



## Herbal Energetics and Formula Creation

### Transcript – Lesson 1

---

Well, hi everyone. Welcome to the first module of the Intro into Herbal Energetics and Formula Creation Course. I'm just so excited that you're here and without further ado, let's get started. In this module, we're going to learn how just tasting herbs can tell you a lot about that herb, including what it does, how you can make the best medicine with it, and the best way to go about studying herbs. So, let's get started. Now, I couldn't really get too far into this course without first giving the disclaimer that we want to make sure when we're using herbs that we're not just taking the conventional medicine paradigm of taking a medicine for a symptom to make the symptom disappear and replacing that medicine with an herb. It's not really how to use herbs. It's not really the way herbs work. We're not saying, "Hey, I've got this health issue. What herb is good to make that go away?"

This is the paradigm that I use in my school, the Hill College Holistic Wellness Pathway, and that I use in my clinic. And it really depicts that once we get to this symptom level of health, when we're having issues like fatigue or nervous system issues or hormone issues or digestion issues, those are really the tip of the branches of the tree. And wellness isn't about cutting those branches off or hiding them. It's about thinking about, and you guys are gardeners, right? You know this. It's about thinking about the roots and the soil and what's going on below the ground, making the diseases in that tree sort of show up, right? And so, we think about health the same way. Herbs are not meant to hide symptoms or mask symptoms or replace pharmaceuticals. They're part of a much larger wellness protocol that involves positivity and joy and time in the sun and sleep and spirituality and movement and whole foods and supporting all of your organ systems with those whole foods.

And naturally, where herbs come in, herbs are part of the nutrients and the nourishment that are used to support the functioning of those organ systems. And so, I just wanted to make sure and paint that picture of where herbs fall into this whole wellness paradigm and really how we're interacting with the herbs and with the planet as we're growing these herbs. And this is of course not what we're covering in course and that's well outside of the scope of this course, but since we will be talking about herbs and using those herbs and formulating herbs, I just wanted to make sure and clarify our sort of why behind us using herbs.

So, the topics we are going to cover in this module are the different tastes of herbs or the things you can really sense whenever you put an herb in your mouth and taste it, what that tells you about the energetics of the herbs, what that tells you about the constituents or the medicinal components that are in the herb, how that helps you decide the best way to make medicine with that herbs and then we'll end with this sort of framework or guideline on the best way to go about studying herbs in the short and in the long term.

So, the first thing we're going to cover is really a four-in-one of all of these subjects because as I'm teaching you the taste of herbs and the different tastes or sensations you're looking for as you're sampling herbs, first of all, that you know are non-toxic, right? Don't just walk around the world putting plants in your mouth. Make sure you're 110% sure that this herb is not a toxic herb. But as you're ... as I'm teaching you about the taste of these herbs, it's inherently going to tell you something about the energetics of these herbs and the constituents in these herbs and the medicines you can make from these herbs. So, it's sort of in ... these four topics are integrated and so let's just get started.

So, just to give you a quick background into how this topic became so important to me is ... so here's a picture from my previous home. We just moved out to some acreage, but as you can see, I was growing just about every fruit and veggie that you can imagine. And I was a good little companion planter, so I had all sorts of herbs next to my fruits and veggies to attract pollinators and deter pests. And I was really stumped because I didn't know what to do with these herbs. So, I

Contact Us: [Happiness@TheGrowNetwork.com](mailto:Happiness@TheGrowNetwork.com)

wasn't harvesting them, I wasn't using them and I was like how can I really capitalize on this produce that I'm creating when I don't understand herbs? So, I started taking herbal courses to better understand how to utilize all the hard work I was putting into my garden. And the three concepts that I'm about to share with you inspired me so much that I then just continued on learning about herbs until I, you know, created the herbal school that Marjorie told you about in the intro.

But you will be able to take these concepts away straight from this presentation and into your backyard to better understand the herbs that you're growing. And just to quickly give credit to my teachers, these concepts were learned by Rosalee de la Foret and her Taste of Herbs course through Learning Herbs and herbalist Jim McDonald in a course he called ... he has on Herb Mentor, which is a membership site called Foundational Herb Craft. And all of this is really built upon the ancient concept from Hippocrates in Greek medicine that it's far more important to understand the person that has a disease versus the disease name that a person has. So, this really deals with really understanding that herbs have their own energetic personality, health issues have their own energetic personality and people are born with their own energetic personality and finding the herb specific to that person and that person's needs is far more important than any name of a disease that that person has. And that's really what we're going to learn today is matching the perfect herb to the perfect person, to the perfect health issue, to find that sort of herbal sweet spot.

So, what we're looking at here is a diagram developed by herbalist Jim McDonald, and it's his rendition to bring to Western herbalism a concept that is from ancient Greek medicine. And what this really does is it divides a person's personal energetics and health issues energetics into six different conditions. So, when I say energetics, I'm talking about hot versus cold, dry versus damp, intense versus lax. And so, when you apply energetics to herbs, it's important to know that every person is born with their own energetics and that's called a constitution. So, you may be thinking, "Oh yeah, I'm normally hot compared to most people or I'm normally dry compared to most people." Health issues also have energetics. So, you can imagine that hot conditions tend to be like a hyper condition. So, diarrhea, that's just the best one to bring up, right? So, we can all laugh at the lady who just said diarrhea is hyper digestion.

