



Herbs to Lift the Spirits & Natural Mood Support

Maria Noël Groves, RH (AHG)
Clinical Herbalist & Owner of

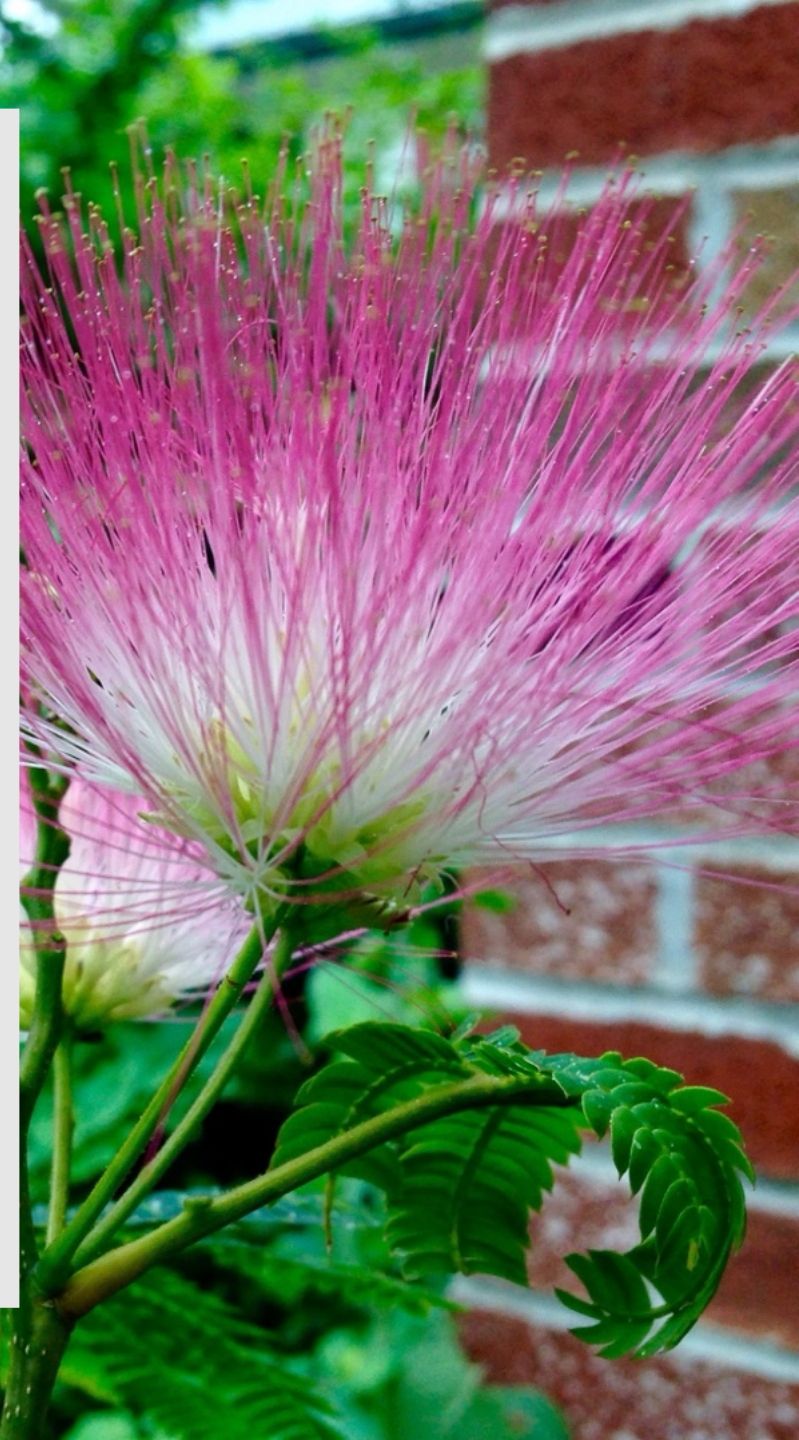
Bestselling Author of

Body into Balance

Grow Your Own Herbal Remedies

Herbal Remedies for Sleep

New Hampshire | WintergreenBotanicals.com



Starred slides are bonus slides.

Underlined items are usually hyperlinked to sources



About Me

Clinical Herbalist:

- Wintergreen Botanicals Herbal Clinic & Education Center
- Registered Herbalist with the American Herbalists Guild
- 20+ Years in Herbal Medicine
- Graduate of the SW School of Botanical Medicine

Educator: Live and online herbal study courses, guest lecturer at Herbal Academy, MUIH, AHG Symposium, and more

Author & Journalist:

- *Body into Balance* (2016) best-selling, award-winning
- *Grow Your Own Herbal Remedies* (2019)
- *Herbal Remedies for Sleep* (2024) and more forthcoming!
- Freelance writer – *Taste for Life*, *Mother Earth News*, *Herb Quarterly*...



BODY INTO BALANCE

INTO

AN HERBAL GUIDE TO HOLISTIC SELF-CARE



GROW YOUR OWN HERBAL REMEDIES



Restore Gut Health

Calm the Nervous System

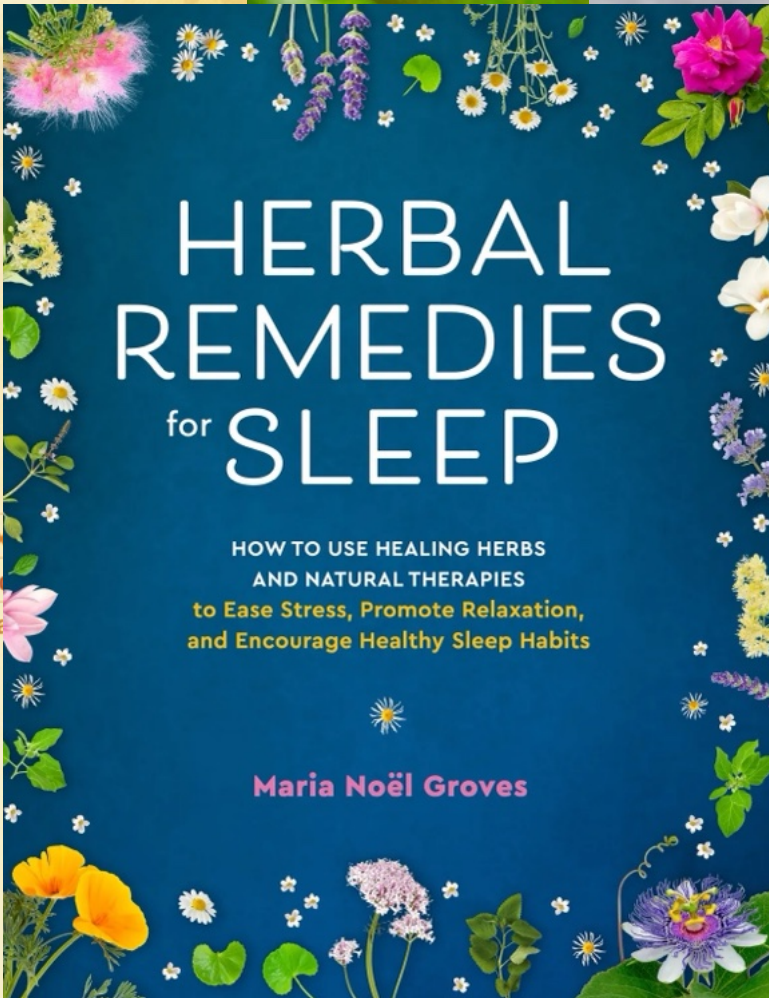
Boost Immunity

Detox

Reduce

Increase

MARIA NOËL GROVES



HERBAL REMEDIES for SLEEP

HOW TO USE HEALING HERBS AND NATURAL THERAPIES to Ease Stress, Promote Relaxation, and Encourage Healthy Sleep Habits

