



The Provisionary

“merging conventional and natural practices”

**Therapeutic Environments™
Albuquerque, New Mexico**

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“Why Herbal Medicine?”

In February of 2010 I wrote about the “Wise Women Tradition” and its herbal heritage including its message to seek the wisdom inside each of us. Now more than ever we are faced with turning to more than the strict medical, reductionist methods when seeking a “good” life. Our health has become a political sparing ground and we can no longer just assume that conventional medicine will have our best interests, (that “patient-centered” care that we hear bantered about).

European and American herbal medicine was the primary form of medicine used by physicians until the early 1900s, prescribed widely though out the medical community. Today the modern herbalist is reclaiming the roots of this tradition, a tradition that speaks to self-care and self- health. We need to rely on our inner wisdom and current day offerings of herbal care for ourselves and for our family and friends. This is very good news as it gives us the opportunity to reconnect with our natural world and to ground and educate ourselves in one of the oldest traditions of healing.

In plant medicine all parts of the plant are used. I am not speaking of the standardized version of plant medicine where one or several chemical constituents are isolated and then standardized to a fixed percentage and then sold in bottles with a blend of other herbs or by itself with pharmaceutical directions. I am talking about herbals as healing partners, to repair, restore or maintain health. I want to be clear I am not talking “curative” but instead I am speaking of plants working in concert with our food, our rest and our relationships to bring about balance and harmony, the place where healing can happen. I am not talking about ameliorating disease. Healing may happen but the disease may continue to be present. An improved quality of life, the locus of control for ones self-care, and the delight in understanding, “deeply understanding”, what Hippocrates said; “Let your food be your medicine, and your medicine be your food” is reason enough for using our plant partners.

Plants are food. Used whole, unrefined such as tea, in our food, or in herbal tinctures allows these little herbals to be naturally assimilated and metabolized, giving us a high nutritive value and a safe and effective response by our body, mind and spirit. As with food and as a food, herbs need to be used ethically, with the same consideration for allergies, or interactions that we are generally aware of. Some folks do not have a good relationship with chamomile or maybe find ginger to harsh, and have unwarranted reactions from the “sulfated constituents” in garlic. However, this is not the herbs fault for “causing” these reactions. We are responsible to use our good common sense about what agrees with us and what doesn’t. Then we need to contact a professional herbalist if indeed there is a question that the intuitive self cannot answer. There is a lot of misleading information about herbs and for the most part the dangers of herbs are grossly exaggerated. Nevertheless, learning to use herbs correctly and to understand their action and interactions is the foundation of herbal self-care. Educate yourself, rely on your inner wisdom, take an herbal class, find an herbal partner to cook and create with, and then appreciate the healing potential nature has in store for you.

This year, 2012, we will be offering this class to anyone interested in educating themselves about using and making their own plant medicine. It is an opportunity to add another healthy tool to your tool chest. Herbal self-care, herbal medicine, it is truly medicine of the people. Come and join us and reconnect with your innate healing potential.

****Herbal Nutrition**© 40 hours, Certification as a Herbal Nutrition Practitioner; the use of plants as medicine and as food. (2 weekends and 4 hours of independent case study plus attendance at two 1.5 hour Herbal Circles)

March 17 & 18, 2012

April 21 & 22, 2012

With 32 CEUs, all materials and text included, \$600 thru the Birkmayer Institute, (see and register with www.thebirkmayerinstitute.com)

Without CEUs \$425, text and materials included contact and registration thru Therapeutic Environments™ www.bodymindspiritplace.com

Register by February 1, 2012

“Milk Thistle”

Silybum marianum; Milk Thistle, St. Mary Thistle, Lady’s Thistle. But by any name still a thistle. A shining example of a plant that thrives in harsh environments with spiny margins along dark green leaves mottled with white. Its purple colored flower heads peek out of more spines along the base of the floret. Not an easy plant to handle. Originally it was borne in Southern Europe and North Africa but has become a natural species in North America, South America, Australia, and central Europe. It has been used for centuries and a plethora of studies that still continue represent its importance in a number of areas. It is the seed heads that are of interest and these can be collected easily when visible by gently tapping them into a paper bag leaving the plant unharmed and with still some seeds to sow for future crops. Easy to grow, easy to harvest, easy to use. However, the silymarin in Milk thistle is not easily released in a water solution so it needs to be delivered through food, tincture or capsules. Only the herb used from the whole seed, not standardized or otherwise adulterated is advised in capsules. Eclectic Institute makes a whole herb capsulated form that is far superior to most brands. Milk Thistle ground to powder and added to foods can be better assimilated by the digestive tract and can provide much the same desired effect as in tincture form. It can be a digestive tonic when used consistently as a food additive. It is hepatoprotective and can significantly improve the survival of folks with chronic liver disease. There is speculation that some research using an alcohol tincture showed little improvement but the research was used without verifying the history of alcoholism or the continued use of alcohol in the participants and the toxicity of the alcohol most likely interfered with the effectiveness of the antihepatotoxic effects.