So that would be a hot condition versus constipation is hypo-digestion slowed down digestion. So that would be a cold condition. And so, every health issue has its own energetics and every person has their own energetics. Also, if you think about plants, so if you bite on a piece of ginger that's heating, or cayenne is heating versus if you bite into peppermint, it's really cooling, right? It makes your mouth feel really cool. So, plants also have their own energetics along this hot versus cold, dry versus damp, intense versus lax scale. So, that sweet spot that I mentioned on the previous slide is really about knowing what are your energetics, what's the health issue energetic that you're trying to make an herbal remedy for and then which plant has the energetics that are going to bring all of that into balance? And by balance, what I mean is if you're in a hot tense condition or you're a hot tense person, you're gonna want cooling and relaxing herbs, right? Versus if you're in a cold damp condition, you're going to want heating and drying herbs. So, the sweet spot is about bringing everything away from the extremes of both our personal constitutions and our health issues into that middle balance using plants. And what I'm about to teach you is how just tasting the plant can help you figure that out.

So, as we're starting to learn about herbs through their tastes, one thing I want to mention is that I'm using the word taste a little loosely. What I mean by this is that when you bite into a plant, you get sensations in your mouth. So, sometimes these are tastes like salty or sour or bitter, but sometimes they're more feelings, like an acrid feeling can be kind of tingly or an astringent feeling can be like really drying or tightening to the tissues. So, as we go through these tastes, know that some of them are actual tastes like taste bud receptors, but some of them are more about feelings or sensations that you get in your mouth as you're tasting and chewing these plants. And what we're going to learn is how these seven taste or sensation profiles can tell you a lot about what that herb can accomplish and if it's a good match for your constitution. So, it can tell you it's energetics, the energetics of the herb and the herbal actions that can be achieved by this herb.

So, for example, aromatic herbs that you can smell, they tend to be heating and drying. Because of that, they tend to be relaxing, antimicrobial, carminative, diffusive, diarrhetics, expectorants, and antispasmodics. Now, not all aromatic herbs do all of these things and not all aromatic herbs are also heating. Some are cooling like peppermint and camphor.

Contact Us: [Happiness@TheGrowNetwork.com](mailto:Happiness@TheGrowNetwork.com)

Some people argue that lemon balm is cooling instead of heating. So, there's no herb that fits into a category perfectly and no category that encapsulates every herb perfectly. But in general, if you can smell an herb and it's really aromatic and you taste it and it's heating and it ... you get this dry sensation in your body, these are some of the herbal actions that that herb can do. And it'll be best matched to someone who's cool and moist and needs heating and drying to bring them back into balance. Or it'll be best matched with someone with a health issue that's cooling and moistening and needs heating and drying to bring them back into balance.

If you taste an herb and it's bitter, in general, bitter herbs are cooling and drying, so they're good for hot, damp health conditions and hot damp people. They tend to be eliminating. So, we said they help digestion, which is really eliminating waste from the body. They can be choleric herbs which help the liver as do alteratives. We'll choleric herbs and alteratives help the liver and the gallbladder. They tend to be hypoglycemic and help you regulate blood sugar and bitters also tend to be really strong medicines and we'll talk why here in just a minute. But those strong medicines can be used as nervines and laxatives as well.

Now, if you taste something like that wonderful goldenberry and it is sour, that is a sign that that plant has organic acids in it. In general, they're cooling. In general, they're moistening, at least locally as your mouth starts to salivate from that sour flavor. It's also an indication that there's antioxidants in it. So, fermenting increases the sour flavor. Organic acids assist with digestion and antioxidants are also important phytonutrients in plants conventionally understood

So, I saved the more tricky ones for the end. And salty and sweet are two very tricky tastes in herbalism. So, when you're tasting a plant that's in the salty flavor profile, you're not really likely to be like, "Ooh, that's really salty" and let ... so let me explain where the term comes from. So, when you taste something that's conventionally salty, the reason why it's salty is because it's high in those salt minerals, right? In sodium and chloride. So, the salty flavor profile indicates that a plant is high in minerals and these minerals are really nutritive. And so, this is a little bit more difficult to taste and say, "Oh, this is salty." So, what will really happen is you'll squeeze the leaves and you'll be like, "Okay, that's not aromatic. It's not a pungent thing that I can smell." You'll taste it and it won't really be bitter.