Maria Noël Groves



HOW TO CREATE A CUSTOMIZED HERB GARDEN TO SUPPORT YOUR HEALTH & WELL-BEING

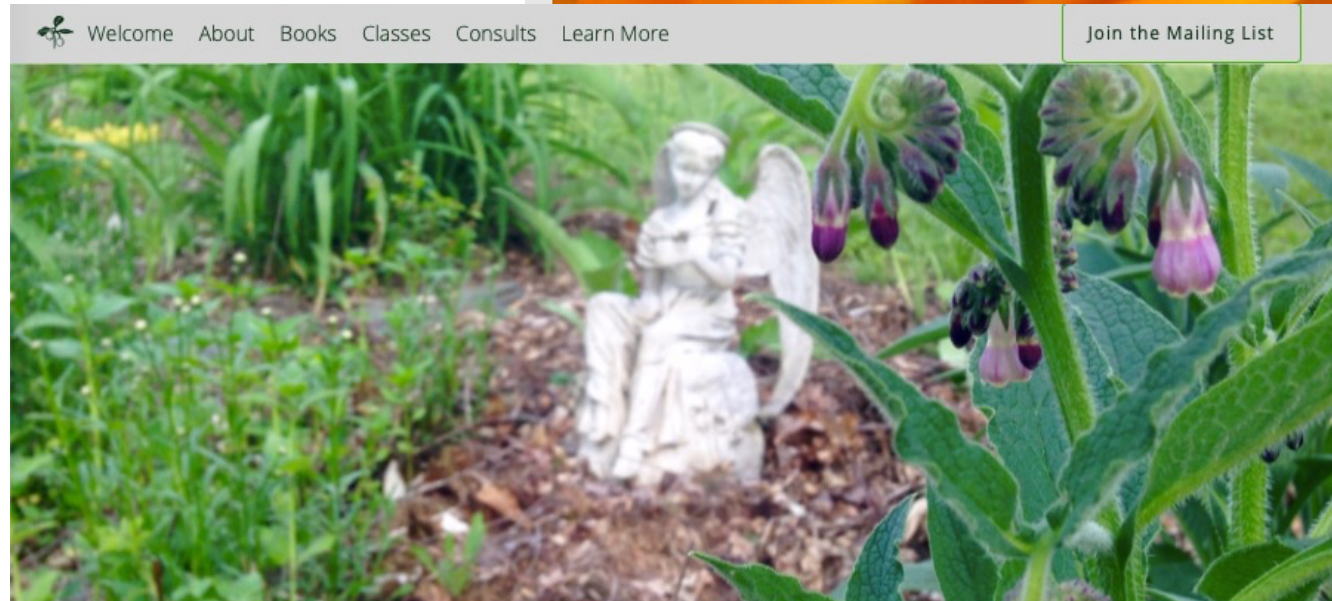
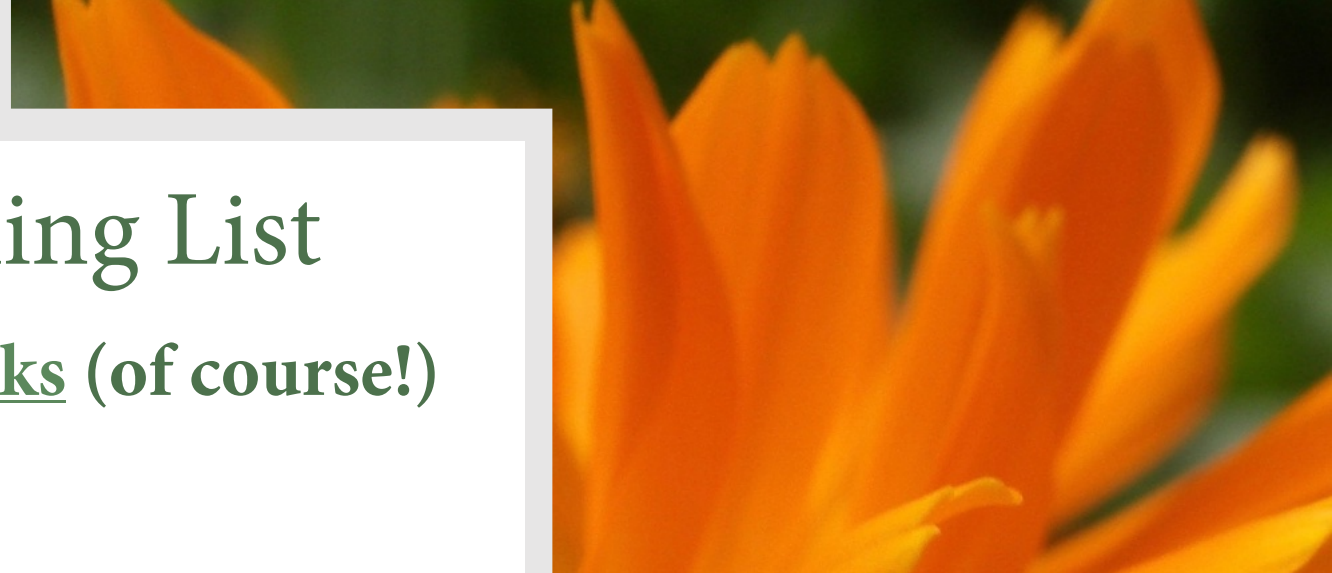
MARIA NOËL GROVES
Best-selling author of *Body Into Balance*

On My Website & Mailing List

- Info on my classes, consults, books (of course!)
- Seasonal recipes
- Virtual herb walk
- Recommended books, websites
- Where to get herbs
- Free class notes and videos
- Blog full of articles

WintergreenBotanicals.com

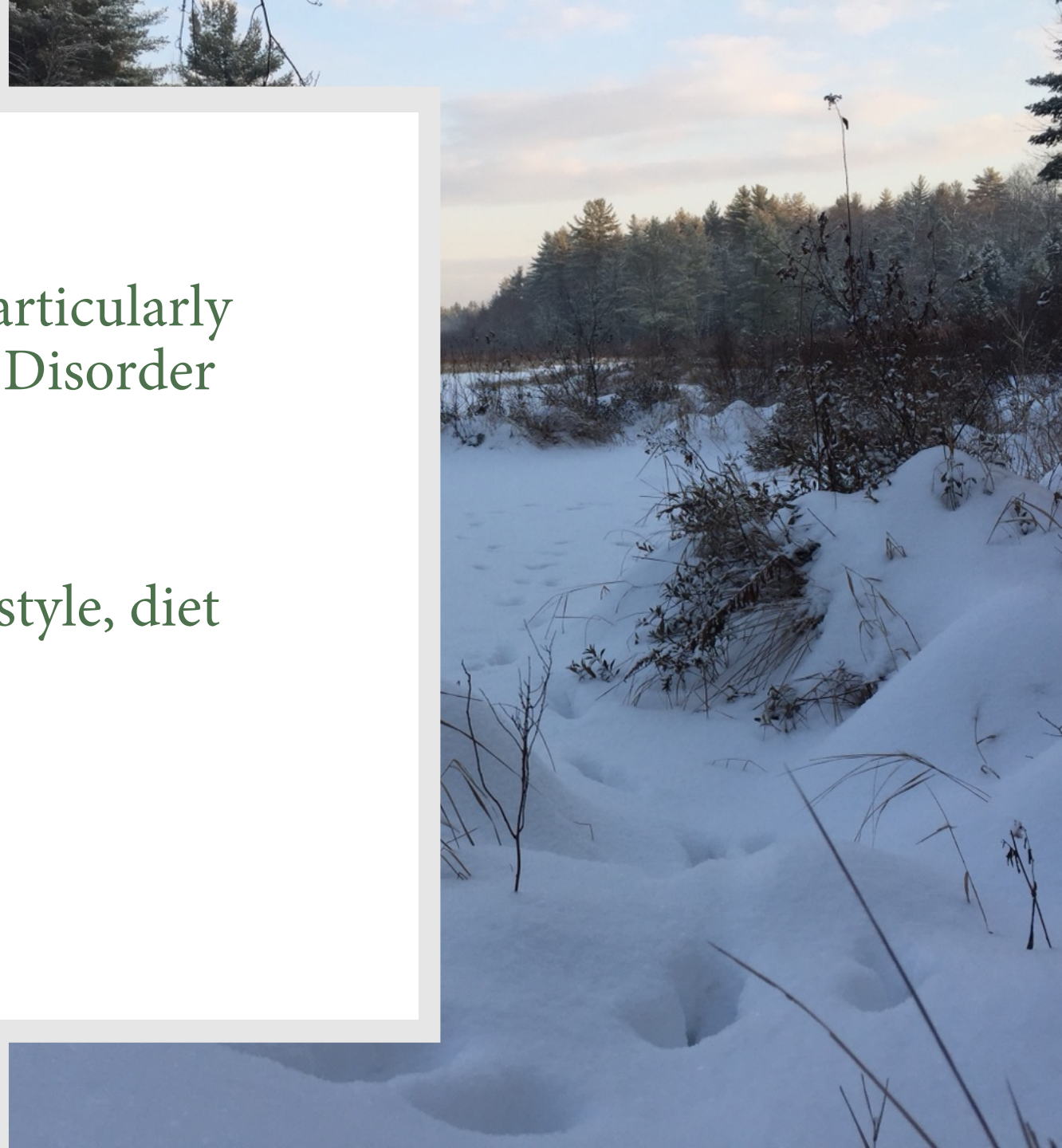
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*Welcome to Wintergreen Botanicals
Good Health Grows in Nature*

