



Medicine Stories Podcast

Episode 42 with Asia Suler

You Are Your Own Healer: Earth Intuition & Self Knowledge

April 3, 2019

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(Excerpt from of this episode from Asia Suler)

Asia: This idea of grounding is concepts that we're told are really ethereal, that somehow they're off planet, and they're actually not. And this idea that intuition actually is a natural by-product of being connected to the natural world, and the many worlds that that encompasses, and I think that all of our ancestors knew this innately. This was just the waters that they swam in.

(Intro Music: acoustic guitar folk song "Wild Eyes" by Mariee Sioux)

[0:00:31]

Amber: Hello friends! Welcome to the Medicine Stories Podcast, where we are remembering what it is to be human upon the earth, and exploring the mythic journeys we undertake when coming to know ourselves through interviews, herbalists, story keepers, ancestral listeners, consciousness explorers, earth dreamers and other wise folk. Our guiding principles are that story is medicine, magic is real, and healing is open-ended and endless.

I'm herbalist, Amber Magnolia Hill. This is episode 42, and today I'm talking to Asia Suler. This is Asia's second time on the podcast, and she is very much back by popular demand. In this interview we talk about how plants bring us deeper into ourselves, and the kind of second sight that only comes when we tune into the aliveness of the earth; the cultural fallacy that spirituality and rationalism can't co-exist; the chronic health issues that revealed to Asia her intuitive self and brought her to the plant path; how we don't have to do it alone and how when it comes to healing the body works on its own timeline.

Asia tells the story of "The One Willow to Rule Them All;" how one ever-evolving plant relationship can transform a life, but literally on an actual, physical, biological level you

are your own healer. Your pain, symptoms, ailments, everything is happening for you; the daily routine that keeps Asia's past chronic health issues at bay; the interplay between stress, the nervous system and health (especially useful conversation for those of you with empathic tendencies and highly sensitive nervous systems); being truly seen, and the difference between being seen by nature versus being seen by humans; when you're given a book on a subject you've never heard of before, and the truth it contains makes you cry; and finding the core flower essence for your multidimensional self.

[0:02:46]

I am really excited to share the Patreon offering that goes along with this episode. I couldn't believe when Asia offered it! I had wanted to ask her if she'd be willing to offer this to the Patreon supporters of this podcast, but didn't really think it was okay for me to ask. And so when she offered, I was all, "Oh my God! Are you serious? Yes! Please. That's so generous!" because it is a guided plant meditation from her course Intuitive Plant Medicine, and this course is all about tuning into a plant ally. And when Asia was on this show before, [Episode 4: Multidimensional Plants and the Fabric of Consciousness](#) -- which, you are gonna need to go back and listen to if you haven't yet. It's so good! -- I shared this story when I first did that guided meditation, and my connection with angelica, and it just blasted my heart open, and I was just sobbing, and it was not what I expected at all.

I went into the meditation thinking I would connect with another plant, and, you know, I -- it just was mind blowing. Asia's ability to really take you on a journey through her guided meditations is something I've experienced in person with her and through her online courses a number of times, and every time the layers of my deepest, widest, highest self that get revealed just totally blow my mind and change my life, like truly.

[0:04:32]

So for supporters at the two dollar a month level right now patreon.com/MedicineStories, this beautiful guided meditation is there for you. Thank you so much, Asia! I still can't believe it.

The other two plants that Asia and I dive into in that first ever episode on this show are ghost pipe and reishi. And today I want to talk to you a little bit about reishi. It's totally coincidental that we just released a triple extraction reishi elixir on the day that I'm recording this, and that Asia and I talked so much about this on the last interview. I'm not going to go to talk about of course, you can listen it to it there, but I did want to share my top three reasons that the reishi mushroom deserves not only our attention but truly our reverence.

So number one is that the culture with the longest recorded history of using it, Chinese, consider it the bestower of immortality. I can't think of another substance from the natural or pharmaceutical world that is described in such terms. And that such a powerful

word is used to describe its effects I think just speaks volumes about its ability to promote well-being and longevity.