It's not going to be sour. In fact, it may have a lack of taste. It may be more like a sort of grassy taste. Now, seaweed is considered a salty flavor profile, or that does taste cause it's floating in the ocean, right? It's got some sodium and chloride in it. But other examples are things like nettle, oat straw, violet leaf, Mullen leaf, alfalfa, chickweed. These are all considered salty flavor profile and what the salty flavor profile does energetically is they tend to be neutral as far as temperature, but because they're so high in minerals, they tend to be a little bit drying. So, what the herbal action is, is really a nutritive. So, people who are deficient in vitamins and minerals, which you could argue as most people in our culture, right? These can also be gentle diuretics. They can be laxatives; they can be used to stimulate the lymph as lymphatics or just support the lymph system. Some are even known to soften lumps because those are part of the lymph system. If it's a sort of lymphatic lump. So again, this is going to be a little more challenging to pick up through taste, but really, it's going to be more of a lack of taste, a lack of the other profiles. And our next herb, the sweet flavor profile is just as tricky because of the misnomer or the concept that we have about what salty means in our country and what sweet means in our culture.

We also said that the sweet flavor profile is a little bit different in herbalism. Some sweet herbs are the conventional taste of sweet, but sweet herbs are generally considered building, tonic, adaptogen, healing herbs. They're neutral. Many of them are moistening. These tend to be your medicinal mushrooms, your adaptogens. Some of them are, you know, modulating, some of them are stress modulating, but in general, they're going to be helpful for people who need building from a state of deficiency, from wearing themselves out or they can be moistening to people who are dry.

Now I said acrid is a sensation, right? That when you taste something, it's kind of tingly or it's like this sort of putrid taste. That is an indication of a much stronger medicine in an herb. These tend to be antispasmodic. They tend to be really strong, sedating, relaxing nervines. Also, anti-pain, anti-stress and these are going to be used for very specific indications and we'll get into that. So, notice this doesn't have a specific type of like heating or cooling or moistening or

drying. These are along the tense and laxity scale. They tend to be ... they tend to increase relaxation through antispasmodic, relaxing nervines.

And then we said astringent isn't really a taste, it's also a sensation. And this is that really tightening, toning and drying sensation in the mouth where you taste something astringent. It's considered cooling. Now we're going to get a little more advanced in our thoughts here since we're getting into like herbal medicine 201, right? So, when I said sour is moistening and I said astringent is drying, I'm talking about locally. So, think about when you bite into that golden barrier, that limit in your mouth fills with saliva. So, the tissues on your mouth specifically are being moistened, but the tissues that just lost all that saliva are being dried. So, you can have different things going on locally and systemically. The opposite is happening with astringent, your mouth feels all dry and tightened and toned, but the reason why your mouth is dry is because it's restricting and containing moisture inside the body. So, astringents can be moistening to the whole body while they're drying locally, adding a bit of a level of complexity onto this concept of energetics here.

The eighth taste or sensation is demulcent and I know I said before that there were seven; that's cause I can't count. The eighth taste or sensation is demulcent and technically this falls under the sweet category, but I'm separating it out because not all sweet herbs are demulcent and also demulcent's more of a sensation as opposed to a taste. So, you can see this aloe leaf here and how gooey and moistening it looks. So, demulcent is really that sort of gooey, wet sensation that you can either taste on your mouth or feel on your fingers, right, in certain plants. And so, demulcents are almost always going to be cooling to the tissues and moistening to the tissues. And because of that, they are vulnerary or healing to skin cells, whether you use them externally or internally. And because they heal skin cells, they're indirectly immunomodulating because they can return moisture to mucous membranes, which is where your immune system cells sort of lie, in all of your mucous membranes, and so because it restores function to those mucous membranes, it also restores function to your immune system. And so, demulcents are usually used as healers of tissues, moisteners or coolers of tissues or just to sort of immunomodulate through restoring function to the skin or the mucous membranes, which are actually large parts of your immune system.

So, now that we've reviewed the taste of herbs and what those tastes can indicate about the energetics of the herbs and how hopefully we're using herbs to match the energetics of the person and the health condition, instead of saying, "Rose is good for this or turmeric's good for this," you really always want to be thinking about energetics. Now, we're going to talk about how these tastes energetic profiles of plants, what that indicates about the medicinal constituents that are in the plant and how that affects the best way to make medicines with those plants because if you're aren't thinking about energetics and you're just like, "Here's a plant that I want to take. I'm going to make a tea out of it or I'm going to make a tincture out of it." Unless you really know what's in that plant and what you're trying to get out of that plant, you may be using an incorrect herbal remedy. So now let's dive into a few of the main herbal constituents that are in plants that impart medicinal qualities on to us and which ones are found in which herbal taste and what that tastes can tell us about which herbal preparations we should be using for these herbs.

So, these nine herbal constituents are some of the main constituents you're going to find in plants that impart medicinal use into our body. So, we mentioned the volatile oils. These are things that you can smell either by squeezing the leaf or smelling the pedals. Alkaloids tend to be those really strong medicines, so they have a specific, direct effect on the body. So, for example, caffeine and morphine are both alkaloids found in plants. Polysaccharides are these really complex carbohydrates we talked about in the sweet flavor profile with the mushrooms. Resins are really sticky. So, if you think of pine resin or if you've ever picked a calendula flower and it sticks to your fingers or cottonwood buds that are sticky, those are resins. Then we said nutrients are going to be found in the salty flavor profile. Tannins, so imagine you bite into an oak leaf and your mouth is totally tight and constricted and dry. Now those are tannins. You can also think about tea and coffee as containing tannins. Saponins are found in things like chickweed and glycosides and flavonoids. So, these are all going to be found in different herbal taste profiles. So, just tasting an herb will tell you which of these nine constituents are in that plant. And then knowing what these herbal constituents do, by what we're about to learn next, will tell you which herbal preparation you want and which herbal preparation you need to pull the specific constituents out of plants with the right herbal remedy.

