

Welcome to the
Herb Growers
Network of WA



Herb of the
Month:
Wild Lettuce

Network News

Hi All,

I hope you all have survived the storm, healthy and happy. I have no home phone which is making for a very quite life.

A message from a fellow herbalist Christine has some Kombucha scabies and Kefir grains if anyone is interested. She can be contacted at

royandchristinek@gmail.com, if you are interested in starting your own Kombucha and Kefir growing. We have a new blood powder

happening, I like it, it is quite spicy, though not too hot. I was looking to get it as red blood colour as possible. Still working on that. Guaranteed to clean the blood, happy to send some samples if anyone is interested. Still looking for more herb growers, if you know any peoples interested then send them my way.

Enjoy your month,

Louise Plant



Interesting Facts to Consider

PEOPLE who drink at least two soft drinks a week nearly double their risk of developing pancreatic cancer, a study has revealed.

Researchers collected data on the consumption of soft drinks, juice and other dietary items, as well as lifestyle and environmental factors of 60,524 people who were part of the huge Singapore Chinese Health Study, following up with study participants for up to 14 years.

The research found there was a 87 per cent higher risk of developing pancreatic cancer for those who drank two or more soft drinks per week. No link was found between drinking fruit juice and developing pancreatic cancer, said the study which was published in *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers and Prevention*.

LONG BEACH, California — Red grapes and dark chocolate join blueberries, garlic, soy, and teas as ingredients that starve cancer while feeding bodies, Angiogenesis Foundation head William Li said at a prestigious TED Conference.

"We are rating foods based on their cancer-fighting qualities," Li said. "What we eat is really our chemotherapy three times a day." The Massachusetts-based foundation is identifying foods containing chemicals that evidently choke-off blood supplies to tumors, starving them to death.

Li cited a Harvard Medical School study showing that men who ate cooked tomatoes several times weekly were 30 to 50 percent less likely to have prostate cancer. The foundation pitted some foods against approved drugs and found that soy, parsley, red grapes, berries and other comestibles were either as effective or more potent in battling cancer cells.

QUALITY HERBS Given with WISDOM

Do you know where you are able to find quality herbs?

Do you know where you can find information and traditional uses of herbs?

- The Herb Growers Network of WA, offers Quality Herbs with Wisdom.

Article

Meditation

Meditation is a very effective way to reduce stress.

When our stress levels are high meditation is one of the most powerful ways to trigger a relaxation response. This response then helps our bodies to restore homeostasis. Homeostasis is a way of regulating our internal environment to maintain a constant and stable condition.

It is not beneficial for us to remain stressed for prolonged periods of time. Long term stress will decrease our immune systems and this in turn will increase the incidence of diseases that we have. This stress over time will affect the health of our adrenal glands and if long term and severe it can lead to adrenal exhaustion. Adrenal exhaustion is when we will have, what is commonly called a 'nervous breakdown.' Long term stress will also affect our heart and our cardio-vascular system. High blood pressure can be attributed to stress, this in turn will shorten and reduce our quality and quantity of life. Stress affects our nervous system and even our thyroid and this can lead to metabolic disturbances. Chronic long term stress will lead to muscular pain, heart disease, kidney and respiratory dysfunction, fatigue, cell damage, thymus destruction, poor immune function and even digestive disturbances such as irritable bowel syndrome.

Stress can occur from being too under-aroused as much as being too over stimulated. It is known that stress will shorten our lifespan. It will also make us less tolerant to the things that will happen in our lives and this can reflect on our family and loved ones.

We all have stress in our lives, stress can come from our environment, our foods, the chemicals we put on and in our bodies, from work, from family and the list can go on. We all need to eat, maintain our family life, work and interact with others. Life is constantly moving and we are never standing still. It is like standing on a seesaw, we often need to move back and forth to maintain our balance in life. The trick to doing this is to incorporate something into our lives to help us 'detox' from the stress in our lives. Meditation will do this.

When we are tense our breathing becomes shallow and it can even stop. When we have shallow breathing we are not saturating all the cells in our bodies with the essential oxygen that it needs for life. When we meditate we start to relax in seconds.