And it's the best, this is number two, the best-selling medicinal mushroom in the world with hundreds of scientific studies proving its incredibly potent healing actions. It's really easy to get lost in the overwhelming amount of information about reishi out there, both in books and online, but when I think of reishi I think mostly of immunity, vitality, energy, stamina, and adaptability. It's just -- it's so incredible what a fungus can do when it interacts in the human body.

Umm, and then the third reason is that, while most folks focus on the amazing physical benefits reishi confers, Asia Suler, today's guest, has shared about its ability to enhance our perception of the unseen, naming it a subtle psychedelic.

In the show notes I will have a link to Asia's' blog post about using reishi in that way, coming into relationship with reishi as an ally to help subtly open our sensory gating channels. And I have to share this story that about two years ago, I got herbalist [Sophia Rose's Reishi Elixir](#), and I took it one night, and I remember I sat down to dinner and just everything seems, like, more alive and more sparkly in a way.

I was like, "Whoa! This is like a subtle psychedelic shift in my perception right now. That's crazy!" And I thought I was just having a one-off experience and then, like, within the week I read an article that Asia had written about this in Plant Healer magazine saying this very thing; that reishi can act as a subtle psychedelic and I was like, "OH my gosh, yes. I experienced that."

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And if you haven't listened to the episode -- I think it's with James Fadiman -- the word psychedelic just means "mind-manifesting." We're not talking like you're tripping balls here, but just that you know things are revealed that aren't usually revealed, So, on that level, and with all its crazy physical healing capabilities, I mean, the studies on like cancer and all sorts of other stuff are just through the roof phenomenal results, Reishi just feel to me like the strongest allies in my life for sure. I am so thrilled that my husband wanted to embark on this journey of growing our own reishi at home and making this medicine. The elixir's got honey and it's really palatable. Reishi can be hard to take, mushrooms can be hard to take, but I just think this tastes really good. And I just love the way I feel when I take it. I'm holding the bottle close to my heart and just smiling when I take it because it's such a gift from the universe, the earth this beautiful medicine. Umm so, yeah, we grow it at home, it's triple extracted. You can check out [mythicmedicine.love/shop](#) to learn more about it. What the triple extraction is, and why we do it that way.

[0:09:21]

But I want to get on to this interview, and one more thing I just want to mention, I was interviewed recently on the free birth podcast, and I shared the stories of my two daughters' births ten years apart, and how I had an unassisted birth with my first daughter and then a midwife assisted birth with my second, and why I made those choices both times and how the births went. and so you can find that at the free birth society, the name of the episode is called matrilineal love mythic medicine's amber magnolia hill. Emily the host is going to be a guest on this podcast coming up too.

[0:10:02]

So Asia Suler is a writer, teacher, medicine maker and seeker who lives in the Blue Ridge mountains of Western North Carolina. She is the creator and concoctress behind [One Willow Apothecaries](#), an Appalachian-grown company that offers alchemical gateways of educations. Asia's work is a unique combination of Western and energetic herbalism, stone medicine, earth-centered animism and intuitive healing. But most days she will say that she is just someone who has fallen deeply in love with the living world.

Asia's popular yearly online program, intuitive plant medicine, from which that guided meditation, is a guided initiation and cozy community dwelling for those who are ready to reopen the pathways between themselves and the natural world. Asia's free online course, [Opening Earth Intuition](#) was just released, will be available through the whole month of April. And if you're listening to it past April, it will be available again next April, so don't even worry about it.

I will have the links to that online course, which again is free, to her article about reishi as a subtle psychedelic, to the listing for our reishi elixir, to my interview on the Free Birth podcast, to the Patreon offering for this guided meditation, to so much more right in the show notes, as I always do.

So thank you so so much for listening! Thank you so much to the Patreon supporters of the podcast and to everyone who leaves an iTunes review or tells a friend about the show. It really means a lot, and we have a great Facebook community if you're not already there. [The Medicine Stories Facebook Group](#) is just a really nurturing and beautiful spot. It's kind of like my, my uhhh... safe zone (*Amber laughs*) in the internet world, and we'd love to have you there.

And thanks so much for listening, and let's get into this interview now with Asia Suler.

(Transitional Music: acoustic guitar folk song "Wild Eyes" by Mariee Sioux)

[0:12:14]

Amber: Hello Asia! Welcome back to Medicine Stories!