So again, the flavor profile that's going to contain the volatile oils are those pungent aromatic herbs. So, if the smell that you're smelling is the medicinal component of that plant, those volatile oils, which oil is fat, right? The things that are going to extract those oils are going to be water, oil, vinegar, and alcohol. Those four Menstrums are going to be able to pull out and extract the volatile oil medicine from those plants. Volatile oils tend to be relaxing and stimulating and also antimicrobial.

Alkaloids are those strong medicines and in general, they're going to be found in the bitter flavor profile. So, the bitters that have that really "ehhh" kind of taste, that's going to indicate that, "Ooh, this plant has some really strong, powerful alkaloid medicines." That acrid sensation is the same thing. If you taste something and you're like, "Oh my God, it's so acrid." That indicates strong alkaloid medicine. Usually these end in "ine" and "in" like morphine, caffeine. These medicines can be weak to strong; some of them can be deadly. Some of these are toxic, low dose herbs, but in general, these are the bitter and the acrid taste sensations. Bitters are extracted by alcohol, water, and vinegar. So, if you're trying to extract bitter alkaloids, then you don't want to make an oil, right, to extract these alkaloids. If you are working with a plant and you're like, "Ooh, I want to extract the medicine from this plant and I maybe want to take it as an oil, or I want to rub it on my skin and let the alkaloid go through my skin." These are not fat-soluble. You're not going to use a fat to extract alkaloids. You need to remember that.

So, glycosides are molecules in plants that have a sugar attached to them. Like they have a sugar within their chemical formula. Part of their atoms is a sugar group. There's a lot of different types of glycosides. Some of them are really strong, some of them are toxic, some of them are deadly. Like, you can see some examples here, but if you're using an herb, you want the glycoside out of them, they're going to be water and alcohol soluble and that's it. You're not going to use a vinegar. You're not going to use an oil. You're not gonna use glycerin, which I don't really teach how to use glycerin any way cause it's too processed of a thing. I don't use glycerin. But for glycosides, you're gonna use water and alcohol. Saponins are a type of molecule in plants that used to break up fat-soluble compounds. So, people take them to help digest fats. People also use them to wash their hands and wash their hair, right? These were the ancient plants that were used as soaps. So, Saponins have adaptogen qualities, so it's going to be this sweet flavor profile. So, some of them have diuretic properties, so some nutritive salty flavor profile can contain saponins. Like chickweed is high in saponins. Saponins are water and alcohol soluble. Flavonoids are a phytonutrient that generally indicates an antioxidant. And so that's going to be the sour flavor. So, Rosehips, Hawthorne; that sour flavor is going to indicate the presence of flavonoids and flavonoids are also water and alcohol soluble.

Now in Nutrition one, we learned that polysaccharides, we learned about three polysaccharides; we learned about glycogen, starch, and cellulose. So, we're like, "Oh, we need to stay away from the polysaccharides cause they're the starch." But there's lots of other polysaccharides that don't go into our body and break down into calories and contribute to energy. Instead, they're used in building molecules inside the body and so other polysaccharides like polysaccharides found in mushrooms and the roots of burdock and astragalus, they're in this sweet flavor profile because they're building, they help your body build their cellular components. They help restore damage. So, these are going to be your adaptogens and your demulcents. So sweet and demulcent are going to indicate the presence of polysaccharides. Polysaccharides are water-soluble. This is important because if you're using medicinal mushrooms as a tincture for adaptogen qualities, are they going to be in there?

Tincture's alcohol. So, you're not going to have, depending on the percentage of alcohol you use, you're not going to have nearly as many adaptogen qualities from your astragalus or from your mushrooms or burdock as a tincture as you would from a water-soluble decoction. So, you need to keep that in mind, but there are also some alkaloids in mushrooms that are really useful as neurotrophics, meaning they help brain function. Those are alcohol soluble because they're alkaloids. So, a mushroom tincture might be appropriate as a neurotropic versus a mushroom tea or decoction might be a lot more appropriate as an adaptogen.

Now nutrients like vitamins and minerals, those are going to be your salty flavor profiles. So, things like nettles and Mullen and seaweed, which is salty. So, they're building in a different way because they provide the precursors to chemical formulas in your body and they help enzymes work. Notice these are water and vinegar soluble. Those four fat-

soluble vitamins are fat-soluble. These are not alcohol soluble. If you're taking a nettle tincture or a Mullen tincture or an oat straw tincture, you're not getting ne ... you're not getting vitamins and minerals out of that, right? So, you need to make sure and use the right herbal preparation for the biochemical constituent that you're trying to extract out of that herb.

