

**HERBAL HEALERS  
NEWSLETTER  
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Watching one of David Attenborough's documentaries, brought forth first despair, and then with his usual positivity, brought me back to Hope. His solution amongst many simple remedies, rewild the World. This resonates strongly within me. This is not a difficult task we need to accomplish. It is that we need to make ourselves aware of our deep connection to the planet and use our consciousness to harness the energy we have within to make what seems impossible to happen. When we rewild the world we start with ourselves. This does mean going out and causing chaos, rather it is organising the chaos that reigns within us; something most of us deal with either consciously or unconsciously. The world we now live in is undergoing massive change; where do we want to be?

Lois, Lynne and Michele give their perspective.

**REWILD THE WORLD  
A view from Methuselah  
Lynne van Zyl**

Our Ancestors left a legacy in each and every one of us, which runs throughout our DNA. It is in our awakening, that we re-establish our re-connection to the world.

As Michele so clearly shared, it's evident in David Attenborough's documentaries and his incredible dedication to our planet.

It takes me back to a recent documentary of the Methuselah Tree. At that time, known as one of the oldest trees on earth. Nature has a clear way of teaching us, if we are ready to listen. These beings take life in a natural unfolding slow focused pace, unlike our human race.

From the Garden of Eden to today's concrete jungles, life is a fast pasted one. With the smell of money in the air, humans are escaping the delusions from their

natural environment. Yet true immortals, are made out of wood. Many climates today are so harsh due to climate change and our ever changing world, that all beings around our globe, are being forced to adapt.

*"The slow pace of life keeps you slim. We humans could take a leaf from the fugal life. It takes a 100 years to add an inch to your waistline. Could it be deep within your cells, that you hold the key to immortality?"*

Until one day, a scientist, Edmund Schulman connected with an incredible ancient tree. In the cross section of its body, he counted 4600 rings. Each ring depicted what kind of year it had experienced and whether the climate promoted growth. Hidden in her trunk was an unparalleled age and accuracy. At that time it was found to be the oldest tree of all, named Methuselah. This incredible, resilient being was named and given a voice. It's ancient wisdom which was seen and sensed, now become part of history.

This complex chemistry was meticulously crafted. It had seen civilizations come and go. Ancient tribes would hunt around her. She who witnessed it all, under these harsh conditions.

Fascinating, the climate left scars to show in her trunk. Was there more to this? Were they linked to events happening in that era?

*"You can read me like a book, open me up and take a look. Each year jotted down by me" Showing precision in my annual report.*

Scientists were obsessed with Methuselah and it's discovered recordings. These trees rewrote history.

Methuselah watched the every growing concerns in the environment. When the white immigrant infiltrated, prospecting for silver and gold. The people infiltrated sticking rocks with their drills, 24 hours a day. Smoke filled the air from the production of fracking. Greed... was the human curse.

Hills were stripped bare to make houses and chemical dying screams filled the air. Victims of

the highlands and staple diets and all life changed for livestock and tribal people. As the minerals ran out, it became a ghost town. However the desert reclaimed.

Her roots began reaching out to restore its nutrients of the dissolved poison, yet resilient Methuselah, learnt to deal with it all. The problem was not silver any more, it was water. Again a serious adaptation to limited supply. The miraculous, crafted design of her needles, minimised water loss.

In the desert every drop of water counts. Yet in the concrete jungle, it's taken for granted. 24hrs a day fountains spray. Gallons of water wasted, just for show. Or a golf course, so you can enjoy 18 rounds of golf. Yet our trees, just have to get by.

A staggering 300 gallons per person per day, are consumed by Las Vegas. As more and more people infiltrate the land, the landscape diminishes.

Not until one has personally carried a bucket of water on your head and walked for miles to get back to your village, do you realise that every drop of water is precious! What a commodity we take for granted, more precious than gold or anything that is mined.

Nature has a way of saying enough and starts pushing back.

Methuselah survived the bronze age, iron and machine age. What about the nuclear age?

Apocalypse....atom bomb tests? People were oblivious to the earth shaking. Again the manifestation of what the human being is capable of doing. Many villages were affected, like human genuine pigs. Our forefathers died naturally, yet these generations show staggering reports of cancer and many other health risks and dis-eases.