Asia: Thanks so much for having me, Amber!

Amber: Yeah, I love having you. I've had -- It's been over a year since I've had you, and I've had a number of people write, "Have Asia back!" (*Amber laughs*)

Asia: Aww, that's so sweet.

Amber: ... So I'm happy to deliver you.

Asia: Oh wonderful!

Amber: I really feel aligned with you. There's so many herbalists teaching good work out there. There's so -- herbalism is vast, I always say -- there's so many ins for people who are interested, and it's our ancestral inheritance to know how to work with plants.

But one place I feel really aligned with what you offer to the world is coming into relationship with plants as a way to come into deeper relationship with ourselves; not just focusing on the plants chemical constituents and what can it physically heal in my body, but how can this bring me deeper into the core of who I am?

So I wanted to -- you have this idea of earth intuition that you have written as being "the knowing that lives in our connection to the living world." I thought that was a really useful way to think about this connection between ourselves and plants. And you also write about it as the kind of second sight that only comes when we can recognize the aliveness of the earth.

So I would love to hear -- this is not something we talked about last time -- like, I've also heard you talk about or seen you write about how you were this dreamy, sensitive kid, as was I, and that you wanted to prove that you could be rational, and you could live in reality, and you could leave all that stuff behind to fit into our culture. How did you go from the person trying to prove all that to someone who's like, writing all these beautiful (*Amber laughs*) newsletters and blog posts and teaching these beautiful courses and classes about this sort of earth-knowing and intuition?

Asia: Hmm. That's such a good question. Yeah, I mean, I grew up in the Northeast in an academic family, and it was just sort of the waters I swam in was this sort of undercurrent of belief that sort of spirituality and intellectualism didn't go hand in hand. And I think part of that was kind of this fallacy that I see in our culture that things like intuition or earth connection are somehow like, ungrounded. You know we see that in the criticism of calling someone a "tree hugger," and I think that's finally fading out of our lexicon of insults. But, I think there's this undercurrent of belief that to be connected to intuition, spirituality, earth-based practices that you are kind of like out-to-sea.

[0:15:20]

Asia: And so yeah, I was an extremely dreamy kid and honestly, not very focused and kind of in my own world, and I really had to work super hard to tune in to this reality that was supposed to be sort of the **one** reality.

And then, when I in college I started having chronic health issues (so I talk about this in other places), but I started having chronic yeast infections that sort of devolved into a chronic pain condition called vulvodynia. But it was kind of a complex of a lot of different things, and a lot of my different body system were starting to go offline. And I think that when you have chronic health issues, the dominant paradigm, the one world that we're told we live in doesn't help and cannot give answer for, you start looking elsewhere and you start realizing that there's actually so much more, so many other worlds that exist within this world.

So, I just started, like, what I say often is that the world inside my body was so uncomfortable and so painful that I just started going out into the natural world, and I was lucky where I went to school that there was forests and farms and I could just sort of wander around and go off path and get lost in the woods. I started talking to trees, and I started really feeling this sense of belonging and understanding in the natural world.

And I think that that connection, it just blasted open my intuition again. It ended up that I, through different intuitive hits, figured out the complex of things that were going on with me, which included a very severe food allergy and also included sort of body misalignment as well as looking at emotional aspects of trauma earlier in my life. And it was really through my connection to the natural world, that **that** intuition started to open up.

[0:17:25]

And so, one of my sort of life passions is this idea of grounding these concepts that we're told are really ethereal are somehow off planet and that they're actually not. And this idea that intuition actually is a natural byproduct of being connected to the natural world and the many worlds that that encompasses. And I think that all of our ancestors knew this innately. This was just the waters that they swam in. And so we're just kind of relearning how to reintroduce ourselves to those depths just by making these connections and relationships. And I think that something that was so important for me to realize in all of this is that we don't have to do it all alone.

I was always kind of a "I do it all myself" kind of person. I remember when I was three years old I stopped taking food from my parents, and they would have to like (*Asia laughs*) put it on a low shelf, 'cause I had this thing where I was like "I do it myself," and I just felt like I had to take everything on on my own and internalize everything and work on it by myself. And the reality is there are so many wise guides in the world around you, and our intuition can be expanded exponentially when we open ourselves to these

relationships and just wise guidance that lives for us in our living connection to the natural world.