Alright, I think we just have two more. So, tannins. These are going to be the really astringent constituents in plants. So, if you've ever taken an oak leaf and bitten into it, it is like super astringent, really antimicrobial because of that, because it removes water locally and so the bacteria can't live there. Witch hazel, black coffee, tea, these are all astringent. They tighten and tone so that astringent sensation is an indication that there's tannins there and tannins are water and alcohol soluble. Now here's an interesting thing. People have drunk coffee and tea for centuries and centuries, right? And usually like if you look at how Ayurveda drink tea, traditionally they always drink it with milk. They mix their teas with milk. Now milk and the fat in the milk inactivate the tannins. So, this is important to know.

If you want to have a tannin herbal property and you mix it with a fat, that tannin's not going to be there anymore. So, tannins in salves, not super effective cause salves are oil-based. This is also important for like people who drink their coffee black or their tea black. You're getting way more tannins and tannins consumed internally bind to minerals and make you leach minerals and vitamins out of your body. So, if you look at our ancestors always drinking tea and coffee, but they drink them with milk, you have much less mineral leaching out of the body that way. So, get some raw non-inflammatory ghee or local dairy and put it in your coffee and tea to minimize the leaching of minerals from tannins. However, if you're using tannins medicinally on purpose to tighten and tone externally or internally, you don't want to have them around fats and lipids and oils because it'll inactivate the tannins.

However, resins which can be indicated by the bitter flavor. So, we said bitter can indicate alkaloids and now we're saying they can also indicate resins. Resins are oil soluble and notice they're not water-soluble. So, if you want the bitter or expectorant qualities of calendula, you're not going to make calendula tea because oil ... water doesn't extract oil. Water and oil don't mix, right. When you're using Cottonwood or calendula or myrrh, you're gonna want to have an oil or a tincture because resins are also alcohol soluble. So, now that we've learned how just tasting an herb can tell you one, it's energetics and see if that energetics will balance with your energetics. Two, the herbal actions of that specific plant. And then three, the constituents that are in that plant giving that plant the herbal actions that it has. Now we're going to learn which herbal remedy preparations might be best for the taste of that plant. And this is really just building on another layer of, okay, now that we know the constituent in the plant, just from tasting it, what sort of herbal remedy preparation is best to pull out that nutrient. But the most important thing here is knowing how to taste that plant, know what energetics it gives that plant and just making sure that it matches with you. And now this is the rest of this is just to make sure you're pulling out those appropriate constituents. So, you're ingesting the most of that as possible.

And I know you guys are getting detailed herbal preparation demonstrations in other GrowNetwork presentations, so this is really just a brief overview of, "Hey, if you taste this, it probably has these constituents. So, you use this herbal preparation." So, the main herbal preparations you're gonna see are tinctures made with alcohol, teas, infusions or decoctions made with water, vinegars, and oxymels, which use vinegar the Menstrum and then oils and salves which are oil-based herbal preparations. And you can probably go ahead and put two and two together based on the biochemistry we just learned of these herbs, but I just wanted to briefly reinforce that the taste will tell you the constituent and the constituent determines the preparation.

Tinctures are one of the most widely used Menstrums to extract herbal constituents and make herbal medicine most likely because alcohol really does extract almost everything except minerals in that salty flavor profile and polysaccharides in the sweet flavor profile. Also, just to add onto that, you really want minerals in such a large amount that even if they were alcohol soluble, you wouldn't really be taking them as a tincture because you couldn't take them in as high amounts as your body would need those minerals in. That's usually also true for the polysaccharide adaptogens. You need more of those and so if you are taking the right amount of herb in a tincture, you would probably just be getting drunk medicine instead of actually herbal medicine. But tinctures are really convenient, so they're great

Contact Us: [Happiness@TheGrowNetwork.com](mailto:Happiness@TheGrowNetwork.com)

for things that don't taste good, so you can dilute the tincture in some water. They're really good at preserving herbs that are best used fresh as opposed to herbs that you can dry in store for long periods of time because you can take the fresh herb, preserve it in a tincture and then use it in the offseason.

However, it's not ... tinctures aren't as necessary as our wide use of tinctures may indicate because so many herbs are also water-extractable or oil extractable. And so, unless you just absolutely want to use a tincture, there's never a case where you have to use a tincture. To demonstrate that exact point is the use of water as a Menstrum. So, just about everything can be extracted by water except for resins. So, if you think about traditional Chinese medicine, they drink ounces and ounces and ounces of herbs as tea every single day. So, unless you're specifically trying to extract a resin, you can extract it with water. So, let's talk about some nuances here because the length of time you're going to extract herbs will differ depending on the taste flavor profile and the constituent you're trying to use and the way you use the water to extract the constituent will differ. Let me just explain that one. So, for example, things that are harder, like harder plant material like root and seeds and berries, you tend to decoct them. And what that means is you boil them in the water for 20 to 30 minutes versus a tea or an infusion means you have just boiled water and you pour that onto things like stems and leaves and flowers.

