

NATURE'S HERBAL HEALERS NEWSLETTER

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Winter in the Western Cape is such a delightful time of year. Bulbs spreading skywards, boughs waving furiously at each other in merry conversation and as the rain beats upon the earth, everything sings in unison. Do we often hear this?

Sifting through the memories of time, I stumbled again upon Plato's Cave of Illusions. Considering that he lived over 2 millennia ago, he was spot on regarding human behaviour. We like to be in our comfort zones; we enjoy the illusion, believing that it is the Truth.

Plato describes people that have spent their lives chained in a cave facing a blank wall. They watch shadows projected onto the wall by objects passing in front of a fire behind them, and they give names to these shadows. The shadows are the prisoners' reality but not accurate representations of the real world. The shadows represent the fragment of reality that we can normally perceive through our senses, while the objects under the sun represent the true forms of objects that we can only perceive through reason. (Wikipedia)



It is a painful process when seeking the Truth. We are so acquainted with illusion that it can be hard to break free of the shadow. We live in a world that demands change; immediately. This can limit our perception of our world and indeed, our universal vision.

Yet, through all this, there is positive change. Our consciousness is growing, slowly, but growth is on the way. We are accustomed to our time, not the earth's time.

Enjoy the read. May winter bless you All with endless creativity; the creativity that frees your entire being. Let's bring rays of sunshine into our lives.

Let's not be pulled away from reality.

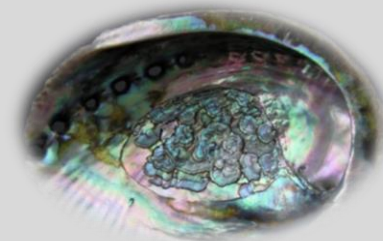
Sometimes we pride ourselves by perceiving what we believe to be the Truth. Kgara Kevin Rack puts this so well.

PRIDE, ATTACHMENT AND GIFTING With Kgara Kevin Rack

I wanted to impress the shaman with a gift so he would teach me some of the ancient wisdom of the Naro Clan. On my return journey to Ghanzi, central Botswana, I bought back a polished perlemoen (abalone) shell, to do just that. I took great pride in my effort to polish the shell and make the beautiful blue/silver colours of the ocean shine and sparkle. He is going to love this shell I think to myself as I turn it over and over admiring its beauty. I carried that polished shell in my shoulder bag, across borders for several days of travel, eagerly waiting to impress the shaman. I imagined him and I sitting by the fire while burning Imphepo in the shell, staring up at the endless stars and he teaching me the secrets of the universe.

We finally arrive in a whirlwind of red Kalahari dust at the Naro camp. It has been several days of tough driving in a sedan through Botswana. I jump out of my trusty Toyota Yaris and immediately cross paths with Kgara, his shoulders bent from all the healing he has done over the years. The shaman has his devoted wife in tow. "Teacher, teacher I have a gift for you," I bleat out. He has traditional bushman attire and his yellow Bushmen stick with him. I hungrily reach into my bag and hand him the sparkling shell. He takes it smiling, laughing while turning it over and over admiring the sparkles. He likes it I think to myself, my cheeks flush, feeling proud. He laughs, dons the shell on his head like a cap, simply passes it to his wife and walks off to the fire where the rest of the clan is hanging out, laughing all the way.

Slacked-jawed, the enormity of the lessons hits home. I have so much to learn...my pride, my ego, my notions of possessions, attachments and of course the lesson of humility. I cannot of course impose my Western notions on such an ancient space. I kneel to acknowledge my lesson, taking several deep breaths and I take the time to embody the lessons before I join the clan at the fire. I realise too that if you cannot explain things simply you don't understand them. I reach down and take a pinch of red Kalahari sand and swallow as it is taught to me by my teacher. I am aware of the eyes that watch in acknowledgement. The ladies break into song welcoming me to the fire.



Unintentional consequences...

Kgara's wife's eyes are lit as she turns the polished shell over and over in her hands, mesmerized by the sparkles of the ocean; she hides the shell in a springbok skin shoulder bag and scurries off to her hut clutching it tight. My precious....