Methuselah again escaped lightly with adversity. Trees like Methuselah, seem to hold the secret of immortality.

If trees like these could impart their knowledge to a human being. Could it be a possible key to longevity?

Further observations grew and almost 5000 years old thereafter...Methuselah still produced healthy seedlings. Genetic material was perfectly preserved. No deterioration was found. Methuselah could live forever, each year showing healthy incremental of growth.

A major article was written in the National Geographic, by Edmund Schulman which brought hordes of tourists up the harsh mountain. They liked it so much, they took souvenir branches in vein. Until one day, fate came upon one of these bristle pine cones. The normal approach was not working and one of these ancient trees was a driven victim to a chain-saw. It took 5 minutes of looking, to reach this devastating effect. Sadly the tree was cut down and the search was in vain....

Today this remarkable slab was laid to rest in a Casino of a small town. The same town Methuselah, once looked down on upon.

We all play a part in this global awakening. We're all responsible. How we choose to nurture ourselves and our planet, lies within our hands.

During global hard lock-down, we have witnessed our planet finally having a chance to breathe. From our oceans, rivers, air space, animals, mammals and bird-life were all healing. Fish returned to the canals in Venice. The air was less polluted, just to name a few. Not only could you see it externally, the isolation allowed us time to reflect internally. Time to restore and take stock.

Through our ever changing climate change, animals have adapted and redirected their migration. From land poaching, deforestation and the rising effect thereof, it's changing our planet and ecosystems forever. Posing an enormous strain on new life.

Land conservationists work tirelessly, to preserve wildlife.

From insects, mammals to land dwellers, each playing a vital role on our planet. Every being has a job to do and a role to play, it all counts.

It starts with a single step, a change in perspective, beyond oneself.

What does restoration mean to you?

I leave this as food for thought, go back to your roots of your forefathers laid before you. Take time to go inwardly, to listen to God within. Therein lies all the answers....deep, deep inside.

Take off your shoes, feel the ground beneath your feet and connect to Mother Nature. Absorb her vitality, she offers so unconditionally. Water and nurture your roots. Feel the inter-connectivity. Taking time to smell the roses and look up at the stars.

As we re-learn to dance to the beating drum. We sing together, as a choir and start creating a new song. For as above, so below.

*Credit history documentary, Methuselah tree*

Plug in your earphones and enjoy this theme song "Our Planet - Elle Goulding"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=btSDddn1Vew>

<https://www.belovedsa.co.za/testimonials/>

## HERBS FROM MY GARDEN

With Michele Slabbert

Well-being can be attained by simple methods. If the mind is calm the body responds.

Having a large garden but at the same time minimising water usage can be quite challenging. There are those indigenous herbs that once planted, are pleased with their conditions and thrive. So it was with some surprise when the **Kruidjie-roer-my-nie** (*Melianthus major*) set seed close to a household water runoff. I use this herb in an effective ointment to soothe backache and muscular aches so was delighted at the

appearance. Although poisonous, and should not be taken internally without strict supervision, the leaves make an effective compress to soothe arthritic and rheumatic ails. A decoction of the leaves was used in cleaning sores and wounds, being applied after boiling the leaves or poured into bath water. (*Common Names of S.A. Plants – C.A. Smith 1966*)

**Wild Rosemary** (*Eriocephalus Africanus*) is known as the kapokbos or Cape snow bush because of the snow like seed tufts that develop after the flowers have faded, this shrub is a good showy addition in the garden. This "snow" can be collected and used to make fragrant stuffed cushions. I notice in my garden that certain birds harvest the snow for their nests as wild rosemary also has insect repelling properties.

Used mainly in infusions as a diuretic, this herb also relieves stomach disorders, coughs and colds. To make an infusion take a small sprig of leaves and place in a cup and cover with boiling water. Ensure the cup is then covered and allow to infuse for 10 minutes. Strain and then sip. Take 2 to 3 times a day for not more than 2 days at a time. Wild Rosemary makes a similar fragrant hair rinse to the common rosemary and a good recipe to treat dandruff naturally is to use 1 tsp of dried and powdered wild rosemary mixed with ¼ teaspoon powdered Aloe. Add 1 litre boiling water. Infuse ½ hour. Strain. Add 1 litre of boiled cooled water to this mix and use as a rinse for the hair.

