respiration, elimination, digestion, and raises your energy level by enriching the blood

For Topical first aid:

- Kloss' Liniment – the recipe of famous herbalist Jethro Kloss –

1 ounce Echinacea powder
 1 ounce organically grown Goldenseal powder
 1 ounce Myrrh powder
 ¼ ounce cayenne powder
 2 cups alcohol (vodka, brandy, gin, etc)

Combine the powdered herbs. If starting with dried herbs that are not powdered, use a coffee grinder or Vitamixer to grind them as fine as possible. Cover with alcohol, leaving 2" of space between the surface of the alcohol and the rim of the jar, and put a lid on it. Shake

daily for one month, and then strain the liquid, composting the herb. Bottle and label your liniment, recording the ingredients, date, and any other info you'd like to include. Use this liniment as a disinfectant, to ease rheumatism and sprains, and to heal wounds, bruises, and burns. If you'd like to make a local version of this recipe, simply omit the Myrrh, and use locally grown Echinacea, Goldenseal, and Cayenne infused in Sunshine Vodka or another locally made alcohol. By omitting Myrrh you can also use this blend as an immune stimulating tincture for internal use.

- Yarrow (dried or tincture) to stop bleeding, also to drive out a fever. Moisten leaves with saliva (chew em!) first if applying to open wound. MUST HAVE.
- Plantain (dried or tinctured) to pull out venom, or infection close to the skin surface. Tobacco is also a great drawing agent.
- A skin salve, all purpose, anti fungal or anti-bacterial (containing herbs such as: calendula, yarrow, plantain, saint johnswort, black walnut, comfrey, usnea, etc.)
- Lavender Oil (see above) can also use for foot soaks, face steams, and massage into areas with a carrier oil or salve
- Tea Tree Oil or Thieves Oil – Rosemary, Thyme, Lemon, Eucalyptus - potent anti-fungal and anti-parasitic.
- Sea salt – has a myriad of uses, for infected skin soaks, nasal/throat rinses, food preserving, etc.
- Raw local vinegar can be used as a skin cleanser, digestive purifier, and immune booster.

A MINI 1st AID KIT from the above:

- Hydrogen Peroxide
- Yarrow herb or tincture,
- Calming Flower Essence like Rescue Remedy
- Plantain or Tobacco,
- Spike Lavender, Tea Tree or Thieves essential oil,
- an Immune Tincture or Kloss Liniment Tincture
- Arnica dilute tincture or Homeopathic, and
- Wound salve.
- Fennel seeds or ginger chews.

Herbal Book List

by Dana L Woodruff~ Community herbalist, Dandelioness Herbs,
Montpelier, Vermont ©2010

- Herb Mentor by Learning Herbs is a fantastic on-line site for learning more about herbal medicine. Check it out! <http://www.herbmentor.com/>
- Rosemary Gladstar's Family Herbal: A Guide to Living Life with Energy, Health, & Vitality
- The (New) Holistic Herbal *David Hoffman*
- The Roots of Healing: A Woman's Book of Herbs (also published as A Woman's Book: The Healing Power of Natural Remedies) *Deb Soule*
- The Complete Floral Healer (also published as Flower Power: Flower Remedies for Healing Body & Soul Through Herbalism, Homeopathy, Aromatherapy, & Flower Essences) *Anne McIntyre*
- Making Plant Medicine *Richo Ceck*
- The Herbal Medicine Maker's Handbook: A Home Manual *James Green*
- Herbal Remedies from the Wild: Finding & Using Medicinal Herbs (or Earthmagic) *Corinne Martin*
- Herbs: Partners in Life: Healing, Gardening, & Cooking with Wild Plants (also published as Health, Happiness, & the Pursuit of Herbs) *Adele Dawson*
- Healing Wise *Susun Weed*
- The Book of Herbal Wisdom: Using Plants as Medicine *Matthew Wood*
- The Herbs of Life: Health & Healing Using Western & Chinese Techniques *Lesley Tierra*
- Addiction-Free Naturally: Liberating Yourself from Tobacco, Caffeine, Sugar, Alcohol, Prescription Drugs, Cocaine, & Narcotics *Brigitte Mars*
- Botanica Erotica: Arousing Body, Mind, & Spirit *Diana DeLuca*
- The Male Herbal: Health Care for Men & Boys *James Green*
- Growing 101 Herbs that Heal: Gardening Techniques, Recipes, and Remedies *Tammi Hartung*

Mail-Order Bulk Herbs and Supplies

Avena Botanicals

Organic herbal extracts, teas, and salves by Deb Soule based in Rockport, Maine.

Frontier Natural Products Co-op

Organic and natural products, Norway, Iowa.