WARMING TIPPLES FOR WINTER

With Michele Slabbert

This is the time of year when a warming tipples is good for the soul. While I prefer to use alcohol as a base (a brandy works well), Apple Cider Vinegar can also be substituted in most of the recipes. As the cold sometimes penetrates into the bones, a warming sip or two does wonders for the brain and in most cases takes away the feeling of cold bones! A benefit of these tipples is that they can be used internally and externally to promote that feeling of warmth.

In my garden I have many indigenous herbs growing and I enjoy using these in preparation for the coming heart of winter, when cosy firesides go hand in hand with a warming brew and generous chatting while debating life's journeys.

Taking handfuls of the following herbs, shred into pieces and place them into a hermetically sealing jar and cover with either brandy or apple cider vinegar.

Wild als, wild dagga, wild rosemary, wild peppermint, blue sage and cancer bush. Add a cayenne chilli and a piece of ginger.

Leave in a light filled spot for 10 days, shaking every day. Strain, squeezing out the excess from the herbs and replace with fresh herbs. Leave for another 10 days, shaking every day. Strain, again squeezing out the excess from the herbs, and bottle. Store in a cool place. A dessertspoon does wonders for those chills that flow into the chest.

Buchu can be made into suitable vinegar for use in the bath to relieve rheumatism. Externally this vinegar can be used to treat bruises and sprains. Internal use is a valuable digestion tonic. Crush the fresh or dried herbs and follow directions above (in italics). Use 1 teaspoon three times a day.

Camphor brandy (Tarchonatus Camphoratus) is valuable for bronchial ailments such as asthma. If you can obtain the fresh leaves and do not wish to make a brandy, you can make an infusion and apply to the chest area to relieve bronchial ailments. The crushed leaves are excellent as a steam to relieve a tight chest. For internal use 1 to 2 teaspoons 3 times a day.



THE GIVING TREE

With Gogo Nomvuka

As we approaching the crux of winter, morning and evenings cooling down and getting out our winter knits and blankets, we begin to see the slowing down of elemental life. Trees start to drop their leaves in an array of warm hues. Animals seek their shelters. This is a time for balance, rest and recalibration while nature is naturally turning into hibernation space. This is a time for inner reflection, as we naturally go inwards.

I heard a beautiful story recently, called the Giving Tree, so I'm paying it forward. May you be open to receiving the message.

The Giving Tree was an apple tree and it was a happy tree. It was in a backyard of a little boy. This little boy would come and swing on her branches and eat her apples and take naps in her shade. They lived so happy together. It was beautiful.

Then, the kid started growing up and goes off to school, later college. The tree is sad. "Where's my buddy?" Well, he comes back from a long time of being gone. He's sad! And the tree says, "Oh my goodness why are you sad?" What can I do to help?" Now a teenager, he said "I need some money!"

The apple tree replies, "take all my apples and sell them at the market. Then you'll have some money". The tree was so happy and so was the teenager.

The tree doesn't see him for a long time again, and gets a little sad.

Finally he does come back, this time a lot older now and not very happy again. The tree says, "oh no...What can I do to help to make you smile?" The man goes, sho "I've got so many responsibilities, I got a wife and kids now and I need a house."

The apple tree says " you can cut my branches off, and cut my trunk and build a house". He did. He cut off the branches, cut down the apple tree and milled the wood and built himself a house.

Now the apple tree was kinda happy she helped but not that excited as she is now just a stump.

The man goes off again, leaves her and there she is, sitting by herself.

A long time goes by, guess who comes along. This guy who was a young boy, then a teenager, then a man is now an elder with a cane, just walking along. The apple tree sings out "there you are, I knew you would come back!". "How are you? I'm sorry, I don't have very much to give, I have nothing left, I've given all that I can give you." And the old man says "aargh...I don't need anything more other than just having a place to sit down".

The apple tree said "you can sit on me, I am a stump! I am here for you to sit on anytime for as long as you want". The elder sat down on the tree stump. I'm sure he had a lot to contemplate and to think about.

"I am like a fruit tree reaching up to the sky, I spread out my branches and give out my fruit to any or all who pass by".

Just like the sun shines down on everyone and the rain shines on everyone. Gaia gives so unconditionally, so freely.

Don't dam up your river, let your river flow.

Be generous to one and all.