So, you're not boiling the stems and leaves and flowers, you're just letting it steep in that hot water. So that's the difference between an infusion versus a decoction. Really, it's the hardness of the herbal material. But another thing you want to consider is if you were trying to extract an aromatic volatile oil, so in the pungent or aromatic flavor profile, those are going to be volatile. So, they will leave with steam, they'll go into the air. So, if you infuse them for like an hour, a lot of those volatile oils will have escaped. So, if you are trying to extract the pungent or aromatic flavor profile, you always cover it. And in general, they're going to have short infusion times, like 15 minutes. Now, remember, no herbs follow all of the rules. So just keep that in mind. Versus things that are not aromatic, so things like, well, let's just say licorice root, right? Licorice root is an aromatic, you can decoct that for 30 minutes and it's not really a volatile oil that you're trying to extract. It's more of a polysaccharide or a saponin. So that will determine how long you extract it or if it's in the salty flavor profile and you're trying to extract minerals and nutrients. So, I know Susan Weed was a speaker of this conference before and she talks about nourishing infusions where you infuse ounces of those herbs for very long periods of time, four to eight hours. Another thing that will differ if you're using water as an extraction is the amount of herb you have to use. So again, for those minerals, you can use ounces of herbs cause you want lots of those minerals. But if you're extracting the bitter or the aromatic flavor profile, those are pretty strong medicines and you don't need nearly as much.

That's why you can use like an eighth of a teaspoon of cayenne or a fourth of a teaspoon of cinnamon, right? And you still have a really strong medicine. You're going to take it more frequently, but you still have a strong medicine. You don't have to use as much herb. So just know when you're using water as an extractor, you still need to really be thinking which flavor profile does this herb fit in and does it match to my personal energetics or my health issue energetics. And then three, what is the best way to use an extractor to get that constituent out for me to use?

Now vinegars also extract minerals. They extract aromatics of your pungent herbs and they extract alkaloids. So, you can make bitter vinegars, you can make medicinal vinegars, you can have really, you can have nutritive vinegars. However, the problem is you cannot drink as much vinegar at a time as you can water. And so, these aren't really medicinal as far as the minerals are concerned. You're just kind of adding minerals to your vinegar as another way to get your minerals in. But mostly if you're taking minerals and vitamins, you're going to do it as water. But the aromatics and the bitters, you don't need as high of doses of those because they're so strong and so vinegars great ways to and take them. An oxymel is just a vinegar that's extracted herbal medicine mixed with honey and it makes it taste better and it also makes it last longer and you get the sort of antimicrobial nutritive benefit from the honey. If you look on learningherbs.com, Rosalee has tons of oxymel recipes and she just loves making them.

Oils and salves are going to extract very specific constituents. They're going to extract resins and they're going to extract aromatic oils. A lot of people make comfrey oils and comfrey salves. The medicinal components of comfrey are mostly alkaloids. So, you're really not getting a lot of those alkaloids in comfrey oil or comfrey salve unless you had a comfrey

Contact Us: [Happiness@TheGrowNetwork.com](mailto:Happiness@TheGrowNetwork.com)

tincture or comfrey tea that you added into that salve, which is gonna make it not last as long. That's why it's important to know what your herbal constituents are. Now that's assuming that we know exactly which of the million constituents in comfrey are doing, you know, the medicinal benefits. There probably are some constituents we don't know of in comfrey that maybe oil extracted and that's why everyone uses the salves and the oils. But just know that there are some people making oils and salves of medicine that they're, you know, 100% that it's an alkaloid and it's not in there. So, you want to match the remedy with the constituent and the way you know which constituent you're using is from the taste of the herb or looking at the constituent and knowing what can extract that specific constituent.

Now, last semester you guys watched a video on how to make herbal oils, but I didn't make you watch the one on how to make salves cause I was just sort of introducing you to it. But if you get on Herb Mentor and go back to Herbal Basics, you can then see how to make herbal salves. Salves are so convenient, they're great for long term storage. You can take them anywhere. You can also just use your herbs as oils. The salve just makes it harder and easier to transport, harder like to touch, so that makes it easier to transport versus oils. If you don't have time to go that extra step and turn it into a salve, you can just rub the oil on your body. And it does the same thing. It gets the herb into your body. Salve just takes it up a notch towards convenience. And you can use salve as like lip balm and stuff like that. You can put oil on your lips too, but you can't carry it around in your purse. So hopefully that was helpful to sort of tie in the connection between the herbs you're tasting in your backyard, what they can do, the constituents they have in them, and therefore the proper herbal remedy that you're going to choose in order to pull those constituents out of the plant.

So now you know how to have a mystery plant in your backyard that you know is not gonna kill you and you taste it and you say, "Is this aromatic?" You smell it. Does this make my mouth tingly? Does it make it all dry and astringent? Is this sour, is it bitter? Does it really lack any kind of flavor? So maybe it's in the salty flavor profile and that taste can indicate one, if the plant energetics is going to match your energetics. And two, it will tell you which medicinal constituents are in the plant and therefore what the proper herbal preparation for that herb is.