One aim of meditation is to restore the body into a state of balance. To have us to start breathing again in a healthy and deep fashion. Once breathing deeply our cells will be provided with more oxygen and will in turn work more effectively. Cells working effectively as a team will give us more happy organs and this in turn provides us with a happier body.

We do not always know how stressed we are. It can be a comparison thing. Ask yourself, "Am I doing this in a relaxed state or a tense state?" and see what your body has to say. We can believe we are not stressed, though when we take ourselves to a deeper state of relaxation we can find out that we were quite stressed after all.



*Organic Green Teas
with a hint of herbs*



*Our Lumina Tea
for stress*

Meditation

When we meditate it allows us to put the mental noise and barrage aside and to listen to our inner voice and inner being. It is not just about stilling the mind, as for when we think about stilling our minds, we find that we actually think more. It is more about learning to focus and to stay focused.

Meditation is not about sitting in the lotus position and chanting Om (though it is for some), it is about bringing yourself into the present, into the here and now and learning to focus on your senses rather than your mental thought patterns. It is possible to meditate whilst you are driving, walking, eating, even whilst you might be doing something that you are not happy with such as smoking or drinking. You can change the way that you look at this to be focused and present on what you are doing.

Osho is well worth reading. He has meditations for smoking. He says just do what ever you are doing, do it slowly, use all your senses, smell what you are doing, breathe deeply and enjoy it. Over time as you become more tuned into your inner voice, you will become more aware of what your inner voice is saying. After more time you just might start to listen to the advice from that inner voice and stop doing the things that causes your being harm. Well worth trying.

Meditation is about being relaxed as well as being alert. Alert to the inner signals and voices. It does not matter what technique that you use. Ideally you want to find a technique that is most suited to increasing your ability to relax.

There are some techniques that have been proven to give a deeper state of relaxation and these are techniques such as Transcendental Meditation (TM) or simple Mantra

meditations. Mantra is focusing on the same thing over and over again. It can be a word such as love, peace, joy, Om or it could be repeating a phrase.

With all mediation the aims are to

1. Focus and increase the focus over time
2. Bring yourself into the present
3. Bring your attention to your senses rather than your thoughts

As you do this you will find that thoughts and sensations will rise to the surface. This is quite normal and when you then allow yourself to let the thoughts to pass, they will eventually disappear. Whilst I did some training in TM, an analogy was used of bubbles rising to the surface from the deep sea. The bubbles are the thoughts, and these thoughts will always head up to the surface. As the bubbles rise to the surface they will become larger as the pressure become less. If you let the bubbles do their thing, they will continue to rise until they eventually reach the top of the surface, where they will 'pop' and be released.

Other mediations you might consider are

1. Scanning the body looking for stress and then consciously relaxing them
2. Tightening and then relaxing different parts of the body to give comparison between relaxed and tight muscles .
3. Filling yourselves with colours and having a colour bath.
4. Filling your body with white light to cleanse, purify and energise.
5. Just focusing on deep breathing
6. Working though the chakra energy points
7. Meditating into or with music
8. Breathing out dark and breathing in light
9. Seeing your body and seeing the healthy cells from the inside
10. Spending time in a 'special' place that you create inside where you can relax and feel safe

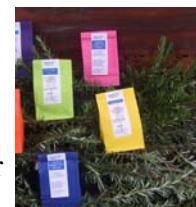
So I hope I have given you some inspiration and desire to take more time out. It is working for me.

It is a little action that helps to go a long way. Let yourself know that you are worthy of having a relaxed and stress free time. Create a healthy environment for you and others and meditate!

Louise Plant

mediation aims are

1. Focus
2. Bring yourself into the present
3. Bring your attention to your senses rather than your thoughts



*Celestial
Herb Teas*





Herb of the Month— Wild lettuce

Name: Wild lettuce

Botanic Name – *Lactuca virosa*

Family - Asteraceae—sunflower family

Other Names - Prickly Lettuce, opium lettuce, Compass plant, Horse thistle, Bitter lettuce

Parts Used: Leaves and latex.