Today's Talk

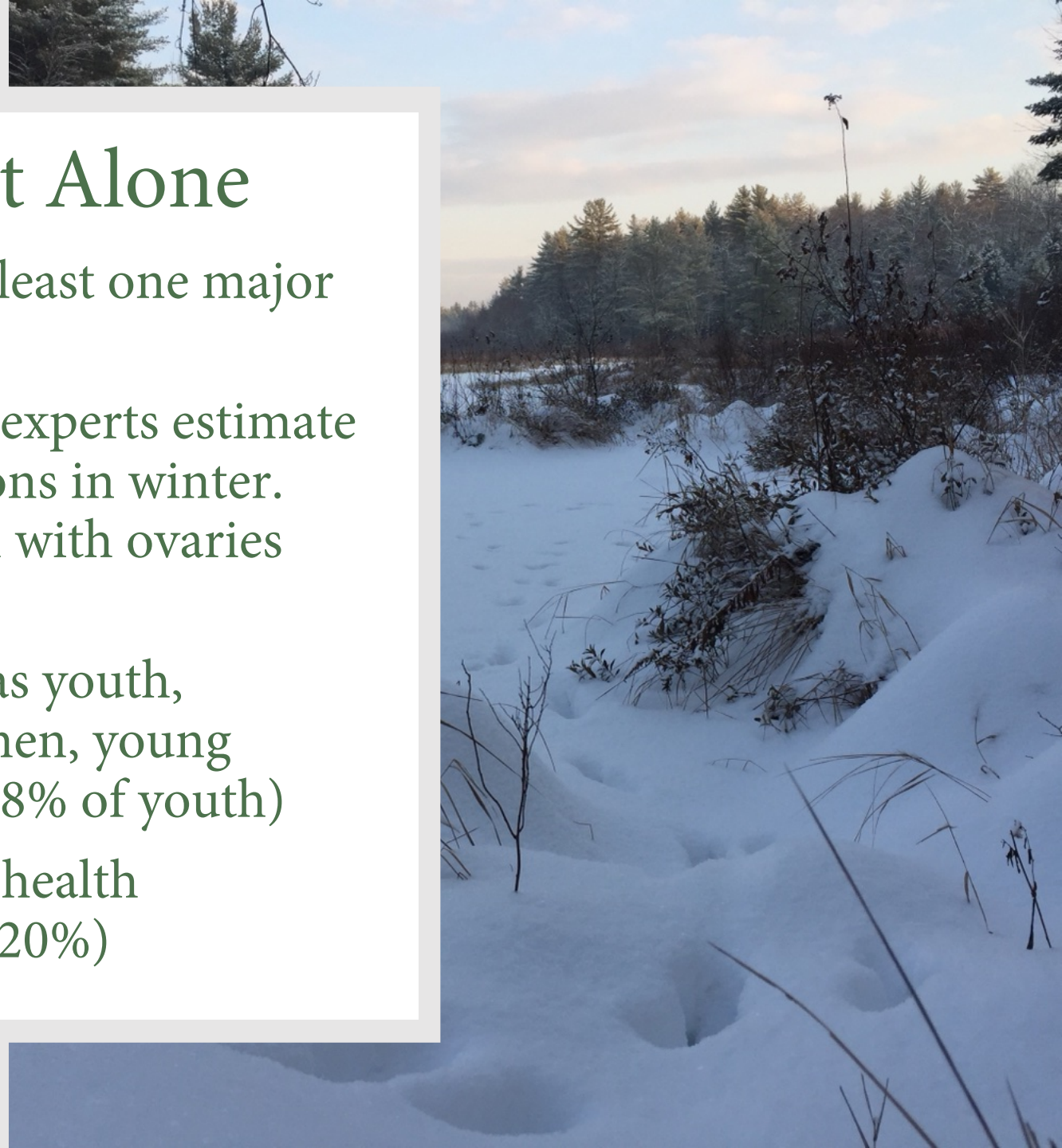
- Some basics on mood concerns, particularly depression and Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)
- Safety Tips
- Natural Approaches including lifestyle, diet
- Favorite Herbs



Low Mood? You're Not Alone

- 21% of Americans will experience at least one major depressive episode
- About 5% experience SAD but some experts estimate 95% of people have SAD-like variations in winter. More prevalent in women/folks born with ovaries and in northern climates
- Both are increasing in adults as well as youth, potentially more common in cis women, young adults, as well as LGTBQIA+ folks (58% of youth)
- Anxiety is the most common mental health condition in the United State (about 20%)

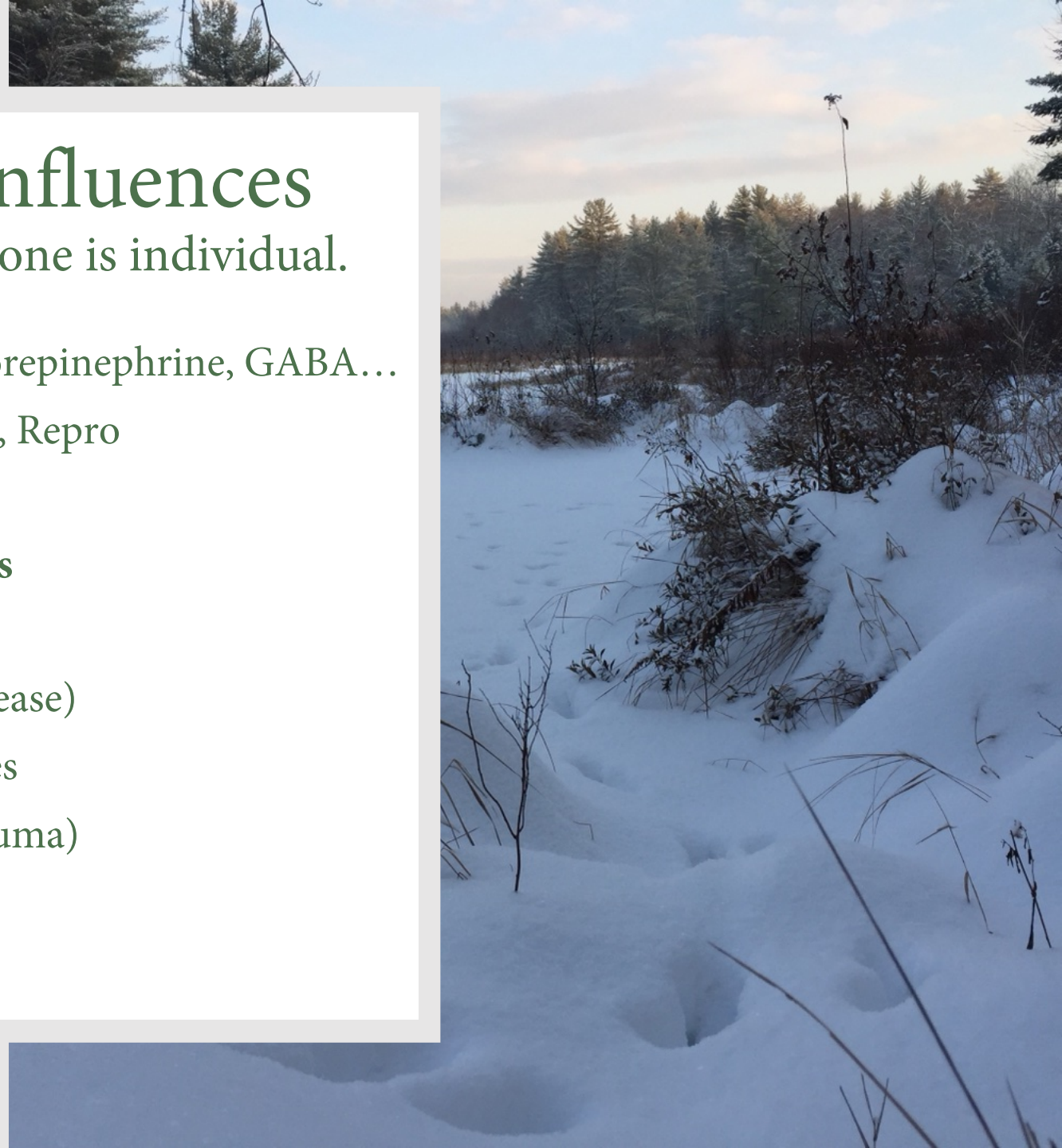
Sources: [CDC](#), [CDC/increase](#), [PT](#), [Spont](#), [AADA Anxiety](#), [AADA Depression](#), [Trevor Project](#) ← Clickable links!!!



Depression Theories & Influences

There's still so much we don't know. Everyone is individual.

- **Biochemical Imbalance:** low **serotonin**
And/or other **neurotransmitters:** dopamine, norepinephrine, GABA...
- **Hormones:** Stress, Cortisol, HPA Axis, Thyroid, Repro
- **Blood Sugar Imbalance**
- **Nutrient Deficiencies, Methylation Difficulties**
- **Microbiome & Gut Health**
- **Inflammation** (including infection, chronic disease)
- **Trauma, Childhood & Life Negative Experiences**
- **Genetics** (methylation and others, inherited trauma)
- **Community Connections**
- **Life Purpose**



A Holistic & INDIVIDUAL Approach

- Assessment and ruling out or addressing factors
- **Root Causes & Triggers**
- **Underlying Patterns**
- Client's **Constitution & Energetics** – hot, cold, dry, damp, sluggish, overstimulated...
- **What's Realistic, Do-able?**
- **Diet, Lifestyle, Habits, Therapy Support**
- **Possibly Herbs**
- **Possibly Medications** (may limit herbs)
- **Pregnant or Nursing? Allergies?** may limit herbs, meds
- **Team-Based Healthcare Approach:** natural practitioner, prescribing doctors, therapists, the client, family/friends, etc.





Natural Mood Support ~ Combine A Few

- **Exercise** – better than Zoloft! (1)
- **Diet** – lots of veggies (2), watch/balance carbs
- **Stress Management**
- **Gratitude Journal** (25% happier) (3)
- **Adequate, Quality Sleep** (not too much, not too little)
- **Community, Animal Therapy, Spirituality**
- **Sunlight, Light Therapy**, AM 20-60 min (4)
- **Nutrients: D, Omega 3, Bs (3,4), iron (if deficient)**
Brown: 5 x 20 min outdoor walks in sunlight/week + B1 50 mg, B6 50 mg, B2 50 mg, folic acid 400 mcg, selenium 200 mcg and vitamin D 400 IU
- **Thyroid, Cortisol, Blood Sugar, What's Needed?** support

1.Josefsson, Babyak, Siqueira, 2.Tsai, Payne, 3.Weil
4.Melrose, Brown, Walsh Protocol (full studies on Sci-Hub)

Maria's Safety Rules

Disclaimer: I am not a doctor, and this **information is meant to educate**, not diagnose, prescribe, treat, cure disease. **Discuss** herbs and supplements with your **healthcare** provider before beginning a regimen. **Especially in self-care...**

- **Research:** Consult at least **THREE** good resources for uses/cautions before taking an herb.
- **Listen to Your Body & Intuition** to guide you on which herbs to take and determine which do or don't work well for you.
- **Ensure the Identity 100%** before harvesting a plant.
- **Check with Your Pharmacist or Herbalist** for herb-drug Rx, and keep your doctor informed.
- Check **pregnancy, lactation** safety (Aviva Romm, Camille Freeman)