Wild Rosemary falls under the influence of the Moon, the ruler of Monday, the day of receptivity. Use the innocence and fortitude of these energies to start each week positively and wisely.

*Wild Rosemary should not be used by pregnant women or breastfeeding mothers.*

**REWILD THE WORLD**  
**Lois Stahl's perspective**  
**Nature Does Not Change**

An object seen in isolation from the whole is not the real thing. To the extent that people separate themselves from nature,

they spin out further and further from the centre. At the same time, a centripetal effect asserts itself and the desire to return to nature arises. But if people merely become caught up in reacting, moving to the left or to the right, depending on conditions, the result is only more activity. The non-moving point of origin, which lies outside the realm of relativity, is passed over, unnoticed. I believe that even "returning-to-nature" and antipollution activities, no matter how commendable, are not moving toward a genuine solution if they are carried out solely in reaction to the over development of the present age. Nature does not change, although the way of viewing nature invariably changes from age to age.

While a well-maintained design with shaped hedges and a precise lawn is pleasing, there is something joyful and almost freeing about witnessing flowers growing wildly among garden beds as if in an untouched wilderness.

Put away your trimming shears and choose a rainbow of blooming flowers and an assortment of foliage textures and shapes to make sure your wild garden catches everyone's eye -- no matter where you plant it. In a wild garden, paths should not be beautifully paved and stand out. A path should simply lead you through the natural spaces left between plant growth, so are best created out of natural materials and in earthy colours.

To recreate a natural mix of plant species, intersperse taller plants and trees with bushes, grasses and groundcovers, deciduous species with evergreens and annual flowers among perennials. There's no need to neatly layer heights and textures.

Nothing says wild more than native grass species with many different forms and species with different heights, textures and colours.

Shades of green, brown, orange, red, purple and blue are all found among different native grasses. Planted en masse, their wild forms create a natural look.

**Colour:** Is essential to create a fantasy garden which never seems to be bland, so brighten up your garden with a wide variety of colours, be creative and don't restrict yourself! Take full advantage of the wide variety of flowers Mother Nature has to offer. Choose your favourite colours and mix them together, have fun with it, the possibilities are endless.

Also fill your garden with nature's music to give it an abundantly wild feeling. You can do this by purchasing a wind chime; it will look beautiful in your garden and will fill it with a sweet, unique symphony; you will find yourself waiting for the next gust of wind. You could also try to attract birds to your garden, who doesn't love the sweet sound of happily chirping birds?

Water-wise gardens cut down water usage but are still beautiful and, as there are so many indigenous options to choose from, water-wise gardening should be the norm.

### **1. Choose locally suitable water-wise plants**

There are numerous beautiful plants that require minimal to no watering once established. It is beneficial to plant in autumn, after the first rains -- this gives plants a full winter to develop a strong root system before facing the dry season.

### **2. Group plants according to their water needs**

Water-wise plants need minimal watering once established. And by grouping your plants according to their water needs, you avoid wasting water on plants that don't need it. Those plants that need more watering should be planted together in a small area where their water needs can be attended to.

### **Soil is the Foundation of All Growing Things.**

A healthy soil produces healthy plants and healthy plants resist attack from pests and diseases. You need to re-instate your soil fertility and establish the natural order, therefore soil-disturbance should be minimized.

Ploughing and digging disturb the balance among soil insects, fungi, viruses, bacteria and other soil

life. They break up the root channels and soil structural units so that the soil is not able to perform its intended function. These disturbances cause rapid loss of organic matter upon which the crop and soil organisms feed. Use organic matter and manure in place of chemical fertilizers.

To improve your soil dig less, mulch more and compost always. By growing leguminous crops your soil fertility and organic matter content can be greatly improved. They of course also produce edible leaves and seeds.

### **Re-establishing the Natural Order**

When you have left your garden and the insects to their own devices and you still get too many pests and diseases then there are some important other factors to take into consideration and rectify.

### ***It is never necessary to resort to chemical poisons.***

Nature is always working towards a healthier environment. Don't work against nature, working with natural patterns will speed up the process.

Conserve bird habitats. Birds are very useful in reforestation, birds help to spread seeds through their manure. The manure will add nutrients to the soil and some of the seeds will grow into new trees.