In the studies where mushroom poisoning, hepatitis B and C and in alcoholic liver disease were present and the delivery method did not include alcohol it not only improved the survival rate but also stimulated regeneration and the formation of new liver cells (Van Wyk and Wink 2004) and (ABC 2003). Milk Thistle was also used to promote the production of breast milk and originally this is where it got its name.

Today Milk Thistle is a good herb to use in foods or as an alcohol tincture for the ongoing health of the liver, skin conditions, and constipation and hard/dry stools. It is an excellent antioxidant. For more complicated conditions such as portal hypertension, fatty liver, pelvic congestion, and elevated liver enzymes it would need to be delivered in capsules with high quality silymarin and not with an alcohol preparation. It has been used for thousands of years, has no safety concerns, and shows very little evidence of adulteration. It is a hardy little herb that thrives.....so therefore wouldn’t it be reasonable to think we might thrive as well when using it?

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“Digby Says”

The Process Of Re-Visioning

“There is a central quality which is the root criterion of life and spirit in a man, a town, a building, or a wilderness. This quality is objective and precise, but it cannot be named. The search we make for this quality, in our own lives, is the central search of any person’s story. It is the search for those moments and situations when we are most alive.”

Christopher Alexander, *The Timeless Way of Building*.

With each new year we often set to the task of somehow making our selves and our world better. We engage with thoughts and plans to clear out the old stuff, envision the new way, change our habits of being and doing,

and accomplish something. That something invites us into a process of re-visioning what it is to be most alive. Here are some pathways and activities that may help open new doors and windows beyond the wall.

CLEARING is getting rid of the stuff, sense and nonsense in your life. Then stepping out of the preconceived ideas and ways of seeing and interacting with your living place.

Take a few moments, get comfortable, close your eyes and listen. Listen to the sounds around you. How many do you hear? What do they tell you? What was the first sound you ever heard? What do you imagine will be the last? What sound do you hear now? How do the sounds you hear describe your life?

The place we live in triggers much of our behavior. It defines, shapes and supports a great deal of our thoughts, feelings and activities. Much of what we do in and around the places we live is beyond our awareness. How many steps and turns does it take to get from your bed to the bathroom?

Imagine you are an archeologist years in the future. You have discovered your house (as it is today) now buried under several feet of earth. You enter by way of a hole in the roof and move down into the remains of the house. Given what time and decay, the earth and techno robbers may have done, describe what you find. What does the house say now of its former tenants?

OPENING and RESPONDING, being aware and paying attention is how we orient ourselves in our world. We generally use our senses of seeing, touching, hearing, smelling, tasting, and intuiting. Take a vacation from the routinized, compulsivity of your daily thinking and minding. Lose your mind; come to your senses (Fritz Pearls).

Take a walk in your neighborhood, count and describe the number of different doorknobs. Make a list of all the weeds you can see. Many of them are traditional healing plants. Plantain leaves are a first aid for cuts and dandelion root makes a good coffee alternative.

Practice dowsing using angle rods or a pendulum. Angle rods can be made from a wire coat hanger. A simple pendulum can be made by hanging an old key on the end of a piece of string. Use your pendulum to select fresh organic produce at your grocery store.

Walk around your neighborhood and make a list of all the smells. Often smells will connect to old memories. As you make your list, write down any memories and ideas that come mind.

At your next meal, take time to taste each part of the meal. How would you describe the taste of lettuce, the taste of bread and the taste of water? Can you taste each ingredient in Worcestershire Sauce? It used to contain asafoetida and what are eschalots?

FOCUSING and SEEING. We often use our imagination to view, pre-view, and re-view the world we move in. Can you look at an object and in your mind's eye turn it around, see it from different positions and angles? Can you imagine yourself moving around that object? As you walk down the street, can you picture what is around the next corner? When you turn the corner, does what you see match what you imagined?

Imagine a Rubik's Cube. How many of the small cubes have 3 colors? How many have 2 colors? How many have 1 color? What is a Rubik's Cube? No? Then what are the colors of your states flag? List them in order of the amount used.

Group all the things in your room by color. All the reds go together. What kind of groupings does this make? Describe your friends and colleagues as colors.