Safety Specifically for Today's Talk

- Many herbs discussed today pose **potential risks in pregnancy or nursing** – seek professional guidance
- Many of the herbs discussed today (especially SJW and serotonin boosters) **may interact with medications** – seek professional guidance (we'll highlight common Rx)
- **Do not cease medication** without the doctor's supervision and typically slowwww weaning with additional supports (& Dr oversight) IF it is appropriate to cease
- **Medications may be appropriate and life-saving**
- **Therapy** can often also be very supportive



Favorite Uplifting Herbs

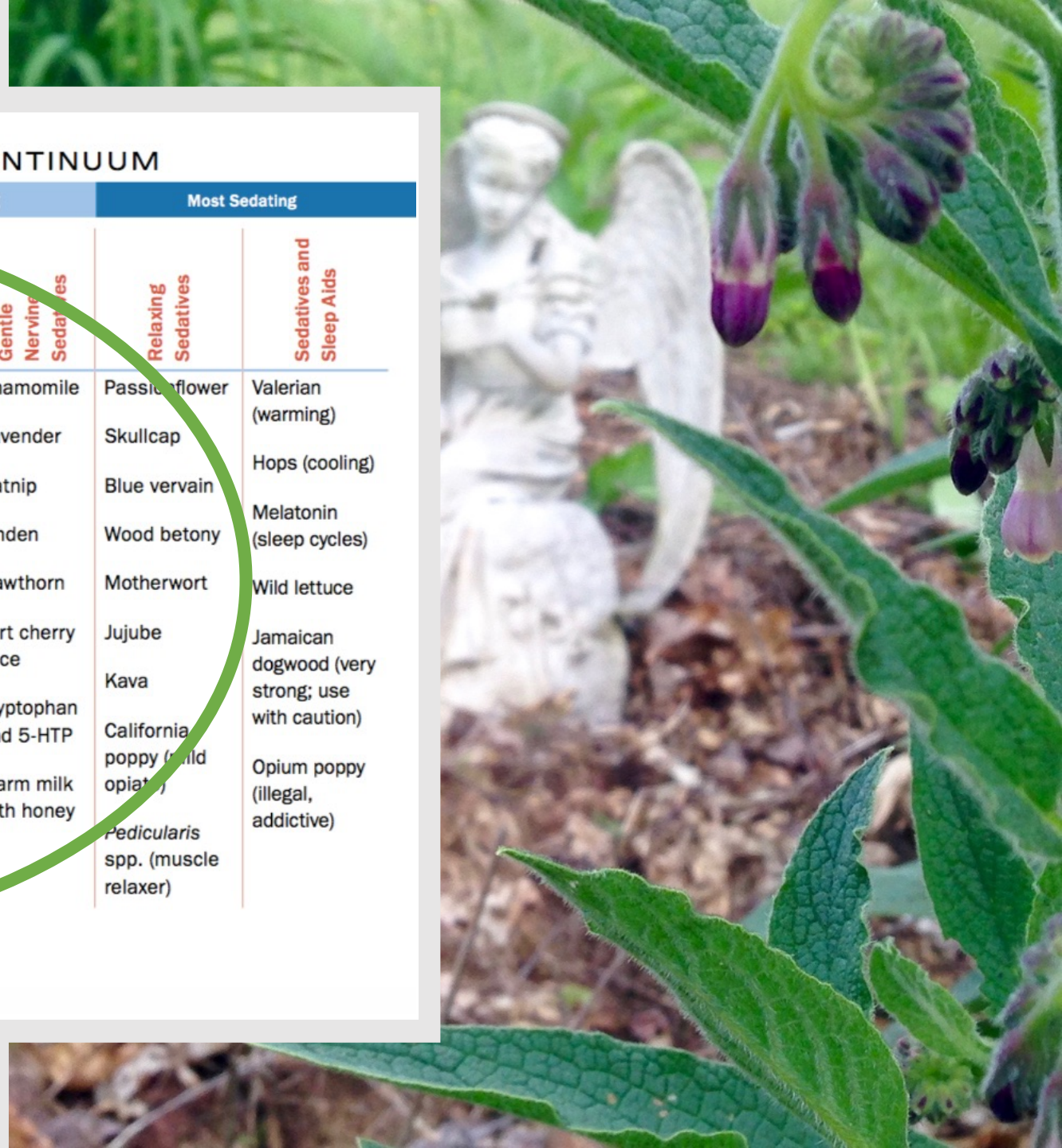


NERVOUS-ENDOCRINE SYSTEM HERB CONTINUUM

Caffeinated/Very Stimulating		Stimulating		Less Stimulating	Balancing/Neutral	Calming		Most Sedating	
High Caffeine	Low Caffeine	Stimulating Adaptogens	Semi-Stimulating Adaptogens	Balancing Adaptogens	Calm Energy Adaptogens	Calming and Uplifting Nervines	Gentle Nervine Sedatives	Relaxing Sedatives	Sedatives and Sleep Aids
Guarana*	Black tea*	Red Asian ginseng*	Codonopsis	Maca	Ashwagandha	Lemon balm*	Chamomile	Passion flower	Valerian (warming)
Kola nut *	Chocolate*	White Asian ginseng*	Eleuthero	Schizandra*	Holy basil*	Fresh milky oat seed	Lavender	Skullcap	Hops (cooling)
Coffee*	Green tea*	American ginseng*	Cordyceps fungus*	Licorice	Gotu kola*	St. John's wort	Catnip	Blue vervain	Melatonin (sleep cycles)
Yerba maté*	White tea*	Rhodiola*	Aralia spp.	Reishi mushroom*	Bacopa*	Linden	Hawthorn	Wood betony	Wild lettuce
			Jiaogulan*	Chaga	Shatavari	Damiana	Tart cherry juice	Jujube	Jamaican dogwood (very strong; use with caution)
						Bay leaf	Kava	California poppy (mild opiate)	Opium poppy (illegal, addictive)
						Nutmeg	Tryptophan and 5-HTP	Pedicularis spp. (muscle relaxer)	
						Mimosa	Warm milk with honey		
						Vanilla			
						Turmeric			

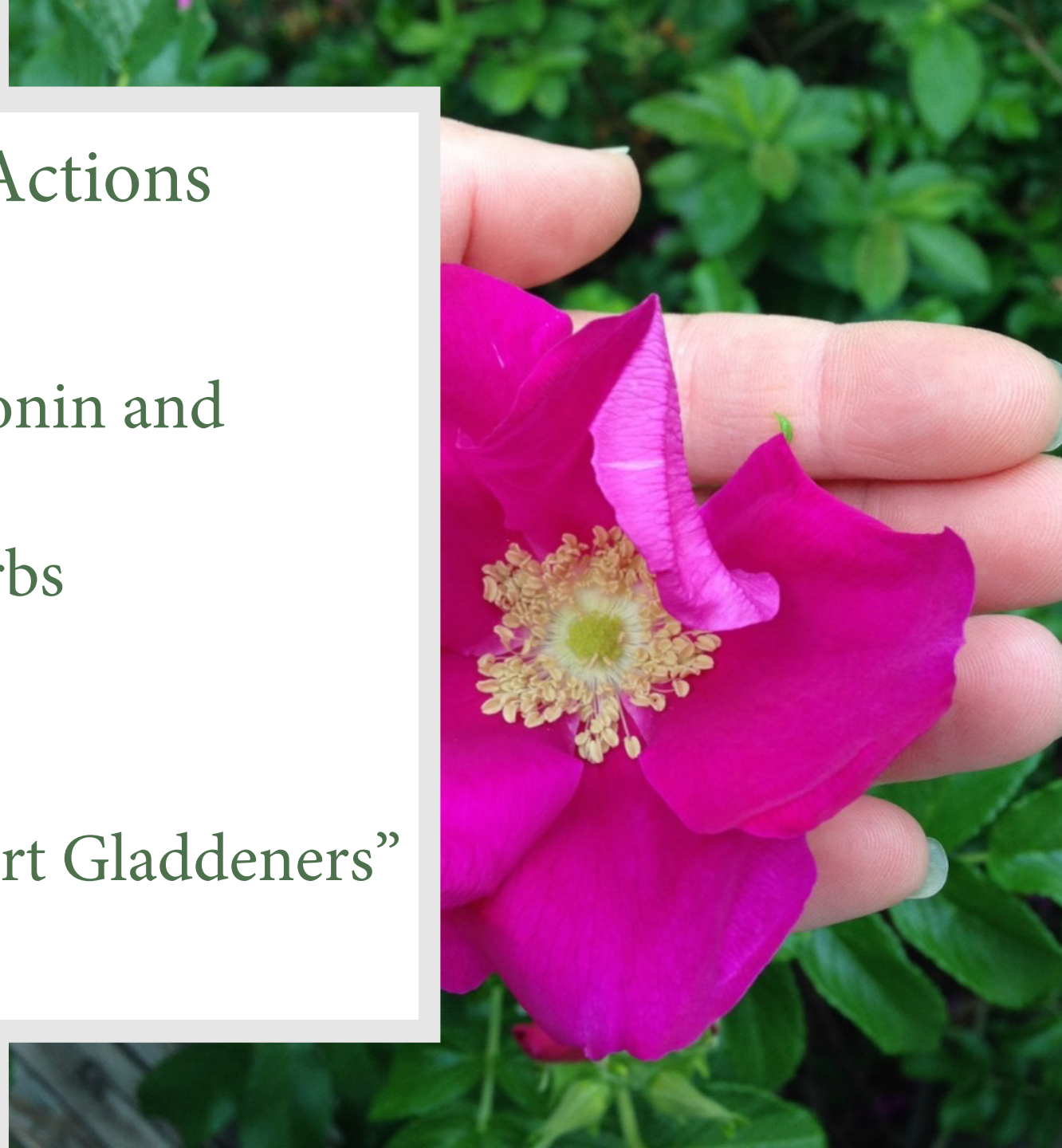
*These herbs have memory-enhancing, brain-boosting, and/or recovery-enhancing properties.