### **The Importance of Reforestation and Tree Crops**

First plant trees in small groups. Then, in following years, add new trees to the existing groups. The new trees will receive protection and mulch from the older trees

Reforestation areas are areas where the natural forest is restored. It is a less intensive system, and will provide less produce than agriculture. However, this system is very important for preserving the environment and stopping erosion, and it will provide many essential products, such as bamboo, oils, fibre, timber, honey and medicines

Areas that have forests need to be protected and carefully managed. These forests are the seed banks of the future.

Reforestation and tree crops are a long term solution for protecting

the soil and stopping erosion. It also helps to repair damaged land, while providing food, wood, oils, medicines, fibre and many other products for income. These are all sustainable incomes. Erosion will reduce productivity by removing a very valuable layer of soil. Soil, especially soil which is good for agriculture, takes a long time to form, but can be lost very easily and quickly due to erosion. If not controlled, erosion will quickly get worse and create bigger problems in the future. Erosion will also destroy all small plants, seeds and organic matter. Erosion on cleared land can cause landslides, which not only destroy land, but can be very dangerous for people.

We need long term solutions for keeping the environment and land healthy and strong for the future.

### Medicinal Plants

Medicinal plants are more than simply objects with useful chemical and symbolic aspects. They are living organisms that are functionally embedded in the cultural fabric of social groups and institutions. They play an integral role in ideas of balance and cosmological order that often reflect sophisticated medical theories of the human body, the symptoms it experiences and their underlying causes.

Many different elements are involved in the complex of ideas and practice that comprises medicinal plant use. The exact constituents of a medicinal plant-related tradition vary from culture to culture to form a rich and diverse array of medical systems.

### How Plants Cure:

The prevailing scientific view is that all disease is caused on a molecular level. Similarly a chemical drug produces its effect by entering a cell through a receptor [a chemical structure on the surface of the cell] that conforms to the shape of the drug molecule, like a lock and key.

In contrast though medicinal plants, in many incidences and within various cultures are described by their adherents as working on a higher physiological level. Astringents make muscle solids firm; diaphoretics promote perspiration by the skin, which makes them more versatile. A

plant that increases the secretion of urine can also be used to treat kidney and bladder ailments or to eliminate body poisons. For example, tannins are compounds that bind with proteins in the skin and mucous membranes and convert them into insoluble, resistant tissues. So plants that are high in tannins may be used for a number of ailments such as diarrhoea, wounds, inflamed gums and haemorrhoids.

## REWILD YOUR WORLD Create a rock garden With Michele Slabbert



When we went into lockdown, with time now an excellent friend, the rock garden project began.

As rocks create a resonance that plants respond to most favourably, it is a natural way to create the energy needed to feed the plants.

We live in an area that has magnificent displays of spring flowers that were being devastated by the mice, moles and various other critters.

The gardens are left in a fairly wild state so the decision was made to collect as many of these plants as possible in order to replant them once they recover sufficiently.

These plants require little water through their dormant period, and with a greenhouse looking quite barren, and having a boot load of flower pots we set to work. As a keen gardener, having bulbs and pots and soil is pure happiness!

For most of the year this greenhouse would look barren and dry. Turning the rocks into a simple art form makes the greenhouse appealing at all times of the year.

Amongst the most devastated were the *Ferraria crispa* (picture above). We carefully transplanted them in the same soil they were found in, and after one year they all showed their appreciation by blooming for almost 2 months.

This rather unpleasantly scented flower is otherwise exquisite in many ways. I have a deep spiritual connection to this plant as it is part of the initiation of Traditional Healers.

The corms can be boiled gently for a few hours and used in ritual cleansings. This brew is used in healing ceremonies and trance dances.

Another of the bulbs being devastated were the *Babiana*.



The corm of this flower is used as a nutritious food source. As the name suggests, baboons (and as I have found, also mice and porcupines) dig up the corms to eat. The corms can be baked, also dried and then powdered to form a sweetish flour and used to make small cakes. The corms should always be harvested in the wet season, they are not considered edible in the dry season. Many of the *Babiana* species can be used in this way.

After a year of hauling rocks, making small ponds for evaporation there is success. The bulbs have multiplied and some have set seed in the pathways. When the time is right, we will rewild our fields.