Imagination is a powerful tool. Your body will respond to what you think. Energy follows thought. Imagine a lemon. Then imagine you have cut it into quarters. Now imagine you have one of those quarters in your mouth and are chewing on it. Perhaps you are salivating. If so, where is the lemon?

BOUNDARIES and LIMITS frame our lives. Everything within our usual reality has boundaries and limits. It is difficult to envision anything without a boundary. The frames we place around things often limit our ability to see beyond the wall or to relate to that which is outside the boundary.

Look at trees as shaped by the spaces between the leaves, rather than by the shape of the leaf. What else do you know that is defined by its shape alone?

Look at clouds as giving shape to air. What is the shape of the air around you?

Describe how you spent last weekend without using the words “I” or “we”.

To create something new requires we see, think and sense our world in a different manner. The same path will take you to the same place. The same way of thinking will provide the same answers. The boundaries we placed around ourselves contain the small part of the universe that we are willing to live with and exclude everything else in the cosmos.

© J. Digby Henry, MA, CHF, January 2012

*“Each one of us, somewhere in his heart,
has the dream to make a living world,
a universe.”*

Christopher Alexander, *The Timeless Way of Building*.

Friends of The Provisionary

Friends of The Provisionary include the various practitioners, businesses, & individuals that have come into our life and are out in the community working to make your life healthier and happier. We also want to include workshops, classes, books or other resources that we feel might be valuable.

Book recommendation: The Healing Intelligence of Essential Oils, Kurt Schnaubelt, Ph.D., 2011

In this book Dr. Schnaubelt addresses the effectiveness of essential oil treatments and how they stem from the common biochemical and cellular heritage with plants. He talks about their immune-building qualities and reviews recent research in molecular, cellular, and evolutionary biology. He also addresses the argument over internal use of essential oils. A much needed expansion of the understanding of how essential oils may be useful for health and wellbeing. ISBN 978-1-59477-425-6

Herbal Circle, February 4, 2012

Saturday, 10:30 to 12 noon at “Virginias”

Call Virginia for directions

505-400-4505

brs1477@q.com

All herbal friends and people of the plants are invited.

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Intention Group, Albuquerque

An opportunity to gather with friends and colleagues,
kindred spirits and like minded myth-kin folk
and make time to focus on your intentions.

In the company of the drum you can journey to your wisdom place
and return with clear knowledge of your intention and path for the present.

We meet at Florian’s house. Please call 505-720-4115 for information and directions.

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The Birkmayer Institute Presents Workshops 2012

“Horses Healing Healers”

by Win Simon & Florian Birkmayer MD

A 1-Day Retreat Saturday Jan 7, 2012 10-3

To Register or for information please see the web site www.thebirkmayerinstitute.com:

Call (505) 720 4115 or email thebirkmayerinstitute@gmail.com

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JUNG, THE RED BOOK and THE INNER JOURNEY

A seminar and art studio experience

by Florian Birkmayer MD and Victoria Rabinowe

Sunday 1/8/12 Seminar 10:30-12:30 Studio 1-3pm

Seminar and Studio \$60, Seminar only \$30. 2h CEU \$30

Thursday 1/12/12 Seminar 3-5pm \$30. 2h CEU \$30

DREAMING ARTS STUDIOS

1432 Don Gaspar, Santa Fe

505 988-1086

To Register: call 505 988-1086 or 505 720-4115 or email

DreamingArts@gmail.com or thebirkmayerinstitute@gmail.com

Therapeutic Environments™

in Collaboration with The Birkmayer Institute

Announces

CEU Classes for 2012

Instructors:

Connie Henry PhD, ND, CPH, CHF, RN J. Digby Henry, MA, BBP, CHF, CADS

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With 32 CEUs, all materials and text included \$695

Without CEUs including text \$500, without text and order yourself \$425 text(2nd edition 1997) thru Amazon; contact and registration thru Therapeutic Environments™

Register by April 2, 2012

Self-Care and Working in a Health Care Environment 8 hours

“Caring for self and blending healing strategies with conventional medicine.”

July 21, 2012

With 6.5 CEUs \$135

Without CEUs \$80. order text thru Amazon \$15; contact and registration thru Therapeutic Environments™

Register by June 1, 2012

The Provisionary News and Notes

‘thoughts’

“What you permit, you promote”

-Anonymous

Notes

It has been a long and challenging 2011. The transitional work is done now it is time for action. 2012 is a year of action, dragon action. Take steps boldly and walk with confidence. Gratitude to all that walk with us.

**Write Connie at naturecarern@earthlink.net or Digby at tairseach@earthlink.net.
For our web site see www.bodymindspiritplace.com Or phone (505) 343-0552**

**Namaste,
Connie and Digby**