Amber: I think that makes so much sense. I think about in my twenties, I read a few books or did meditations on accessing your intuition --- similar trajectory as you, same kind of kid, also just trying to be super rational, though, and prove that I could do that, total health crises in college -- and then for me it was after college that I kind of started opening up to natural world and herbal healing and to my own intuition. So during that phase when I was exploring like “Well how **do** I find the intuition that was so strong in childhood?” And so many of the teachers focus on like, you know, you stay indoors, you do your guided meditation, you journal about it or whatever, which is good. That's fine. I love that shit. It's great.

But it makes so much sense to me that you're really going to strengthen your instinctive knowing when you're doing that in relationship to the natural world. Because, as you said, it is like this ancestral thing for humans (*Amber laughs*). You know, our ancestors, as I've said many times on the show, our ancestors were hunter- gatherers for 99% of human history. Their whole life was instinct. Their whole life was taking cues from the natural world, watching what was going on, and knowing what to do next. It's not like intuition is some big, mysterious thing that's only accessible to certain people. It really is our birthright as humans.

[0:20:20]

Asia: Absolutely, this is how our ancestors navigated the world. This is why we're here to day (*Asia laughs*)! That's how our people survived was through intuition, so I love the way that you put that.

Amber: Umm. Oh I had a question about -- you were talking about like your complexities of illness? -- Oh, I was just curious about the structural misalignments in your body, how you specifically worked on those. And I know, too, you've shared that these are all overlapping. YOU know? All of these (*Amber laughs*), all of these illnesses are so complex, and it's usually not like, “This fixed that, and this fixed that.” But do you have anything to offer for myself, personally, and my personal pain as far as how you fixed or addressed the misalignment?

Asia: Yeah, well I saw a physical therapist, and you know, I was lucky that someone sort of suggested to me like have you seen a PT who specializes in pelvic stuff. And I was like, I didn't even know that existed. And this person this was just their speciality.

So what had happened, which I think is super fascinating, is that I had sprained my ankle super badly like two years prior to seeing this therapist and probably about four months before the pain started in my pelvis. So I was limping around for awhile, and it just changed my gait, and slightly changed just how my musculature was working.

And I would've never made that connection: that there was a connection there. And I think one thing that's really interesting, and I've seen a lot, is that, you know, all of us have body misalignment going on. You know? We all have different stuff like that, and some people it will make there be referred pain in a certain area of their body, and some people it won't.

And so I think this is really where we come into more of the psychospiritual aspects of, like, our body is such a brilliant communicator, and so it will use whatever bugs are in the system (*Asia laughs*) to help communicate something to us.

[0:22:37]

Asia: So it could be that I had gotten that injury, and, you know, maybe it threw my alignment off a little bit, but over the years it corrected itself and never became a referred pain condition. But because I was already dealing with so much inflammation and infection in this particular area of my body, and there was a serious backlog of processing around emotional heaviness and trauma in this area of myself, that I think that that's why. It's sort of like there was a kink in the system and it was like, "Oh, let's go there and localize the pain there so she will really pay attention."

So I really recommend with basically anything that someone is dealing with that you look at somatic ways of processing. So whether that's going to a somatic therapist, whether that's exercise, whether that's going to a physical therapist, I think that the body is such an important communicator, but is also on a little bit of a slower track than our consciousness.

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Asia: There is also a spiritual communicator named Matt Kahn, he said something once which really stuck with me which is that we are actually the spirit guides for our body. And this is why you can sort of have an insight about something, like, a flash of insight, and you're like, "Oh, of course. Like, I know that this is true. I am seeing the truth. Everything is going to be different from here on out." And then things don't change, and you're like, "Well, why didn't things change? Like, I had this huge realization." And it's because our bodies are just on this slower timeline.

So to really understand that we can keep having these amazing realizations, it's also important to slow down, and give our body time and space to process, and invite in people and practices that can really help our bodies with that aspect of processing,.

