



June/July 2018

A few weeks ago when out on a herb walk with my Apprenticeship students, we witnessed a rainbow around the sun. Though said to be a common experience, I can't remember seeing this before. Other hikers we passed also commented on this phenomenon, worried that it was a sign of bad things to come. The scientific explanation is that this occurs when there are ice crystals in high clouds; the sun shines through them, making a rainbow around the sun. I was curious as to what others have thought the meaning was and pulled up an old Native American prophecy (no tribe was credited), called *The Whirling Rainbow* (see below). Rather than a worrisome sign, it is a sign of hope in our changing world; a way to live our lives.



The Whirling Rainbow—The Prophecy

There will come a day when people of all races, colors, and creeds will put aside their differences. They will come together in love, joining hands in unification, to heal the Earth and all Her children. They will move over the Earth like a great Whirling Rainbow, bringing peace, understanding and healing everywhere they go. Many creatures thought to be extinct or mythical will resurface at this time; the great trees that perished will return almost overnight. All living things will flourish, drawing sustenance from the breast of our Mother, the Earth.

*The great spiritual Teachers who walked the Earth and taught the basics of the truths of the Whirling Rainbow Prophecy will return and walk amongst us once more, sharing their power and understanding with all. We will learn how to see and hear in a sacred manner. Men and women will be equals in the way Creator intended them to be; all children will be safe anywhere they want to go. Elders will be respected and valued for their contributions to life. Their wisdom will be sought out. The whole Human race will be called *The People* and there will be no more war, sickness or hunger forever. —Native American Prophecy*

For me, this was confirmation of our work here at Ohlone Herbal Center. We create a safe place for all people to work on their personal healing, while also looking to the past to find the root of the problem. So many of our wounds have been carried by multiple generations, with each new generation inheriting the pain of past trauma. We humbly attempt to hold those who have the courage to look deeply beyond themselves, to that which is held in the ancestral line, make peace with it, and let it go in love. We can not attempt to heal the problems of the world until we have cleared our own past; our family.

This is not easy work, but it is that which is called for now. Ohlone students are amazing "rainbow warriors" looking to resolve the woes of

the world through themselves. I am so proud of their undying love for themselves, their families, humanity, and Earth Mama.

Pam Fischer

Founder and Executive Director



Things are humming right now ... quite literally in fact! We have bees, hoverflies, butterflies, and much more visiting the flowers, sipping nectar, and spreading the pollen. Sprouts are in a mad rush to meet the sun and there is lush, green growth everywhere you look. Over the last month, we have been harvesting Calendula, Motherwort, Calendula, Milky Oat Tops, and yes, you guessed it, more Calendula. Some of the Chamomile is starting to flower and soon it will be time to harvest leaf medicine from Catnip.

All manner of things are being planted at this time: Skullcap, Valerian, Marshmallow, Tulsi, and Hops. Some plant babies are still being nurtured in the greenhouses, like Meadowsweet, Yarrow, Echinacea, and Elecampane. And still others we are trying to get seeded: Uva Ursi, White Sage, and another round of Echinacea.

This is the time of year gardeners live for, with long days ahead and hope springing up underfoot.

Til next time,

Molly



Calendula officinalis

A plant that shines as bright as the summer sun, Calendula's golden blossoms are a treat to all of our senses. As we walk into the garden, the sight of the orange flowers that dance above the plant's dark green leaves invite us to smell, taste, touch, and listen to the bees and birds, who are also drawn in by this plant's alluring nature. Calendula's name comes from the plant's association with the calendar, as it can be seen in bloom throughout almost every month of the year.

There is medicine in beauty, and that can often be enough, but Calendula's medicine is broad and deep. The resilient and hearty blossoms are rich in mucilage and resins, making Calendula a choice plant for supporting our bodies in healing wounds and infections, both internally and externally. Soothing to irritated skin, Calendula is gentle and emollient and is one of the most widely used plants infused into oil and used for skincare. Internally, Calendula aids our lymphatic system, encouraging the flow of lymph fluid throughout the body, while also supporting the digestive system and liver. Calendula lends its medicine and magic to many preparations including tinctures, oils, succuses, and a flower essence.



Calendula Blossom Infused Oil

- 1) Pick a jar based on how much infused oil you want to make.
- 2) Fill your jar with freshly dried Calendula blossoms and cover them completely with a carrier oil, such as olive oil or grapeseed oil, making sure they are not exposed to air.
- 3) Lid and label your jar and let it infuse for 3–4 weeks in a warm and sunny spot.
- 4) Once ready, with clean hands, strain your oil into a separate vessel using a cheesecloth or muslin cloth.
- 5) Compost the blossoms and rebottle your infused oil. Store it in a cool and dark place where it should last for a few months to years.

This oil can be applied topically to irritations, rashes, and eczema, used on its own as a massage oil, or can be added to the base of salves and creams. Calendula is good food for the skin and body!

Herbal wisdom shared by our resident medicine maker, Whitney Staeb. This information should not be considered medical advice. It is not meant to diagnose or treat disease, and it does not replace the relationship that you have with your physicians or their treatment protocols and advice.



A flower essence comes into life when you place the blossoms of a medicinal plant on the surface of pure water and let it infuse in the sun for several hours. With the help of the sun as a higher universal force, the water gets activated with the power or information of the blossoms. Then one strains the flowers and preserves the water with brandy. This is called the "Mother Essence," which is further diluted and sold as a "stock bottle."