[Body into Balance, My expanded adaptogen chart](#)
 The above chart/image is in your extra webinar documents.



Key Herbal Categories/Actions that Uplift

- “Antidepressant” herbs, serotonin and neurotransmitter support
- Anti-inflammatory Mood Herbs
- Energizing Adaptogens
- Uplifting, Calming Nervines
- Uplifting Aromatics and “Heart Gladdeners”



Classic “Antidepressants”

Serotonin & Neurotransmitter Support

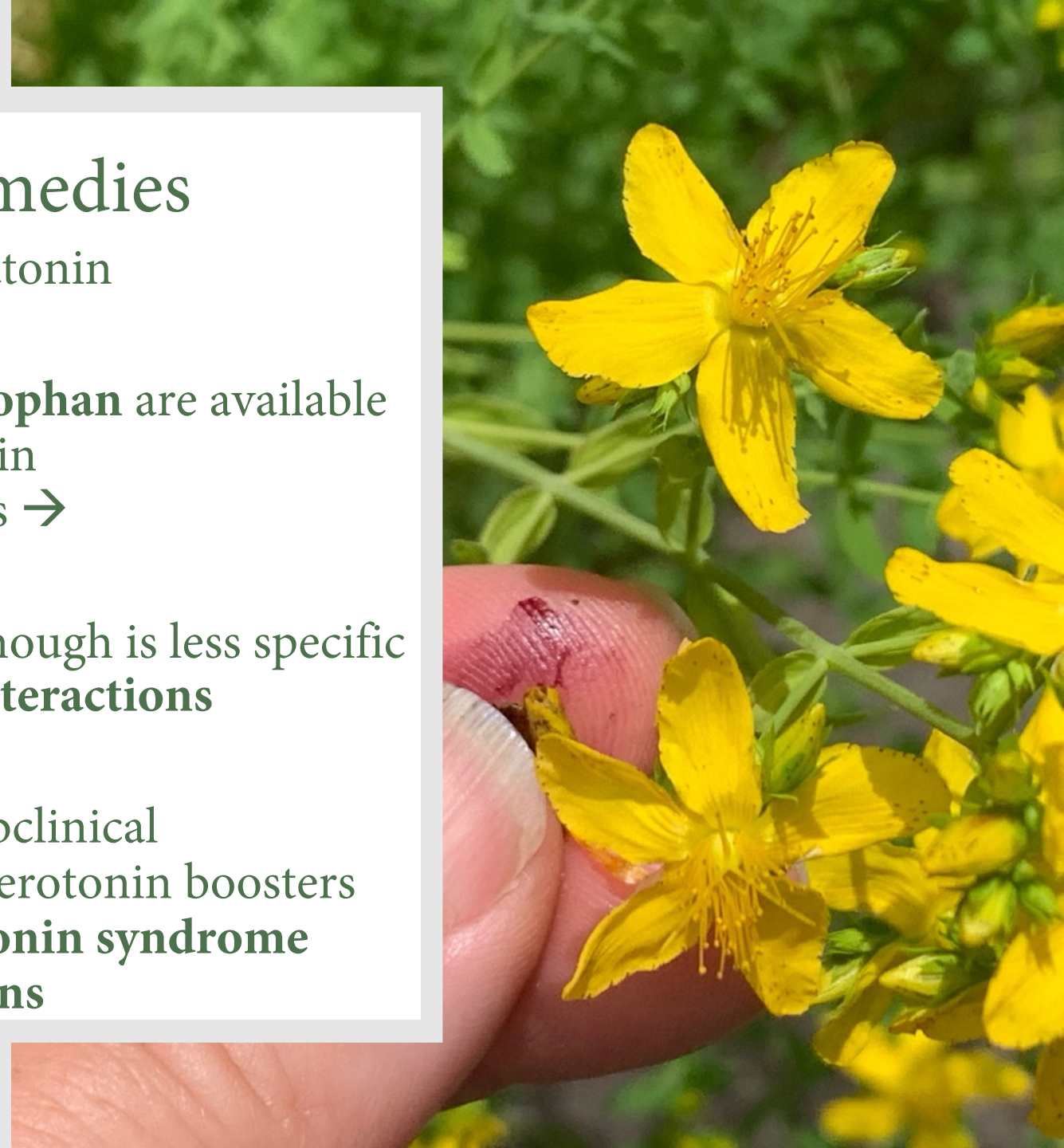
- St. John’s Wort
- Serotonin-Boosting Supplements
- Mimosa (Albizia, Silk Tree)
 - Saffron
 - Cannabis?

These herbs are known or suspected to support mood neurotransmitters such as serotonin. Their activity may or may not be comparable to (sufficient as) antidepressant drugs.



Serotonin Boosting Remedies


- **Tryptophan** supports serotonin and melatonin
Serotonin also supports sleep
- **5-HTP** (tryptophan precursor) and **tryptophan** are available as dietary supplements – increase serotonin
Avoid alongside serotonin-boosting drugs → life-threatening serotonin syndrome
- **St. John's wort** also increases serotonin though is less specific for sleep solo and has *many herb-drug interactions*
- **Serotonin Boosting Cautions:**
 1. **People with tendency to bipolar** or subclinical hypomania/bipolar tendencies may find serotonin boosters agitating,
 2. **Potentially dangerous serotonin syndrome alongside serotonin-boosting medications**



St. John's Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*)

- “Sunshine” nervine with strong clinical research as a safe **SSRI/SNRI-like** herb for mild to moderate depression and SAD, PMS, menopausal mood, anxiety, insomnia
- Approximately 100 clinical studies, generally good response – **benefit for depression (*semi-comparable* to meds), fewer side effects than meds**
- Usually **slow acting** (6+ weeks), **form/dose matters**, products **loses potency** quickly.
- **Cautions: Many herb-drug RX – serotonin syndrome risk, CYP450/CYP3A4 (and other CYP) drug clearance. May increase sun reaction/photosensitivity**
- Combines well with lemon balm, maybe turmeric

Ng, Lawvere, Winston, PubMed, Zhao 2023



Slightly Warming
Uplifting
Sun Energy
Nervine

Taking St. John's Wort

Best Forms (short shelf life!) = fresh buds/flowers

- 300 mg **standardized extract pill** 2-3x/day or 600-1500 mg daily. (900 mg/day most common)
Most Studied: WS[®]5570 Nature's Way Perika
- **CO2 extraction** pills, per label
- **Fresh Tincture** 1:2 bud/flower/tops, 95% alcohol, 2-4 ml 3x/day, best in formula
- **Harvest** in sunny spot, hot sunny week, place in sun while infusing to maximize **beneficial pigments (hypericin, hyperforin)**–
the **redder the better**

Fresh is generally best but freshly and high quality dried can still be very good. Most dried SJW on market = poor quality.



★ St. John's Wort 2023 Review

Table 1. Demographic summary of the included studies

Study and year	Sample size, n	Age [years]	Gender (F/M)	Duration [weeks]	Control drug			Test drug (SJW)		
					dose	positive response in patients with test drug	p-value	SJW extract dose	positive response in patients with control drugs	p-value
Hypericum depression trial study group 2002 [12]	340 mean HAMD ≥20	above 18 years	147/77	8	sertraline 50–100 mg/day	n = 79/111 M ±SD = 10.53 ±0.72	p = 0.21	900–1500 mg	n = 82/113 M ±SD = 8.68 ±6.8	p = 0.26
Lecrubier et al. 2002 [17]	375 mean HAMD ≥ 25	18–65	287/88	6	placebo	n = 80/189 M ±SD = 8.5 ±7.7	p = 0.04	300 mg/day	n = 98/189 M ±SD = 10.5 ±7	p = 0.237
Van Gorp et al. 2002 [14]	87 mean HAMD ≥ 16	18–65	52/33	12	sertraline 50–100 mg/day	n = 28/43 M ±SD = 11.5 ±8.4	p = 0.237	900–1800 mg/day	n = 30/43 M ±SD = 9.4 ±8.3	p = 0.237
Moreno et al. 2005 [18]	53 mean HAMD ≥ 20	19–64	44/9	8	fluoxetine 20 mg/day	n = 3/16 mean HAMD ≤ 10	p = 0.3794	900 mg/day	n = 6/18 mean HAMD ≤ 10	p = 0.0167
Fava et al. 2005 [13]	135 mean HAMD = 19.7 ±3.2	18–65	77/58	12	placebo 20 mg/day	n = 9/43 M ±SD = 12.6 ±6.4	p = 0.096	900 mg/day	n = 17/43 M ±SD = 10.2 ±6.6	p < 0.03
Bjerkenstedt et al. 2005 [12]	163 mean HAMD = 30	18–70	129/34	6	placebo 20 mg/day	n = 21/55 M ±SD = 15 ±8.4	p = 0.7	900 mg/day	n = 22/55 M ±SD = 15.5 ±6.7	p = 0.7
Szegedi et al. 2005 [24]	251 mean HAMD = 22	20–60	168/83	6	paroxetine 20 mg	n = 73/125 M ±SD = 11.4 ±8.6	p = 0.01	900 mg/day	n = 86/125 M ±SD = 14.4 ±8.8	p = 0.01
Simeon et al. 2005 [22]	26 mean HAMD = 18	12–17	14/12	8	sertraline 50 mg/day	n = 5/26 M ±SD = 10.8 ±5.3	p = 0.016	900 mg/day	n = 21/26 M ±SD = 10.8 ±5.3	p = 0.016
Kasper et al. 2006 [16]	332 mean HAMD = 18	18–65	205/127	6	placebo	n = 74/119 M ±SD = 17.6 ±8.8	p < 0.001	600 mg/day	n = 111/119 M ±SD = 11.8 ±8.3	p < 0.001
Ur-Rahman et al. 2008 [19]	112 mean HAMD = 18	18–65	87/25	6	placebo 300 mg thrice daily	n = 23/56 M ±SD = 10.04 ±0.8	p = 0.4	300 mg thrice daily	n = 35/56 M ±SD = 8.04 ±1.0	p = 0.4
Weber et al. 2008 [25]	54 mean HAMD = 18	6–17	20/34	8	placebo	n = 12/27 mean HAMD ≤ 10	p = 0.89	300 mg/day	n = 14/27 mean HAMD ≤ 10	p = 0.68
Singer et al. 2011 [23]	154 mean HAMD ≥ 20	18–74	73/35	6	20 mg citalopram	n = 24/54 mean HAMD ≤10	p = 0.0288	900 mg/day	n = 26/54 mean HAMD ≤ 10	p = 0.0288
Sarris et al. 2012 [20]	124 mean HAMD = 18	18–60	81/43	26	sertraline 50–100 mg/day	n = 64/124 M ±SD = 7.1 ±5.4	p = 0.036	900–1500 mg/day	n = 105/124 M ±SD = 6.6 ±4.5	p = 0.03
Seifritz et al. 2016 [21]	64 mean HAMD = 25	18–70	31/32	6	paroxetine 20 mg/day	n = 8/33 M ±SD = 22.9 ±0.8	p = 0.248	3 × 300 mg/day	n = 20/31 M ±SD = 23.1 ±0.9	p = 0.248