Amber: Mmm. Thank you. So at this point in your life when you're figuring all this out, you're not yet an herbalist. Umm, and I --- I've also seen you write that, you know, once you started to become aware of, tuned into, alive to the aliveness of the world, you realized that in a world animated by consciousness that anything is possible.

So how at this point, out of the infinite number of possibilities that your life could go, did you start to walk the path that has led you to who you are now?

Asia: Mmm that's such a great question. I wanted to be near plants (*Asia laughs*).

That's the most simple answer that I felt so much comfort by being near the plants and I felt like I could access this aspect of my wisdom and my intuition that just didn't happen for me in other areas of my life. Like, didn't happen for me just sitting in the room and meditating. For me the awakening came through talking to plants. So I just wanted to be near plants, and that one goal...

Amber: -- so can I ask? Oh, I'm sorry--

Asia: -- Yeah, go ahead!

[0:25:56]

Amber: It sounds like this kind of came before the, like, "I'm gonna memorize the list of all this plant's medicinal actions," which is sort of seems to me opposite than how most of us come into herbalism. Like, you had the intuitive side from the get-go.

Asia: Yeah. Yeah, I didn't know plant names when any of this went down. I mean, I knew my plant friends, like, I would go out, and there were certain trees I would visit everyday. I had deep relationships with these different plants, and I had no idea what their scientific names were or even their common names. I called them my own names, the names that they told me.

(Both laugh)

And so I, I was not very scientifically- minded. I mean, I was very much on sort of the rational, intellectual train, but I wasn't I wasn't very scientifically minded. And that, you know, so I already was talking to plants and loved being with them, and when I decided to go to school for herbalism I had sort of followed this desire to be around plants into a bunch of different niches. Like, I volunteered on farms, and I did landscaping, and then I took care of office plants in New York City when I moved there.

And I just woke up one morning, and it was like literally as if the idea had been implanted in my dreams overnight. And I woke up the next morning and was like, "Yeah I'm going to be an herbalist. I'm going to apply to herbal school and I'm gonna do that."

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Asia: And I literally, actually when I applied and got accepted and then moved down to North Carolina to go to the Chestnut School of Herbal Medicine, I had no idea what it actually meant to be an herbalist. Like, I think I thought I knew (*Asia laughs*), but I really didn't have any idea. And so when I started, I was like, the newb-est of the newb. I was such a newbie to everything.

I remember the first day of school, people were talking about, I think it was probably lemon balm, and they were talking about tinctures, and I was like, "I don't even know. I'm not sure what you're talking about." I knew a lemon balm kind of, a little bit as sort of a culinary herb?

And so it was definitely like my entry point into how to make this stuff that was innate to my heart something that I can work with in the world in like a tangible way. And I think it was important for my sense of self as someone who is rational and grounded and practical to go to school for something that was rational and grounded and practical. And so it really helped me, honestly, to be able to bridge into this work to feel like I had, you know, sort of a background and validation in that way.

And also I wanted to work with clients, and I knew that if I wanted to work with whole plants, and not just energetic, vibrational medicine, then I need to know plant constituents, and I need to know plant ID and body disease processes and such.

But it's just been an interesting full circle journey of going to school, exiting school, doing more clinical type herbal work, and then very slowly coming back around to who I actually always been. It's cool because I've garnered all this knowledge, and I've really stepped -- really stepped fully into that intellectual plant constituent world. Now I've come back to what I've really found was the most really healing for me throughout all this. And so coming back to then be someone who can open that gateway for people, the gateway that I feel innately feel connected to, and the gateway that was ultimately the most healing for me.

[0:29:47]

Amber: Yeah, I mean, even though it is in our DNA, those of us who grew up in this culture really could use a guide, you know, to reopen that earth intuition, to be led along the path of how to get back to that, that primal state that we were in as children of just being so open to the earth and to what's coming in through our senses, you know, and how our viscera (*Amber laughs*) responds to that. And so I'm grateful that you're doing this.

Yeah, you need both. We need the rational and the intuitive when it comes to an approach to herbalism especially if you're going to be working with clients, formulating medicines, or teaching in a public way at all. And we also have to walk that line and hold both of them.

And I love hearing that it was super intuitive for you, too, to go towards herbalism and to go towards that school, and just to know like, "This is what's right for me."