## THE MAKE YOUR OWN CORNER

We've slowly been entering into the door of Autumn. This is a beautiful time of year but as with most seasonal changes this can be a moody, reflective period.

Watch out for physical manifestations such as muscle fatigue and inflammation, which tend to flare up in the cooler evenings after the hot balmy days. Mix a few drops each of

essential oils of Juniper, Basil and Black Pepper into a carrier oil and use this as a deep muscle rub to relieve. Alternatively crush Juniper berries and basil together and place in a muslin bag tied to the hot water tap and run the hot water through this for an invigorating bath. Should you wish to shower add crushed salt to the herbs and after tying the bag use as a body scrub.

I'm a huge fan of herbal tipples that assist with seasonal changes. If you don't have an herb garden there are many herbs that are freshly available either at nurseries or supermarkets. I have chosen the most common herbs to be found with which to make effective tipples for the coming months. A cheap brandy or good wine is the best to use.

Sweet Basil makes an effective digestive tittle, especially when combined with a leaf or two of Rose Geranium. A handful of fresh sweet basil combined with 2 leaves of rose geranium should be infused in 2 cups of brandy for about 3 to 4 weeks. Shake every now and then. Strain 2 or 3 times and decant into a brown or green bottle. Take a dessertspoon when digestive issues become a challenge.

Lemon Thyme and Rhubarb wine. Cut rhubarb into small pieces; chop the lemon thyme finely. Pour boiling water over this and then add a ½ cup of raisins. Cover bowl and allow to get quite cold. Strain this into a bottle of red wine. Should you wish to add a little sugar then mix sugar with the strained plant liquid before adding to the wine. This is a warming and uplifting tittle!

Parsley wine makes a really good little tittle. Either red or white wine can be used. Infuse a generous handful of fresh parsley in the wine of your choice. Leave for 3 to 4 weeks, shaking every now and then. Strain and decant. A small shot glass as you begin the evening phase of your day's journey clears the mind.

Nettles are popping up at this time of year and an effective tonic wine can be made with the young nettle tops. Add one small lemon pricked with a clove or star anise and a small piece of ginger to

white wine and leave for at least 3 weeks. This is good to use after over indulging!

## OUR FLORAL HERITAGE

In South Africa we have a veritable pharmacopeia of plants. Here's one we all know

### Spekboom *portulacaria afra*



The Spekboom is a close relation to the Purslane but indigenous to South Africa. It grows on rocky hillsides and is an attractive succulent scrub that roots easily and is very drought, heat and frost resistant. It is also very much loved by the bees and most wild animals in particular the buffalo and Kudu.

The Spekboom has leaves that are astringent and lemony tasting and very thirst quenching and the Khoi and San people used to chew it whenever they went on a long walk. The leaf is held in the mouth and sucked and helps wonderfully against heat exhaustion and dehydration.

The juicy leaves rubbed over blisters or corns on the feet will quickly soothe and heal. The leaves of the Spekboom are very edible and can be used in many dishes.

Medicinally the leaf is chewed against sore throats and mouth infections and the astringent juice is soothing and antiseptic for skin spots, pimples, rashes and insect stings. The leaves are also used as a poultice for sores and infected bits and the juice squeezed onto the area is very effective as a sunburn treatment.

## IN PARTING With Michele Slabbert JUST A THOUGHT

The physical body is not designed to become ill. Only when the defence mechanism of the body becomes weakened do we actually become ill. The conclusion is that something somewhere must be interfering

with our natural process. While farming practices, chemicals, certain vaccinations, our foodstuffs and water interfere with this process, it is the mind or ego, which creates the most interference. There are two emotions – unconditional love, which is balanced, and, fear, which is unbalanced. For the past few thousand years human beings have been moved by the emotion of fear. We have lived and are living in a state of fear. Today there are many who have realised what fear is actually doing to our energy levels and have realised the effect our collective unconsciousness is having on the Earth's energy fields and our overall health. Water stores emotions very well and we can all appreciate what has happened to the Earth's consciousness over the past few thousand years and what is happening today. We have created a disease outside of ourselves and this disease is being fed back into our energy fields. We take in this unbalanced emotional energy with every breath we take, with every drink we consume and with every meal that we eat.

Change your thought patterns, become aware of the perceived realities; decide as an individual on a positive individual or/and collective outcome to preserve the future.

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