So now that we've sort of paradigm shifted, how to think about and how to use herbs, one thing I really want to make sure and impart to you guys before we get too far into this whole course is how to study herbs because I'm more, you know, just as much as anyone know how exciting it is to get impassioned with understanding as much as we can about herbs. Like as soon as we learn herbs can be medicine and this is our birthright and this is how all of our ancestors healed themselves. And we get excited and we want to know everything as fast as we can, but when we do that, we can very quickly create burnout, which can then make us decrease our passion for learning about herbs. And we can also start to feel that we're never going to know enough and we can get really down on ourselves.

And so I'm going to create a visual for you which is a sort of ... it's my take on an analogy I learned from John Gallagher at Herb Mentor about how to study herbs and the analogy is going to be like we're at a birthday party and there's tons of people at the birthday party and we don't know any of them. And it's going to be about the different ways and depths we go into meeting all of these strangers at the birthday party. And these strangers are meant to be analogous to the herbs that we're going to learn. So, let's jump into this analogy.

So, the first thing that might be different about going up to all of these strangers and getting to know them are the questions that we ask them. Um, so we might ask someone how old are they? Or where are they from or what did they do? Or what do they love? Or do they have kids or where did they go to school? Or all sorts of different things, right? What their favorite herb is. If the analogy, if these people are actually herbs, we may be asking things like, what is the taste of this plant? What are the energetics of this plant? What are the herbal actions of this plant? Or what body system does this plant impart its actions onto, what ailments is this plant commonly used for? So, as we start to study herbs, remember all of the different questions and sort of try to mix them up. Don't just study one taste or one energetic or one type of herbal action. Remember that there are a diversity of plants. And so, if you get really, really knowledgeable about one type of plant with one taste or one energetic or one herbal action, next time talk to someone who's a little bit different, right? So, you can learn something new. So, mix up all the questions you're asking as you learn about these herbs.



And so, imagine you're at this birthday party and there's some people who you don't really learn a ton about, right? You just introduce yourself to them and ask a few questions and then start making your way around the room, right? Like, "Hey, how are you? Nice to meet you." Ask a few questions and then you go introduce yourself to lots of people, right? So, the analogy for that is studying a different herb every day, but you don't want to learn everything about an herb every day. You just sort of want to introduce yourself to that herb. So, for the one-herb-a-day method, this is really just a notecard with the common and scientific name, maybe the tastes and energetics, a few herbal actions, the part of the plant that's used. Do you use the leaf or the flower or the roots or all three? And three or four uses for that herb. This isn't meant to be an in-depth relationship, right? You're just shaking someone's hand and saying, "Hey, nice to meet you" and moving on; a brief introduction with some brief information just to get that sort of face and name in your memory, right? And then as you increase in these note cards, you can flip through them just to sort of be familiar that these herbs and actions exist, but you're not going to get into an in-depth relationship with them. That's what comes next.

So, as you're going around shaking these people's hands, just sort of introducing yourself. So, as you're learning one herb a day, just all the time, there are a few where you might want to spend a little more time with them. And so, the analogy here is take one of those herbs and spend a week learning a little bit more about that herb. So, this would be more like speed dating, where you sit down at a table with someone and you spend 10, 20, 30 minutes with them. You could learn a lot more about someone in 10, 20, 30 minutes than you can in just a few minutes of shaking their hand. And so, you're going to get to know this herb a little deeper, not super deep, right? You're not going to get super personal in 20 or 30 minutes with a person, but you can get to know a few more things.

You can sketch this herb, learn where it grows, get familiar with the doses, get more in-depth about body systems, traditional uses, maybe look up some scientific information and research articles, jot down a few medicinal preparations, taste the herb, learn some contraindications. I am going to put this link in the resources for this module, but there's a great quizlet and you can even create your own quizlet where you go through and have a few more details about this herb and spend the week really sort of memorizing and engaging, getting more in-depth with this herb. Now, this is still not a real relationship, right? Speed dating is just, you know, half an hour with a person, but it's a lot more than you get just from shaking this herb's hand at this birthday party. So, we're learning one herb a day, briefly introducing ourselves to it. Then we're going a little bit deeper and speed dating one herb a week.

And from there we get a little bit deeper and we learn one herb each month, or we choose one herb each month to have a short-term relationship with, so like a 30-day relationship, you can imagine you're going to learn a lot about a person, right? You may fall deeply in love. You may get deeply annoyed. You may learn some really personal habits that you adore and that frustrate you. So, this is a good short-term relationship with this herb; you're going to get up close and personal, right? You may get your hands dirty with this herb. So, this is where you make medicinal preparations; when you actually make stuff with this herb and use it, right. You learn the constituents; you definitely taste it and use it. You may create a materia medica and that's really just like a sheet of paper or a couple of sheets of paper that go in-depth about information about this herb and I'm going to have links to examples for you in the resources for this module.