SJW – St. John's wort; HAMD – Hamilton Depression Rating Scale; M ±SD – mean value ± standard deviation.



Zhao 2023 Review Take-Aways

2270 people in 14 studies published 2000-2022

- **Main Conclusion** = of benefit for depression with fewer side effects than meds

Also looking at the study overview summaries...

- SJW generally good or better effect vs meds in HAM-D score (lower score = better)
- Often more people respond to SJW than meds
- More people responded but not quite as good of mean depression scores in *major* depression for SJW vs meds

HAM-D Score

0-7 normal

8-16 mild

17-23 moderate

24+ severe

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SJW - St. John's wort; HAM-D - Hamilton Depression Rating Scale; M \pm SD - mean value \pm standard deviation.



Other Study Take-Aways

- 2017 meta-analysis of 27 clinical trials on 3808 patients, ranging 4-12 weeks of use on *mild to moderate depression* → SJW was showed **comparable response and remission rate with significantly lower discontinuation/dropout to SSRIs**
- 2016 double-blind randomized study comparing 300 mg 3x/day SJW to 20 mg paroxetine (**Paxil**) for 6 weeks *major depressive episode* SJW = **better response (87 vs 61%) and remission rates (71 vs 42%) vs Paxil**





St. John's Wort Cautions

- May interact with ~50% of medications
 - Increased serotonin syndrome risk (agitation, rapid heart rate, twitching, dilated pupils...)
 - Increased CYP450/CYP3A4 (and other CYP) drug clearance – lowers drug doses
- May increase TSH
- Semi rare: increased photosensitivity
- Slow acting, anecdotal poor response



Mimosa/Albizia (*Albizia julibrissin*)

- “Tree of Happiness” a.k.a silk tree, sensitive tree
- TCM small tree naturalized/invasive in mid-Atlantic and California
- Fast-acting, makes you happy, alleviates depression and anxiety without sedation
- Useful in grief and heartache, possibly trauma
- Long history of use but few/nearly zero preliminary studies, mainly on anxiety
- Excellent in-clinic success amongst herbalists



Cooling
Calm Uplift

Taking Mimosa


Best Forms:

- Bark = stronger, fresh (1:2, 95%) or freshly dried (1:5, 50-60%) as a tincture, 1-2 ml 3x/day
- Flowers = weaker but popular addition (delightful, aromatic, flower energy)
- Decocted tea may also suffice
- “Albizia” tincture available in commerce (Herb Pharm, Planetary Formulas), Five Flavor Herbs, also dry from TCM suppliers. “Silk Tree” via Mountain Rose Herbs.
- Long history of safe use in TCM
- No modern data for herb-drug RX. *Maybe* ok with SSRIs?



Saffron (*Crocus sativus*)

- Vivid yellow red color, pungent odd aroma
- Uplifting, **neuro-anti-inflammatory**, nootropic (brain boost)
- Studies show improved happiness, reduced depression, possibly as effective as meds and no worse side effects. 90+% remission rates.
- May support **serotonin, dopamine, and norepinephrine** function (inhibiting their reuptake). Several of positive small clinical trials.



Pungent
Brightening
Nootropic
Anti-inflammatory

Sources: [Picheta](#), Thomas Easley, [2020 review of 12 studies](#); [Tabeshpour](#) Photo by [Aaron Burden](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Saffron (*Crocus sativus*)

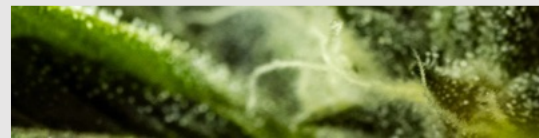
- May also enhance/aid sleep though few people find problematic more or less sleep with it
- **Dose:** 15-50 mg, 1-2x/day **extract pill.**
Tincture Dry 1:10 in 40% alcohol (percolate) 5-10 drops 3x/day (Easley)
Tea 30 mg stigmas boiled 10-15 min 1x/day
- **EXPENSIVE** 1 stigma = 2 mg; 3 stigma per flower
- **Cautions:** Ok with SSRIs/meds?? (some studies suggest it is safe to combine) About 3% of people in studies had sleep disturbances (lack of or oversleeping), 6% had GI upset

Sources: [Picheta](#), Thomas Easley, [2020 review of 12 studies](#);
[Tabeshpour](#) Photo by [Aaron Burden](#) on [Unsplash](#)



Cannabis?

- Many people see significant improvement in mood as well as pain, anxiety, sleep with cannabis products including hemp flower/CBD-only or CBD-forward products +/- or traditional THC-forward
- CBD and THC often support mood, calm, less pain, deeper sleep but *many* variables, dose dependencies, cannabinoids, terpenes.
- Research suggests CBD and CBDA are 100x more potent in binding to serotonin receptors. CBD binds to dopamine receptors. Linalool, limonene among calming, uplifting terpenes.
- Learn more from [Tammi Sweet](#) and others



Cannabis?

- Start w/low dose! Use the *minimum effective dose*.
- Increasingly available (especially hemp, CBD) depending on your state. Quality, formulation, and potency vary widely. Seek reputable herbal organic farms, companies. Full spectrum. Avoid/limit high pinene, myrcene strains
- **Safety concerns** (mostly studied/noted for THC, especially with higher doses and overuse) include addiction/withdrawal, hyperemesis syndrome, reduction in REM (dream) sleep. Unclear safety with serotonin syndrome (at least one possible case), liver clearance of drugs, etc.
- **Cannabis use and overuse has also been linked to *increased* in mental health conditions**
- Learn more from Tammi Sweet and others



Anti-Inflammatory

- Saffron
- Turmeric

lemon balm, holy basil, lion's mane, cannabis, rosemary, bacopa, and many others are also neuro-anti-inflammatory or nootropic (brain boosting) uplifting herbs



Turmeric

- *Curcuma longa* & curcumin highlights
- Best known as anti-oxidant, anti-inflammatory, liver detox/protective herb
- A few studies find it comparable to Prozac (65% improvement) for major depression and better (80%) when combined with the drug
- May speak to inflammation-depression connection

Warming
Slightly drying
Alterative





Taking Turmeric

- Studies used 500 mg curcumin extract in pill form 2x/day for 8 weeks
- Traditional whole forms may also be useful:
- Golden Milk: 1 teaspoon w/small pinch black pepper in hot fatty milk with honey, I add a generous pinch of cardamom and nutmeg
- In Food: Best extracted with fat, black pepper
- Contrasts: blood thinning, *slightly possible* CYP450/3A4 inhibitor/drug RX, sometimes aggravates (but sometimes helps) reflux, gastritis, ulcers
black pepper is worse for GI and drug RX issues



Energizing Adaptogens

- Ashwagandha
- Rhodiola

Also maca, eleuthero, codonopsis, schizandra, reishi

Generally safe alongside antidepressant meds.

General cautions for overstimulation, anxiety, mania, sleep problems for some people

Less Zippy: shatavari (hormone/menopause/sleep support), holy basil, magnolia...