Umm, I've just spent you know my last ten years blogging, talking in public, encouraging people to do the same thing, and it's scary. And it's not always going to work out based on life circumstances. But whenever possible, going towards whatever calls to our heart, for me at least, has always worked out. Even though I might be totally broke in the short term because I just put all my money into herb school. In the long run, I mean, really paying attention to what pulls my soul has always worked out. So I love hearing that that's how you started walking the path.

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Amber: And I'm curious if you did have any umm like plant connections as a young child. If this was something that was harkening back to the very beginning of your life.

Asia: When I think back to my early life there's a few plants that I remember sort of before I kind of shut that down. Do you know what I mean?

Amber: I sure do.

Asia: So the plant that stands out the most is the plant that my business is named for which was this willow tree that was in my backyard, and it was -- I had a very small backyard, basically a postage stamp of a backyard in this neighborhood of duplexes -- and they planted, my parents and my grandparents planted this willow tree the month I was born..

Amber: Awww.

Asia: Yeah, so it was always like my tree. So by the time I was maybe 8, 9, 10 years old, it was a fully fledged tree and it was just the most magical being because, it was a weeping willow. So its branches touched the ground, and it was literally, like, you would part its branches, and it was like you would be in another world when you were inside. And I feel like that tree, that tree took on such a sacred and important, like, relationship role in my life. Like, I'm so grateful for that tree.

It always reminded of this truth that we could connect. And even as sort of all the other things shut down, and I shut down my connection to the world, like, I still felt so connected to that tree because it was my tree. Right? It was sort of like a normal thing, like, "Oh, that's Asia's tree. Of course she's connected to it."

But I remember I would climb up into this tree's branches, and I would lay there, and I felt like I was being held. And I would speak to this tree in a way where I wouldn't let anyone

else see me, but I would like whisper into the furrows of this tree's bark, and tell this tree my secrets and my hopes, and my wishes, and my upsets, and I would bring my journal up there and write (once I was writing). And I just remember that feeling, like, as if this was, like, my spirit guide, really, growing up. And that tree kind of held that space for me all during my years of just flying abroad from my own world and my own connection to this, this natural world.

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Asia: And it's really fascinating because, willows, you know, aren't very long-lived trees. And when this tree was planted my grandfather, who was a plant person, told my parents, he said, "You know the tree will only last like 20-30 years tops."

And so when I went to college, when I was in the midst of dealing with these health issues, is when the tree started to die. And my parents, you know, bless their hearts, they aren't like the normal suburban duo, and so they just let this tree dies slowly over the years (*Asia laughs*). And so it became a home for all these birds and animals, and it would drop limbs over time, and for the past few years it's been standing, basically, just a standing, you know, hollow tree.

And then finally, this fall a strong wind came, and it just fell over.

Amber: Wow.

Asia: And yeah it's been amazing because since I started this business and decided to call it One Willow, because this one willow was just so responsible for me staying connected in this way, like, I've always felt that it's sort of in what we might call a shamanic kind of way, like, as this tree was dying, I was being given and transferred its energy. And it's just amazing because I feel like I'm at a turning point in my work.

And in particular this fall I released an online class that was really specifically focused towards the health issues that I had started experiencing in college when the tree first started its naturally dying process. And it's just been, it's just been an amazing thing, and it really is like the giving tree. And it just goes to show you, like, one relationship that can just continually transform your life in so many different phases.

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Amber: That's incredible. Did you ever ask your grandfather why he chose the willow?

Asia: I think my parents actually chose it, and I think that they just thought that it was pretty. I mean, my grandfather, he was just there and he was there to help plant it, so he had that feedback. But I think they just thought it was beautiful, and we -- where we lived they had sort of filled-in sort of swamp lands, and so it would flood in our backyards pretty regularly, and so it had ample water. And yeah, I mean, I don't think that there was

a deeper meaning besides just probably my parents following their intuition, but now knowing more about willow bore and medicine and energy I'm like, I don't know that they could have picked a more perfect tree for me to be connected to.

Amber: That's so sweet! (*Amber laughs*) I just have a little glow on my face hearing that story.