Personally, it was hard to believe that water, which formerly had a flower swimming on top, should have any effect worth mentioning on my body and spirit. This was until I got frustrated with my seemingly nonexistent life purpose and talked to my herbalist about it. She recommended a certain mix of flower essences to help me find my path. I took it hesitantly for six weeks, only because I trusted my herbalist. I never imagined it could really help me. One day I found myself doing research, creating things and working hard on new plans for my life. For a week, I was so excited and fulfilled I didn't want to sleep. Finally, I connected the dots: I was experiencing the tremendous power of drops of water which formerly

had a flower swimming on top.

One Secret of Flower Essences

You can find valid explanations out there of why and how flower essences work. You may relate to the thesis that the "vibration" or "energy" of the flower is a healing power stored in the water, or you may not. There is an earthbound perspective, too, which I would like to offer.

Whatever the flower does in transforming normal water into something magical, it has to do with the personality of the plant the flower originates from. This plant personality has certain qualities, which a person might not possess at the moment. The plant personality can nudge one's spirit in order to acquire these qualities—like a true friend or a good teacher does in showing by example.

Borage Flower Essence: "The flower of courage ... to relieve the heavy hearted, ease the brokenhearted, and brighten the disheartened."

—Anne McIntyre, *Flower Power*, ©1996

Chamomile (German) Flower Essence: "The flower of equilibrium ... helps to ease emotional problems and soothe anger and conflict to bring out a sunny disposition."

—Anne McIntyre, *Flower Power*, ©1996

Echinacea Flower Essence: "The flower of wholeness ... is used specifically for those who feel shattered by severe trauma in their lives."

—Anne McIntyre, *Flower Power*, ©1996

To take a flower essence means to invite the plant over for a visit and to start an inner conversation with her, developing a subtle exchange which inspires and supports. Does the personality of the plant fit with one's own?

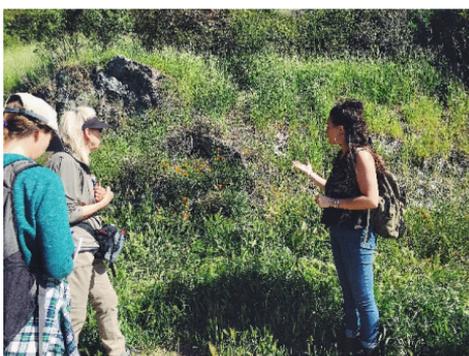
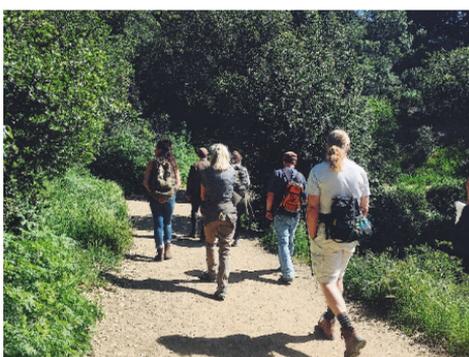
Of Plants and Humans

Yes, plants do have a personality. They show all aspects of it in their outer appearance and with their inner values. On the inside, they consist of different chemical substances. On the outside, the plant has a certain structure, leaf shape, and form of flower. The plant likes a certain type of soil, a special climate, and nutrients. The plant is borne from a specific environment that it must cope with, and makes experiences from it.

A plant is a mirror-inverted human. The roots are the head beneath the ground. The leaves are the circulatory system. The blossoms are the reproductive system. The plant breathes in carbon dioxide and breathes out oxygen, which humans breathe in. Human blood and plant "blood" are chemical twins. The red blood pigment hemoglobin is similar to chlorophyll, the green blood pigment of the plant. The only difference is, it has magnesium as a central element, whereas human blood has iron as central element.

Obviously plants are also different from humans. Two of these differences do have benefit for the lover of flower essences. Plants live in another state of being. They are connected to the forces of the universe and are a part of the whole, in every second of their lives. The modern human being has to define his or her connection to the universe and has to explore the consciousness to find it. Plants do come from a very different age. Their DNA goes further back in time than ours. Plants are a gate to an ancient state of being and an ancient time, long forgotten by humans. This is also a part of the plant's personality. By inviting a plant over for a visit, one invites this ancient wisdom, too. This is like talking to one's wise great grandmother about what really counts in life. One may not get the best business advice, but a delicate remembering about whom one really is.

WHAT'S BLOSSOMING AT OHC



Community members on a local herb walk led by our second-year clinician Dana Aronson





Students from our Therapeutics and Foundations programs come together for a herb walk out in Tilden Regional Park



Making fresh Lemon Balm hydrosol (left) and straining fresh Echinacea Root tincture (right) with master medicine maker Karen Aguiar



Students in our Apprenticeship program happily brewing Elder Flower and Damiana beer

UPCOMING COURSES & EVENTS

Natural Hair Care: Tuesday 6/19 (in Pleasant Hill)

Intro to Herbalism: Tuesdays, 7/10, 7/17, 7/24 & 7/31 + 1 local herb walk

Herbs for Women: Tuesdays, 7/17, 7/24, 7/31 & 8/7 (in Pleasant Hill)

Summer Open House: Wednesday, 7/18, 7:00–8:30 pm

Intro to Herbalism: Wednesdays, 8/1, 8/8, 8/15 & 8/22 + 1 local herb walk

[REGISTER HERE!](#)



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