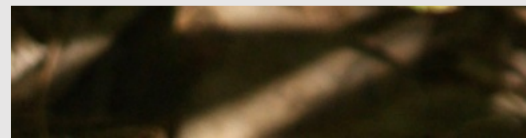
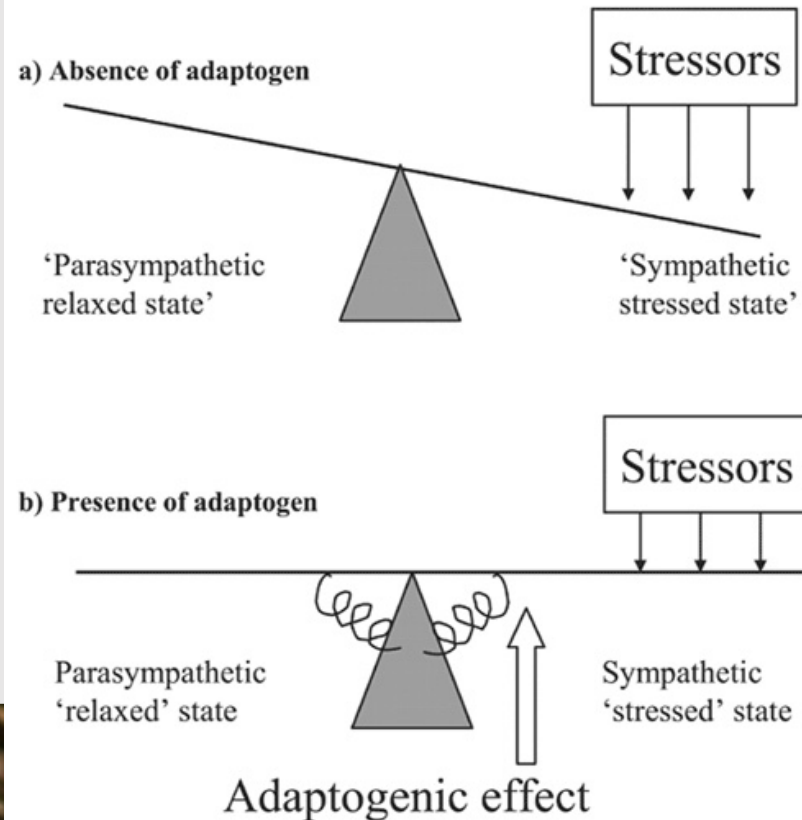
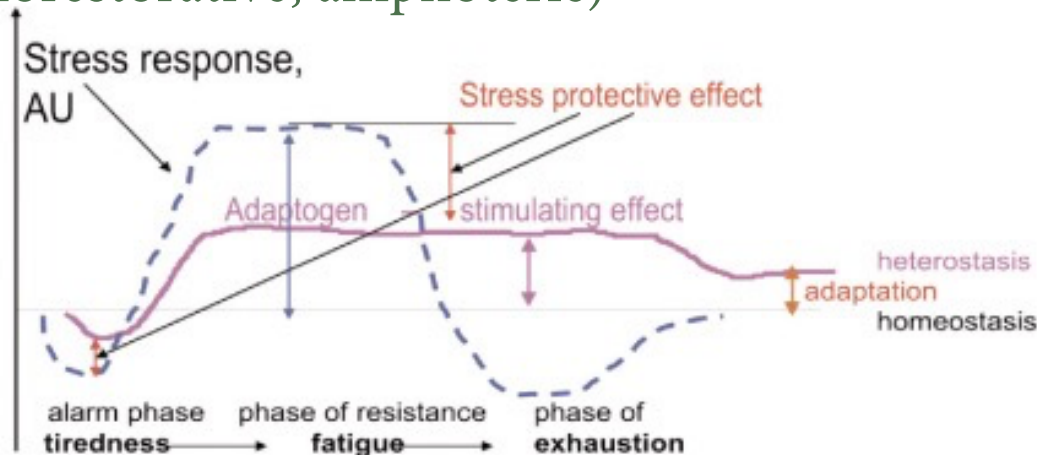
Adaptogens for Stress & Energy

adaptogens help us adapt to stress so we survive better

Basic “requirements” to be an adaptogen

1. Safe, nontoxic, tonic
2. Benefit a variety of body systems
3. Modulate (= trophorestorative, amphoteric)
4. Often work via stress/HPA axis



Often energize, boost mood, enhance stress resilience



Ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*)

- African and Indian/Ayurveda Traditions: **Spirit/Strength of the Horse** – Take roots 1 year → strength of a stallion for the next 10
- **Longevity, energy and vitality tonic, anti-inflammatory**
- **Deep Energy:** reduce fatigue, ↑ muscle strength/recovery
- ↑ **Mood**, stress response, *usually* eases anxiety, aids sleep
- ↑ **thyroid**, cognition, immune modulator, anti-inflammatory
- **Masculine Energy & Sexual Vitality in All Genders:** ↑ fertility and libido/sexual function in all genders (arousal, lubrication, orgasm, satisfaction), ↑ sperm count, motility, testosterone, muscle strength/build, energy
- **Cautions:** hyperthyroid, thyroid meds, nightshade. May overstimulate, agitate, disrupt sleep in deficient folks.

Clinical experience, Winston, Khalsa, [Singh Review](#), [Sharma, ABC](#), [Bhattacharya](#), [Verma](#), [Dar](#), [Jahanbakhsh](#), [Choudhary](#), [Sengupta](#), [Wankhede](#), [Dongre](#)



Warm
Deep Strength
Gentle
Stimulation
Building
Restorative



Taking Ashwagandha Roots

- India-grown ashwagandha seems stronger, more stimulating, more thyroid-boosting than USA/NE-grown.
- Root Extract: pills most often studied, 120 mg – 600 mg daily in divided doses
- Powder: Traditional method in Ayurveda, 1-2 g daily as tonic, 15 g/day as acute tonic
- Tincture: Dry roots 1:5 in 50-60% alcohol, 1-5 ml 1-3x/day
- Hot Milk: ¼-1 teaspoon simmered, add honey, nutmeg, cinnamon, etc. as desired
- Also nice in decoctions, broth, nut balls
- While some use leaves/aerial parts, it's not clear if they have all the same purpose/benefits and safety ingested. Roots are traditional in Ayurveda.





Adaptogen Chai

Simmer in 16 ounces of water for 20 minutes.

- Base Chai:
- 2 **cinnamon** sticks
- 2 **cardamom** pods
- Optional: ginger, licorice, nutmeg, vanilla, bay...
- Therapeutic Additions, ~ ½-1 teaspoon each per choice:
- **ashwagandha** (calm adapt) • turmeric (liver/infl)
- **codonopsis** (zip/energy) • gotu kola (brain/adapt)
- astragalus (immune) • chaga/reishi (immune)
- **nettle** (for nutrition) • oat straw (nutrition)
- marshmallow (gut) • burdock/dandy (liver)
- **Bolded** personal favorites, but I like them all.





Ashwagandha Golden Milk

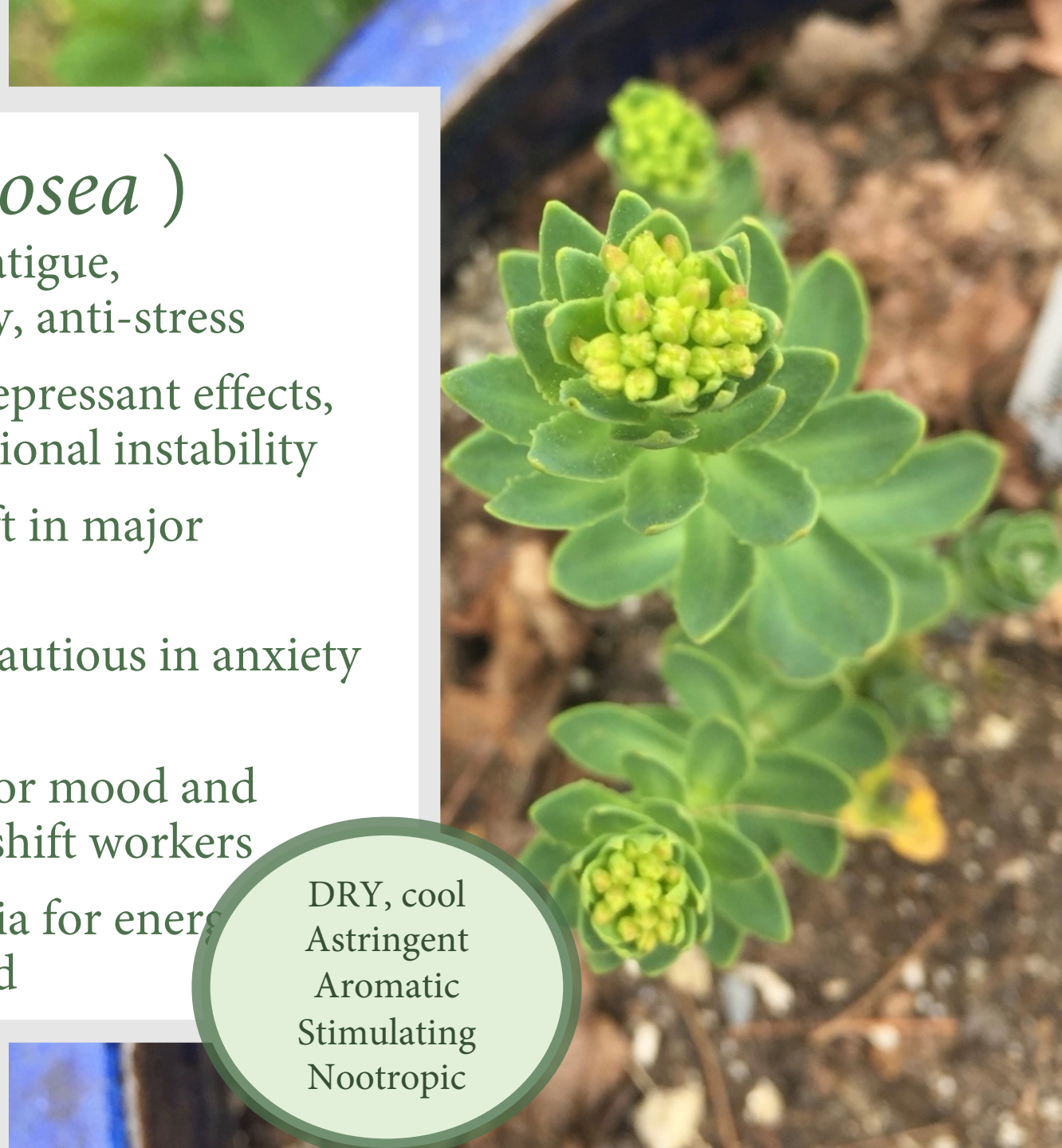
- ~ 8 ounces of milk (cow, coconut, or almond)
- ¼ to ½ teaspoon ashwagandha powder
- ¼ to ½ teaspoon turmeric powder
- pinch nutmeg
- pinch cardamom
- 1 teaspoon honey or to taste
- Heat milk, stir in herb powders and sweeten to taste.
Enjoy 1-2x per day.