Umm, this really ties into what you've shared about, too, about, like, you are your own healer. I think this is such a powerful idea, and something that it is so easy for us to forget. It's kind of like the theme of this conversation so far is how our culture just kind of -- I don't know. I don't even know how to say it -- to me it feels violent, like, stamps out our inner knowing.

For me it was television, processed food, compulsory schooling. I was this total magical child, and then just let that all go when I was told how ridiculous and bad it was, and how I wasn't good at certain things, and just stay over here in this little box. And I think a part of that is completely giving over the power to heal our own bodies.

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Amber: So you write that "We all have access to one singular stream of medicine that will never abandon us: our own inner healer." For me that just touched my heart so deeply and really gives me courage to go forward in my life with my pain, with my, you know, health issues, and keep going deeper, keep going deeper into the land around me and the plants that I already have relationship with, and really tapping into the plant's ability to awaken within us the ability to heal ourselves. So thank you so much for that. And do you find that that's a message that resonates with other people as well?

Asia: Yeah, Absolutely, I think that so many people who come into these alternative realms of healing are arriving here because they've been really failed by the dominant paradigm, the dominant medical system, and I think the biggest thing that's missing (you know, beyond just basics, like, you know, client relationship and you know, just sort of sometimes even essential compassion) is this awareness that we, even on a biological level, are our own healers.

You know? Even when we take something like echinacea, it's stimulating our own immune cells. You know? This is not like -- you're not, like, given something new. Right? The ability that we have to heal is already inside of us, and the plants that we take (and even the pharmaceuticals we take) are stimulating aspects of ourselves that are already there and are already available. And I think that on a physical level can help us then tune into the energetic or even the emotional level.

[0:39:54]

Asia: And one thing that was really helpful for me when I was dealing with chronic pain and chronic illness through having lyme disease was this concept of "Everything is happening for you." And that is a very sometimes hard thing to just swallow in our culture especially because, you know, we live in this culture where we "fight" the things that are wrong or happening in our bodies that are causing us pain. But I've really found it on my own journey to be true that things that were happening, that were, yes, like debilitating: my ability to process, my ability to feel comfortable in my body, my ability to connect to people, to think, to move, to, you know, relate and share intimacy, and you know, all these systems going offline, it was still happening for me.

It was happening so that I could really see and address some of the issues that had been more subterranean that were arising to the surface. And I think even on a super basic level, for example, getting the flu or getting the cold, there's always a message there that's for you. And often that message is as simple as just like "Slow down." What can you do to reduce stress in your life and increase self care and just things like that? But that one idea that everything is happening for you, and your body is help you by bringing these things to the surface goes hand in hand with the fact that you **are** your own healer.

And it seems counterintuitive, but often the health issues that are coming up for us are the ways that we end up healing on deeper psychoemotional levels, including, you know, addressing early childhood programs and patterns that are unconscious. And if we can just stay with the process new layers of healing and understanding will always be revealed.

[0:42:02]

Amber: I love that approach. It just feels really soft, nourishing, gentle (*Amber laughs*).

Umm, you know, as opposed to -- I can get really caught up with "What's wrong with me? What am I doing wrong? Why isn't it getting better?" So thank you.

And I'm just, I'm curious, like, wow, lyme disease and all these other issues, like, do you have -- what do you do daily now to maintain this state of health and healing you've found?

Asia: Yeah, you know, dealing with chronic health issues has just been a super big part of my journey. It's just been one of the foundational aspects and ways in which I've learned, and I'm grateful for it all even through its many years of challenge. And for me, I'm very routine-oriented. And routine I find really helps me to stay grounded and to really be able to continue implementing self-care.

So one of the things that's been really important for me is having slow, quiet times when I first wake up and right before I go to bed. One thing that I've struggled with my whole life is insomnia. I've had insomnia as far back as -- well, far back as I can remember -- when I

was a really young child. And I think it has something to do in part with what you call a “highly sensitive person.” So my nervous system is, you know, gets overwhelmed easily. And that something I've really had to realize is that a lot of these chronic health issues are linked to my nervous system overwhelm, and the cascade of stress that this causes in my body that then wears down all your systems including your immune system. And so that connection between sensitivity and stress and illness is something that just has really come to the forefront of my imagination and my awareness.