Grian Herbs

Organic herbal extracts by Guido Mase based in Montpelier, Vermont.

Healing Spirits Farm <http://www.healingspiritsherbfarm.com/>

Organic herbal products and classes offered by Andrea and Matthias Reisen in Finger Lakes of Western New York.

Herb Pharm

Organic and ethically wildcrafted liquid extracts based in Williams, Oregon.

Mandala Botanicals

Organic herbal products and classes offered by Sandra Lory, Barre, VT.

Mountain Rose Herbs

Supplier of bulk organic herbs, spices, herbal products and teas.

New Chapter, Inc.

Organic and whole food herbal supplements, Brattleboro, VT.

Soothing Herbals

Organic herb growers and makers of pure organic skin care products. Goshen, Virginia.

Traditional Medicinals, Inc.

Supplier of a wide selection of teas and other herbal products, Sebastopol, California.

Zackwoods Farm

Vermont-based supplier of bulk organic herbs and herbal teas.

Ironbound Island Seaweed provides a wide variety of seaweeds hand-harvested off the coast of Maine, and is available at some local coops. 207-963-7016

Specialty Bottle offers a large selection of bottles, jars, and tins. There are no minimums - you can order by the each or by the hundred. 5200 4th Avenue S, Seattle, WA 98108. 206-340-0459

SKS Bottle and Burch Bottles are other bottles sources.

Seed Companies

- **Horizon Herbs** provides an amazing variety of medicinal herb seeds and plants. PO Box 69 Williams, OR 97544 541-846-6704 hhcustserv@HorizonHerbs.com
www.horizonherbs.com
- **Fedco Seeds** provides herb, flower, and vegetable seeds, specializing in cold-climate varieties, and is a consumer/worker cooperative. PO Box 520, Waterville ME 04903 207-873-7333 fedco@fedcoseeds.com www.fedcoseeds.com
- **High Mowing Seeds** provides vegetable, flower, and medicinal and culinary herb seed. 76 Quarry Rd. Wolcott, VT 05680 802-472-6174 www.highmowingseeds.com
- **Johnny's Selected Seeds** offers flower, vegetable, and culinary and medicinal herb seeds, and provides technical information to home gardeners and small commercial growers. 955 Benton Ave. Winslow, ME 04901 877-564-6697
www.johnnyseeds.com

What to look for in purchasing botanical remedies?

The process of making medicine, which is fairly straightforward with plants grown or harvested yourself, becomes vastly more complex once you move out of the garden and begin producing on a commercial scale. It can be a lot harder to find the values at the heart of traditional herbalism in the grocery store - and a lot more confusing as well. But they are there... Here are some basic questions to ask to navigate the maze of herbal products:

- **Organic/Ethically Wildcrafted?**
 - If cultivated, were they grown organically?
 - Were they ethical wildcrafting?
- **Quality control**
 - How do you know there is no adulteration?
 - How does a company ensure that there are no heavy metals/pesticide residues in the plant material (this can be through testing, knowing where to harvest plants that haven't been contaminated, cultivating one's own using organic methods, etc.)?
- **How were the constituents extracted?**
 - Even though the plants may be 'natural' - some extraction processes involve harsh chemicals and solvents and are not at all natural. It can be particularly difficult to find out information about this - and confusing to try to interpret what company's claim on their websites. Ask company what processes they use or ask herbalists and practitioners you respect to recommend brands.
- **Social and Ecological Sustainability**
 - Are those growing and harvesting the medicines receiving a fair wage?
 - Are the plants harvested in ways that enhance their long-term viability and health?
 - A wealth of resources is available on these issues on the web. Some places to start are:
 - International Standard for Sustainable Wild Collection of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (ISSC-MAP) (site: <http://www.floraweb.de/map-pro/>)
 - Plants and People International
 - For an introduction to safety and regulatory issues concerning botanical medicines: Center for Spirituality and Healing: (site: <http://www.csh.umn.edu/modules/botmed/intro/in01.html>)

Plant Spirit Medicine

There are lots of resources in books, on-line and in classes and at conferences about connecting with the spirit of the plants. Rather than simply re-post that information here, we want to include this description from our interview with Rosemary Gladstar, which didn't make it into the film. We asked Rosemary about the importance of intention in working with plants and in healing. Here is her response....

I think one of the most unique places about herbalism and modern herbal healers is that we still maintain that deep connection with the plants. We're not looking at just single components as being the magic bullets in our bodies. There's still a deep prayerful relationship, whether you go to the plants and consciously pray or you have awareness with them, or just the way you are with them when you're harvesting them or making your medicine or even giving the medicine. There's a deep connection with the spirit of the plants. It's not just that there is a chemical constituent that will cure your condition; it is the relationship that the plant has to us and how those plants have served as our healers for literally thousands of years.