Rhodiola (*Rhodiola rosea*)

- Zippy, nootropic, mood elevator, anti-fatigue, neurotonic/restorative, brain fog, energy, anti-stress
- Several clinical studies support its anti-depressant effects, including decreased insomnia and emotional instability
- Helpful, though not as effective as Zoloft in major depression, fewer adverse effects
- Though some studies show benefit, be cautious in anxiety and insomnia
- Well supported with studies including for mood and cognition students taking exams, night shift workers
- Historical use in Siberia, Hungary, Russia for energy, vitality, longevity, to live to 100 years old

DRY, cool
Astringent
Aromatic
Stimulating
Nootropic





Rhodiola Study Summaries

- Review of 2 RDBPC studies 146 people with major depression + 7 open-label studies on 714 people with stress-induced mild depression: Rhodiola showed multi-target effects, favorable response, fewer side effects
- RDBPC 6 week study: 340 mg rhodiola (1x/day), 680 mg (2x/day), or placebo for 6 weeks, 35%, 30%, 3% reduction in HAM-D score respectively. Also improvements in insomnia and emotional stability.





Taking Rhodiola Root

- **Seek organic *cultivated* USA grown**
- Pills: 200-600 mg crude or 100+ mg standardized extract
- Tincture: Dry 1:5 in 50-60%, 1-2 ml, 1-2x/day
- Low/moderate dose daily, higher dose for acute need energy boost
- **Cautions:** DRY/astringent, potential stomach upset, may over-stimulate, may aggravate mania
- **Commonly adulterated** with others
Rhodiola species – unclear if similar benefits
- **CITES, Sustainability, adulteration concerns**
- **Getting expensive**



Calm Mood Nervines

Calming adaptogens

Trophorestorative & Uplifting Nervines

Uplifting Aromatics & Heart Gladdeners

- Lemon Balm
- Holy Basil (Tulsi)

Also motherwort, bacopa, roses, damiana, magnolia, mimosa, reishi, milky oat seed, ashwagandha, wood betony, schizandra.

More relaxing (caution w/meds): chamomile, lavender...



Lemon Balm (*Melissa officinalis*)

- Long history of use and some clinical evidence to gladden the heart, lift and calm the spirits, increase focus, ease stress, benign heart palpitations, anxiety, possible MOA inhibition
- Aromatic, essential oil benefit
- Reduces anxiety and improves focus in one dose in one hour, high doses may sedate
- Also for digestion, herpes/antiviral, hyperthyroid

Clinical experience, [Winston](#), [Alijaniha](#), [Kennedy2004](#), [Kennedy2003](#), [Shakeri](#); Maria's [Herbrally](#) & [Rosalee Videos](#)

Cooling
Carminative
Aromatic
Calm Uplift





Taking Lemon Balm

- Winston likes it combined with SJW (feels they're better together than separate). It blends well with most nerve/mood herbs.
- Fresh is best! Tincture 1:2 in 95%, 1-4 ml 1-3x daily or as needed. Even the tincture loses potency within a few years.
- Quality dried tea has modest benefit, 1-3 teaspoons per cup as desired. Great with tulsi, green tea, rose...
- Studies mostly done on powder/capsules
- Oxymel or glycerine for alcohol-free
- Very well tolerated, child-safe, and likely fine even in hypothyroid conditions.



Holy Basil (*Ocimum sanctum* & co.)

- Aromatic, uplifting, calming, balances cortisol, induces parasympathetic, nootropic, hypoglycemic
- Long history for medicine and spirit in India
- Zen-like state
- Adaptogen with cortisol balancing properties, hypoglycemic, supports parasympathetic response, anti-anxiety, nootropic
- Also digestive/carminative, antimicrobial, immune supportive, anticancer...
- Careful in hypoglycemia, thyroid, fertility, vata people, makes some people feel high

Clinical experience, [Winston](#), [Cohen](#), [Mondal](#), [Sampath](#), [Bhattacharyya](#), [Blog Monograph/Barkelew](#)

Growing It - Annual
Possibly Tender Perennial.
Tolerates Pots. Grow like basil.
Loves good soil, moderate/well-drained
moisture, full sun, warmth.
Kapoor/Temperate = easiest
Pinch flowers. Harvest aerial.

Cooling
Carminative
Aromatic
Calm Uplift





Holy Basil Study Summary

- Handful of small clinical studies so far
- 39% improvement in stress reduction vs placebo (1200 mg OciBest, 6 weeks), including reductions in sleep problems, headache, palpitation at rest, GI issues, cognitive issues, sexual problems...
- 2017 review of 24 clinical studies – most were for metabolic issues, some immunomodulation, and 4 for neurocognitive/stress/mood, 4-12 weeks
- ~1000mg/day extracts, 6 g crude herb



More Holy Basil Studies

- 2008 controlled trial on 35 people with generalized anxiety disorder (GAD)
- 500 mg extract capsule, twice daily after a meal for 60 days
- Nearly 20% reduction in anxiety at 30 days, 35% at 60 days
- Stress, depression, and attention improvements by 28-34% at 60 days (about half that at 30 days)
- Willingness to adjust, 25% improvement



Growing Holy Basil

- Also called Tulsi, Sacred Basil.
O. tenuiflorum = new name for *O. sanctum*
(Rama, Krishna, Amrita varieties)
O. gratissimum (Vana) also popular
O. x africanum (Kapoor, Temperate, unnamed – most common in USA): fave, easy to grow, often sold simply as Sacred Basil (*O. sanctum* or *O. tenuiflorum*)
- Grow like culinary basil: loves heat, full sun, rich well-drained soil with moderate to regular moisture. Grows ok from seeds, well from seedling.
- Annual/tender perennial – tolerates pots, may or may not survive winter indoors.
- Hates cold, dies with frost.





Taking Holy Basil

- Multiple varieties, *O. gratissimum* also used
- Kapoor (often unnamed variety) = most productive in temperate garden
- Market quality is often poor
- Useful fresh or dried in any form – capsules, tincture, CO2 extract, oxymel, glycerite...
- Tea is a personal favorite – beneficial aromatherapy included! Also water, seltzer
- Blends well with green tea, lemon balm, rose
- Contra: hypoglycemia, thyroid??., makes some people spacey or anxious



Wrapping Up





Suggestions for Weaning Off Rx

- **Refer to a doctor** for medication adjustments
- Focus on feeling as well as possible *first*
→ Support with diet, lifestyle, safe-to-combine-w/meds herbs, flower essences, etc.
- **Wean slowly** (with doctor's guidance!)
- **Add in** natural support as needed during weaning
- If a someone does best with meds, that's ok – natural approaches can support alongside meds
- **UK NICE guidelines article and training video** and also see here. Also see this suggested weaning chart to **discuss with your prescriber.**

Where to Buy Herbs

- **Find your local herb growers/farms** for seedlings, fresh, and dried herbs! This is usually the *best* quality if not your own.
- **Mail Order Seeds/Seedlings:** Strictly Medicinal Seeds, Companion Plants, Crimson Sage Nursery, Richter's
- **Dried Herbs – Homegrown**
Quality Herb Shops – Misty Meadows, Alchemy & Herbs...
Farms – Oshala Farm, Foster Farm, Zack Woods, Healing Spirits, Terra Basics... (several will sell fresh-cut too)
Big - Mountain Rose, Pacific Botanicals
- **Finished Remedies - Big Brands (Co-ops, Online, Natural Food Stores):** Gaia Herbs, Herb Pharm, Oregon's Wild Harvest, Herbalist & Alchemist, Urban Moonshine, Wise Woman Herbals, MegaFood, Avena Botanicals



Helpful Resources

- Of course my books 😊 – *Body into Balance* & *Grow Your Own Herbal Remedies, Herbal Remedies for Sleep*
- My blog on making various types of remedies
- Andrew Weil, *Spontaneous Happiness*
- Thomas Easley's mental health and depression classes (advanced)
- Christa Sinadinos' *The Essential Guide to Western Botanical Medicine*: amazingly in-depth monographs on 140+ plants
- David Winston, *Adaptogens* and *Differential Treatment of Depression*
- Rosalee de la Foret's website & books: approachable, detailed
- *AHPA Botanical Safety Handbook*
- See my favorite science links for evidence-based sources



Connect with Maria!

1. Order Maria's Books: via her website or wherever books are sold
2. Register for a class or course – beginner/intermediate Home Herbalist Series, Beyond the Home Herbalist Series, Advanced/Modules
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5. Health Consultation info and scheduling online





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