Blessings upon Blessings

HERBS IN MY GARDEN

With Michele Slabbert

Centella Asiatica - gotu kola or pennywort

Centella has been used for thousands of years in the east, where it is highly venerated as a miracle herb, used for both its medicinal properties and spiritual enlightenment. It has remarkable rejuvenating properties and is known in India as the longevity herb and has been used to treat leprosy, skin ulcers and various other skin ailments. It has been in use in southern Africa for many hundreds of years and now forms an important part of our own pharmacopeia.

Centella has antibacterial, antifungal, anti-inflammatory and anti-allergic properties. It is a vital part of tonification therapy when we strengthen blood, organs and the vitality of the body. This when the immune system is weak especially after an illness or injury. Known as the blood purification herb.

Centella's anti-inflammatory effect is used to treat rheumatism, rheumatoid arthritis and poor venous circulation. It strengthens veins and treats varicose veins. Centella is a highly valued remedy for depression, blood diseases and mental weakness. Neutralises blood acids and lowers the temperature. It acts on the circulatory and nervous systems. An herb often used for the pituitary gland. Tablets are used for vertigo.

The wound healing activity is due to the facilitated development of normal connective tissue. This process includes stimulating an increase in the development of blood vessels in the affected area, an increase in the formation of tissue structural components and an increase in the keratinisation of the epidermis. (*People's Plants – Ben-Erik van Wyk & Nigel Gericke*)

Fresh leaves are pulped and applied to sores, wounds, varicose ulcers, burns and stings.

1 heaped teaspoon of dried or 2 teaspoons fresh herb to 1 cup boiling water.. Remember to cover the cup while the herb is infusing for 10 minutes. Strain, cool slightly and sip. This brew can be used for mild fevers, acne, allergies, diarrhoea, TB and cancer. It is also used for fertility ailments and as tonic for poor digestion

Dried leaves are powdered and used as a snuff. After ½ hour this has a calming, sedative effect, relieving anxiety and stress.

The tincture can be used as a brain food, for endurance, high blood pressure, mental fatigue and poor vitality. Centella strengthens nervous function and memory,

thins the blood and in large doses lowers blood sugar levels.

Tinctures, teas and ointments made with centella are used to treat most forms of eczema, psoriasis and other skin ailments.

Centella should not be used while pregnant or breast feeding. It has been noted that centella can interact with other medications that cause drowsiness, cholesterol lowering medications, antidiabetic medicines and corticosteroids. (Readers Digest).

A few fresh leaves eaten raw each day is said to strengthen and revitalise the body and brain. When mixed with your meal, health is restored and one is able to live to a ripe old age. It has been used as a diuretic to stimulate the kidneys and bladder.

POETS CORNER

With Gerrard Chaiken

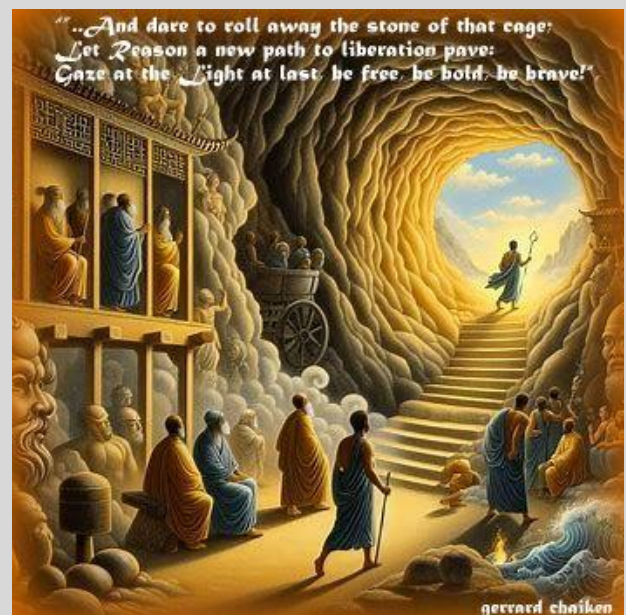
In caves which ignorance has built,
where critical thinking does wither and wilt,
prisoners of blindness dwell content,
with minds and hearts on shadows intent:

Where gazing at shadows on tall walls,
where fallacies and fabrications the mind entralls,
we are trapped by these bizarre apparitions,
Mistaking them as meaningful visions;

So unshackle yourselves, Beings of Freedom's light,
Free yourself from illusion and falsehood's
burdensome blight:

Change your perspective and your perceptions,
Turn around and see beyond those deceptions:

And dare to roll away the stone of that cave,
Let Reason a new pathway to liberation pave:
Gaze at the Light at last, be free, be bold, be brave.