History: It has historically been used as a tranquilizer and as a pain killer. In the 19th century it was used as a substitute for opium. There is a story that the Roman Emperor Augustus constructed a statue of a physician who treated him with wild lettuce. He felt it was that good, he wanted to honour the physician who used it.

Habitat: The plant originally spread across central and Southern Europe and North Asia. The plant is known as compass plant as the leaves follow the direction of the sun.

Description - Wild lettuce is a hollow stemmed biennial which grows to 1.2m. It has broad spiny leaves and clusters of pale yellow flowers. All parts of the plant exude a white milky latex. All varieties of lettuce also contain some percentage of narcotic sap and among them *Lactuca virosa* has the maximum concentration of juice. The other varieties of lettuce include *L. scariola* commonly known as prickly lettuce, *L. altissima*, *L. Canadensis* or wild lettuce commonly found in America and *L. sativa* also known as the garden lettuce.

Propagation – It grows very easily and will readily self seed. It can be found in Australia, growing wild in many parts of Europe and in North America. Wild lettuce is a commonly growing plant in all parts of Europe and is found in abundance in the open areas and along the pavements. The herb is commercially cultivated in countries like Austria, France, Germany and Scotland. The herb also grows in waste lands and along the embankments. The herb is collected in summer when the plant is in blossom. Harvesters cut the apex of wild lettuce and rub it several times in chinaware to extract the herb's juice or sap. The sap is then warmed a little and tapped to bring it out of its solid cup shape. Next, the substance is cut into small parts and dehydrated for future use.

Active Compounds - Sesquiterpene lactones including lactucopicrin and lactucerin. It is this that has the sedative effect. The leaves contain flavonoids apigenin, luteolin, quercetin, mannitol and coumarins. The fresh leaf contains hyoscyamine but not in the dried leaf. It also contains iron, vitamins A, B1, B2 and C.

Actions

- Sedative
- Anodyne
- Hypnotic
- Diuretic

Indications – Wild lettuce can be used in cases of an overactive nervous system and as a sedative. The dreamy effects are a little bit similar to opium, but milder. Wild lettuce can help reduce the feeling of restlessness, excitability and insomnia. It will help to sedate and enhance sleep. It is beneficial for anxiety and for strong emotions. It can be used for excitability and nervousness in children and will be far more beneficial than any ADHD medications!

It can relieve colic pains in the intestines and uterus and also muscular pains related to rheumatism. Some Indians use the herb to enhance the vividness of dreams. They believe that induced dream states provide more information about reality than the conscious waking state.

Wild lettuce can be combined with licorice to help alleviate coughs. It can be used as a diuretic and a lotion can be made from it to treat chapped skin, sunburn and skin disorders. There are cases of it being used to reduce or re-strain the sex drive.

It is a safe sedative which can be prescribed to the young and the old.

Historically it was taken whilst drinking to reduce the effects of intoxication, nursing mothers used it to increase breast milk production and I am sure it would help the baby to sleep. In Assyrian herbal medicine it was used with cumin seeds as a poultice for the eyes. Dioscorides wrote of its effects being similar to that of opium.

There is a sap which comes from the wild lettuce which will harden and form a brownish colour gum. This is known as lactucarium.

Not sure if I say this, anyway, another method is to make an extract. Soak 100 grams of wild lettuce herb for 8 hours in warm but not boiling water. Then sift and press all the liquid out of the wild lettuce. Put the dark liquid in a pan and let it evaporate. Putting the pan in a bigger pan with boiling water will avoid burning the wild lettuce while drying. What is left is a kind of gum that can be used like opium.

Dosage – Infusion: Pour a cup of boiling water onto 1 teaspoonful of the dried herb and leave to infuse for 10-15 minutes. This should be drunk three times a day.

Tincture: 0.5—3ml of a 1:1 three times daily

References

Chevellier A. 2001. Encyclopedia of Medicinal Plants. Dorling Kindersley, London
Plant, L. 2006. Rapid Reference Guide, 3rd ed. Self published Western Australia
Www



Bogbean Herbal Farm

Tel:96287042 Mobile: 0418 940 653 Email: planter@wn.com.au
Web Sites: www.bogbeanfarm.com or www.herbgrowers.org
www.louiseplantbealive.com