For anyone who works with the plants, whether you're gardening, or just being with them, backpacking with them a lot, that experience of having a plant communicate with you in some way happens. It takes you by surprise at first, but the plants want a talk to us, they want to help us.

They work on so many different levels in our bodies. Yes, they can work just as chemical constituents, but that's the least potency that they have.

There are a few really wonderful teachers today who are teaching plant spirit medicine, how to connect with that plant spirit. But you know, mostly I don't really do that so much. I will send students into the woods and have them sit with plants and meditate, but the way that I really find that sacred plant medicine is most effective is just letting people have the opportunity to work with plants. Because when you develop a relationship with plants, that kind of sacred plant medicine will happen. Just by working with them, they begin to speak to you and you begin to hear them.

It happens when you garden. You know, when people go into the garden, they transform. That's why so many people garden. They go into that garden and they begin to feel things and be different and in a way that's plant spirit medicine at it's finest.

So the way that I teach traditional herbalism and try to connect people with that plant medicine is I have them begin to prepare herbs in the way that their ancestors prepared them. I have them collect the plants and make salves and tinctures, all of the traditional skills that have been forgotten, it's kitchen medicine.

And they they're surprised. They ask, "I can make that tincture? You mean I can make a better tincture that that company can?" Which you can, in your kitchen - and in fact you can make it stronger. Because when you grow that plant and you pick that plant and you put a little sacred medicine into the soil when you dig it, whether it's cornmeal or spit or prayer and you take that root out and then you scrub that root and you're working with that root and you're giving thanks for its life and then you cut that medicine up like your cutting up the leg or arm of something that's alive and you feel that in your body and you put that in a jar and you cover it with alcohol, you've made medicine the way your

ancestors have, the way this medicine has worked. That is so potent. And people always get it. They never not get it. It's so amazing to see.

That's why I think why I've been able to do this for 30 years and never gotten bored or tired of it. I mean when I think about how many years I've taught these simple things, what's the medicine for me? The medicine and what keeps me going and keeps me juiced is when I see this magic happening it's the simplest thing, but when I see it transforming people's lives, it feeds my spirit deeply. I know that they're going to teach their kids and their kids are going to get it. And that's how it's always been done. I hear my grandmother's voice in me going, "Oh yeah! It's happening still!"

By Rosemary Gladstar

Ecological Medicine

As Kenny Ausubel and so many others in the film say, "We can't be well until the planet is well." Creating sustainable medicine must start with a healthy environment. There are some great sites with articles and information about the various dimensions of ecological medicine, the toxins to avoid in different products, about research on environmental causes of different illnesses, and efforts to reduce toxins particularly in the health care system. Some places to start include - each of these sites will link you to the many other individuals and organizations doing important work on human and environmental health:

- Ecological Medicine Ecological Medicine: Healing the Earth, Healing Ourselves (The Bioneers Series), ed. **Kenny Ausubel**. **Sierra Club Books**. 2004.
- The Health/Toxics page on Environmental Working Group's site:
<http://www.ewg.org/health>
- Collaborative on Health and the Environment
<http://www.healthandenvironment.org/index.php>
- Science and Environmental Health Network <http://www.sehn.org/about.html>
- [Health Care Without Harm](#)
- [Commonweal](#)
- Center for Sustainable Medicine <http://sustainablemedicine.org/>

Community-Based Healthcare In A Post Oil Economy

Questions for generating discussions around envisioning what a sustainable system of health care will look like in a post-oil economy.

- What will happen to healthcare in your community as oil becomes scarce? Where will supplies and medicines come from?
- What locally based sources of medicine already exist in your community?
- How can you strengthen those systems and educate more people about how to utilize these remedies?
- What are simple health and wellness tools to improve individual health and therefore decrease the pressure on the existing health care system?
- What needs aren't being met in your community and what can you do to meet them now, while you can plan?
- For additional information and resources, go to: Transitions United States <http://www.transitionus.org/>

What Can Herbalism Offer?

Some questions for leading discussions around what herbalism can offer in creating sustainable medicine in your community

- What botanical medicines and wild foods grow in your region?
- What are these plants used for?
- How can you make medicine from these plants?
- If you don't know the answers to these questions, who in your community does?
- Are there CSAs in your community that might include some of these plants in their CSA shares? Can the herbalists in your community offer classes through the CSA instructing members how to use these plants as medicine? Or simple handouts that go out with the weekly CSA newsletter?
- If one doesn't already exist in your community, what about creating healing networks where the focus of the practitioners is on preventative health and well-being? The Vermont Healers network is a good model: <http://www.vermonthealers.org/>