4 USEFUL HERBS FOR YOUR HERB GARDEN

With Michele Slabbert

MULLEIN - Gently remove the sunny yellow flowers from the plant. You will need about 2 teaspoons of fresh flowers to 1 cup boiling water. Cover cup and infuse for 10 to 15 minutes. *This tea can be used for chest ailments, especially dry coughs. Use the mixture as a gargle for throat inflammation.*

Individually dry the flowers for later use and store in a brown paper bag in a cool spot.

The flowers can be used in a poultice to relieve varicose veins, haemorrhoids and slow healing wounds.

Only use the flowers of the Mullein plant. The leaves of the large flowered Mullein (those with hairy leaves - *Verbascum densiflorum*) are not safe for internal use. However, the smooth, smaller variety of Mullein leaves (*Verbascum phlomoides*) are safe to use and are an excellent remedy for respiratory and digestive ailments.

Infuse the flowers for 24 hours to prepare a wonderful rinse for blonde hair.

Place a piece of Jasper next to your Mullein; this combination strengthens the healing properties.

Flower Essence is used to listen to our inner voice especially when a change of habits is required. Helps us to keep true to ourselves by creating awareness of where we have gone wrong. Helps with indecision, bringing a sense of security and protection.



ROSEMARY - Snip off the flowering tops of Rosemary to make a digestive strengthening tea. 1 teaspoon of fresh herb to 1 cup boiling water. Cover cup and infuse for 5 to 10 minutes. Strain, cool and sip. This tea aids digestion, calms the nerves, clears vision and is good as a gargle for mouth ulcers and sore throats.

A stronger infusion makes a superb hair rinse for dark hair.

Surround your Rosemary with either carnelian or citrine to promote balancing energies.

Flower Essence of Rosemary aids in the balancing of the metabolism and improves memory. Relieves feeling of insecurity. Creates awareness.

SAGE - Gather a small handful of leaves & place in a stainless steel pot containing cold water. Cover snugly

while bringing to the boil and then simmer until reduced by a third. *Use this mixture for stubborn infections of the mouth, throat and chest.* The mixture can be stored the fridge for 24 hours.

For one cup take 1 teaspoon of chopped leaves to 1 cup of boiling water. Cover cup and infuse for 10 minutes. Strain. Cool and sip. *This mixture can be used as a general tea to assist in relieving stress and anxiety, minor headaches,*

Struggling to grow a healthy plant. Obtain a piece of Lepidolite and place underneath your Sage to promote a healthy abundantly flowering plant.

Flower Essence is purifying and cleansing, assisting us in the integration of our life experiences. Helps you relax and gives general protection.

THYME - Gather a thumb sized piece of fresh Thyme. Infuse in 1 cup boiling water. Cover cup & infuse 10 minutes. Strain, cool and sip. This tea is good for colds, flu, coughs, anaemia, intestinal ailments and as a digestive aid.

Moss Agate or Carnelian are an excellent aid for an ailing thyme plant.



Carnelian

Flower Essence aids the immune system and has the power to open us up to bring towards us that which we need. Helps us to find the courage and the will to achieve our goals.

CLEANSING JUICES

With Michele Slabbert

Fruit juices are known for their cleansing abilities. They purify the blood and eliminate toxins from the cells.

Vegetable juices help to regenerate and rebuild the body. They help in the production of new cells.

Raw juices are usually easily absorbed into the bloodstream within roughly 15 minutes when taken on an empty stomach. 2 glasses a day is all that is necessary as a good preventative measure.

Juices provide the body with new energy without depleting the energy needed for digestion. Fruit and vegetable juices should always be made and drunk immediately. Storage changes the frequencies of the ingredients, which then lose their therapeutic effects.

Natures Cabinet With Gogo Nomvuka

Parasites - What are Parasites?

Parasites are organisms that infect the body of another living being and live off their hosts to survive. While some parasites create no symptoms in their hosts, others can cause severe illness. Parasitic infections occur when parasites grow, reproduce, or invade organ systems that make their hosts ill.

Health issues related to parasites and other root causes of dis-eases, such as heavy metal toxicity, mould toxicity, and stress-induced nervous system dysregulation. Emphasises on holistic healing without claiming to diagnose, treat, or cure diseases.