Maybe grow it, find it in the wild. There are tons of awesome resources that have already created month-long herb studies that you can use. So, Herbal Roots Zine, Herb Fairies, Herb Folk, even on Herb Mentor or some other herbalist websites which I've in your resources created a link to herbalist websites that I recommend that I know are safe; you know, clinical studied herbalists. But creating this, I mean, you can't do this with every herb, right or you're going to get burnt out, but picking one herb each month, that's 12 herbs a year. That's a lot, right? So, even just charting that out and planning ahead which herb each month are you going to have this short-term, real in-depth relationship with, you can learn a lot in a short amount of time. And remember my advice earlier about the questions. You maybe don't want to learn 12 pungent, aromatic herbs in a year or 12 bitter herbs, right? Mix up the taste, mix up the constituents, mix up the body systems, so you're getting a pretty thorough coverage of knowing how you can use the plants around you by

sort of pacing yourself with a brief introduction each day, speed dating an herb each week, but a really in-depth one-month relationship with one herb every month.

And if you want to get more serious, pick one of those 12 herbs that you're having a short-term relationship with to have a long-term relationship with. So, this would be like a person you met at that birthday party who you speed date, and then you have this short-term relationship with and then maybe you guys move in together and have this long-term, yearlong relationship. So, this is where you pick one herb each year to really, really know it. You watch it grow throughout a whole season. You plant it in your garden, watch it in the wild and sketch it every season or every month. Write about it, teach about it, read about it, make a monograph. This is where you really, really know a person, right? Or you're really gonna get to know this herb. And if you're sort of following this birthday party model, if you're introducing yourself to an herb day, that's 365 herbs, 52 herbs to speed date a year, 12 herbs for a deep short-term relationship with and then if you pick in our every year to have a long-term in-depth relationship with, you're going to learn a lot fast enough especially if you pick the herbs you're growing and the herbs that grow around you, you will feel so in touch with life and nature and where you are and where you live, that that connection just in and of itself will be a benefit to following this methodology.

So, I mentioned earlier, I wanted to make sure and give you a few sources that I really trust when you're studying herbs because herbs are definitely not something that you want to go to and Google how to do it, right? You may be able to do that with gardening. You may, that's something that you know, it's a pretty safe thing to go and learn about through just doing a good internet search. But with herbs, I definitely recommend only studying from herbalists that have trained as herbalists. So, a few places you're going to find these things are Learning Herbs, which is free or Herb Mentor, which is a membership site that's super affordable. Of course, GrowNetwork is going to start beefing up their herbal studies, [herbalremediesadvice.org](http://herbalremediesadvice.org), [not.com](http://not.com). That is Rosalie's website that's free and she's actually the educator of Learning Herbs and Herb Mentor, but [herbalremediesadvice.org](http://herbalremediesadvice.org) is her own private website.

And then Chestnut School of Herbal Medicine blog, the Herbal Academy blog, HerbCraft, that's Jim McDonald's site, LivingAwarenessInstitute is one of my mentors and teachers Kami McBride's site, [foragingtexas.com](http://foragingtexas.com) is amazing for foraging herbs and plants around you and it's not just for Texas. He just happens to live in Texas. Growing Up Herbal is a great website and she has month log herb studies that are great and any resources that the above sites mention, and then there's that little quizlet I mentioned, that's one of Sam Kauffman's students from Herbal Medical University. And so, these are all websites from herbalists who have studied for decades as herbalists that will give you great trustworthy information. And this is of course not exhaustive, but make sure and don't just Google search an herb. Use the experts to tell you about herbs as you're starting to introduce yourself, speed date, and have your short-term and long-term relationships with these herbs.

So hopefully now this picture of herbs doesn't just look like a bunch of herbs, right? Hopefully, now you're looking at it and thinking, "Ooh, I wonder which one of those tastes bitter and are full of alkaloids. And I wonder which one of those are aromatic and full of aromatic oils that are both relaxing and stimulating. And I wonder which one of those if I squeeze it, it'll be demulcent and it's cooling and moistening, right?" Hopefully, you look at them and you're sort of thinking that they each have their own energetic makeup based on their constituents that therefore defines what they can do, how those medicines can be extracted and how to use them. And also, hopefully, you can look at these like strangers at a party that you feel more comfortable going in, shaking all of their hands, doing brief introductions, speed dating a few and having deeper relationships with a few of them. And the more you do that, the more and more you'll learn and the less likely you are to burn out. So, congratulations. That's module one. The next slide is telling you your homework for this module and then I'll send you off to module two.

So, the homework is where the fun is. So, for this module's homework, you guys get to put this knowledge into practice and taste tests some herbs. So, the homework handout gives a little more details for each one of these, but I just want to make sure you get your feet wet or your tongue wet, right. Getting up close and familiar with these different tastes or sensations. And I try to include examples that are more common, that you might find in your spice cabinet or outside around you, but also include some that you might want to order from Mountain Rose Herbs or your local herb shop to

Contact Us: [Happiness@TheGrowNetwork.com](mailto:Happiness@TheGrowNetwork.com)

get familiar with some of those more commonly used medicinal herbs. So, you definitely don't have to taste every single herb on this list. These are just options; more common options versus more sort of fun herb-y let's order some new things and learn about them options. So, check out that homework handout has a lot more details and get your taste testing ready. Have fun. All right, so let's move on to the second module of this course where we really get in-depth into the inner genetics of herbs and the energetics of health issues. So, we can learn how to match these tastes and the energetics of the plant with what's going on with us personally, either as a health issue or just our own innate personalities. All right, I see you there.