A parasite cleanse is a dietary or supplement regimen meant to detoxify the human body and rid it of parasitic infections.

Most parasites come from consuming water or food that has been contaminated. Traveling abroad can also expose you to tropical parasites. Depending on what parasite you have and what body system it affects, symptoms of parasitic infections can include the following:

- stomach pain
- stomach cramps
- nausea
- vomiting
- dehydration
- weight loss
- fever
- gas
- diarrhoea
- constipation
- upset stomach
- dehydration
- flu-like symptoms
- swollen lymph nodes
- aches and pains
- itching
- redness
- irritation

A parasite infection is most often diagnosed by a stool sample. Your doctor may have to test your stool more than once before you test positive for parasites.

Treatment

Once you know what type of parasite infection you have, you can choose how to treat it.

Some parasitic infections disappear on their own, especially if your immune system is healthy and you eat a balanced diet.

Garlic, honey, pumpkin seeds, and papaya seeds are all touted as antiparasitic foods to include in your diet.

Parasite cleanses may also worsen auto-immune symptoms or other chronic health conditions. Cleanse supplements may also be harmful to individuals who are anaemic. You should always talk to your doctor before starting a new supplement.

Avoid starting a parasite cleanse if you're already constipated. Before you begin taking cleansing supplements, make sure you're getting plenty of fibre in your diet and having regular bowel movements. In an intestinal parasite cleanse, this is especially important, as the parasites in your intestines need to be able to exit your body over the course of the cleanse.

Walnut Husk Tincture

Wipes out all viruses

1tsp in a glass of fresh water. Drink for 1 week on an empty stomach.

African Wormwood / Artemisia Afra / Wilde Als

Parasitic Cleanse, intestinal worms

Colds or flu

Heavy Metal Detox

Zeolite powder

Balances the pH and removes heavy metals in the body

Heavy Metal Detox Tincture

Wild garlic, Milk Thistle, Ginkgo Biloba, Coriander, Turmeric, Triphala, Cayenne

Not to be used in pregnancy

Natural Flu Bomb "Cold & Flu" recipe

½ tsp grated ginger

Pinch cayenne pepper

Juice of one lemon

1 Tbsp raw honey

1 drop eucalyptus oil

1 clove crushed garlic

Drink 3 x per day

Consult your herbalist, traditional healer or general practitioner prior to any detox, supplementation or cleansing program

CRYSTAL CORNER With Michele Slabbert MOSS AGATE (pic with article on Thyme)

This crystal is ideal for supporting the lungs and easing breathing difficulties. It also helps the eyes and treats, fungal infections, dehydration, stimulates digestion, eliminates toxins from the body and relieves the symptoms of cold and flu.

Eases feelings of being emotionally stifled. Helps you to become more agreeable, persuasive and lends strength to your endeavours.



Brings in the energy of the natural world allowing you to communicate with the plant and mineral kingdom.

A PARTING THOUGHT

Eating a plant or animal is a way of claiming its power, a way of assimilating its magic to one's self. In the minds of preliterate people, the lines between drugs, foods, and spices are rarely clearly drawn. The shaman who gorges himself on chilli peppers to raise inner heat is hardly in a less altered state than the nitrous oxide enthusiast after a long inhalation. In our perception of flavour and our pursuit of variety in the sensation of eating, we are markedly different from even our primate cousins. Somewhere along the line, our new omnivorous eating habits and our evolving brain with its capacity to process sensory data were united in the happy notion that food can be experience. Gastronomy was born – born to join pharmacology, which must surely have preceded it, since maintenance of health through regulation of diet is seen among many animals.

The strategy of the early hominid omnivores was to eat everything that seemed food like and to vomit whatever was unpalatable. Plants, insects, and small animals found edible by this method were then inculcated into their diet. A changing diet or an omnivorous diet means exposure to an ever shifting chemical equilibrium. An organism may regulate this chemical input through internal processes but, ultimately, mutagenic influences will increase and a greater than usual number of genetically variant individuals will be offered up to the process of natural selection. The results of this natural selection are accelerated changes in neural organisation, states of consciousness, and behaviour. No change is permanent; each gives way to yet another. All flows.

(Quoted from Food of the Gods by Terence McKenna)



"And this our life, exempt from public haunt, finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything. I would not change it."

Shakespeare.

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