So I'm certainly not perfect in this arena and I'm always learning, but you know, my major goal at this point in my life is to really be able to listen to my body and reduce the amount of the load of stress in my life as much as I can. Like, there's certain things obviously that you don't have control over, but to be aware of the things that I do have control over. And so, for me, this time of giving my nervous system quietude in the morning and at night has been super important.

So in the morning I do morning gratitudes which feels really good, and then I write down my dreams, and I have tea. And in the evening before I go to sleep, I try to turn off all screens, like, two hours before I got to sleep, and just not have screens in my awareness. And before I got to sleep I will often stretch by candlelight and meditate. And honestly, that time of meditating is my brain dump time. Like, sometimes it's really numinous and amazing and sometimes it's just all the things that would normally keep me up at night because I'm still in an anxious and overwhelmed state. I just give them time to come up and just dump. So this is sort of the programs that I've put in place for myself. And of course, I'm not even touching the things like diet and exercise which has been super, super important for me as well.

[0:45:58]

Asia: But I think just in general, the older I get, and the more I look at these years of the things that I've dealt with, the more I realize how much of this is just connected to stress, and just the natural stresses of being a highly sensitive person with a highly sensitive nervous system.

And it's taken me a lot of work of self-forgiveness to just be like, “You know what?” --- some of the things that, you know, I'm taking them on a lot of times -- “ Like, the things I'm choosing to do at this point because I work for myself, I'm choosing to take on.” But being being able to forgive myself for like, “Okay this same task might have been totally fine for somebody else. Like, somebody else could do this thing and not be totally dragged out like I am. “

And I just have to forgive myself for that. And be like, “You know what? We have different bodies, and we have different nervous systems, and we have different life histories, and the whole nine yards. Everybody is just completely and totally different.” And so, that self-forgiveness and self-gentleness has really helped me continue to deepen my understanding of how to take care of myself.

[0:47:13]

Amber: Yeah, it's funny when you start talking about having insomnia for as long as you can remember. I immediately went back to my own childhood and same. My parents would be like, "Why can't you sleep?" And I was like, "I don't know. I just like EEEEE (*Amber does high-pitched nervous system squeal*)," you know, decades before I had the framework of being a highly sensitive person with a highly sensitive nervous system.

It's also just really good timing hearing you say that, because just in the last couple of weeks I've been talking to my amazing craniosacral therapist more and more. Everytime I see her I'm good after. Like, I'm good. My body's aligned. There's no pain, but then it creeps back in a day later. If I'm lucky, three or four days later.

So lately I've just been picking her brain, and like, "What's going on? What can I do better? What am I not understanding?"

And she's all, "Well, it's your nervous system is what I'm working on here. You know, I'm not working on like your muscles, your fluid " -- even though physically that's what she's doing-- "...but we're resetting your nervous system and teaching it how to process the world in a different way." And just ever since she gave me that framework, I'm just like, "Oh, of course! It's just stress!" (*Amber laughs*) It's just daily life and also running a business and podcast.

But seriously I'm like, "If I let this podcast go, I'd have so much less stress," (*Amber laughs*), but I love doing it so much, and I feel like it's a gift for **me** to be able to gift to the people for whom it helps and who it touches. I'm just, as you're speaking, I'm thinking of all the people who are going to listen and, like, resonate and see themselves in your words. And I just think so many of my listeners are also empathic sensitive souls and always enjoy having someone like you on the podcast who can share from a similar perspective.

[0:49:08]

Amber: And this brings this to my other favorite thing I've heard you talking about (I wonder if you feel the same as an HSP) is that especially in childhood -- and this is something I've really had to work on as an adult -- is sort of turning away from the feeling of being seen, like, **not** wanting to be seen. Kinda wanting to hide, you know? But I'm just gonna quote you here from one of your newsletters in the past, because it's one of my very favorite things that I've seen you or really anyone write. You wrote:

'For as much of a revelation as it is to take off the blindfold and once again recognize the natural world as our kin, the living denizens of the earth never stopped seeing us as part of everything. The need to be seen isn't an act of ego or self-centered solipsism, it's a natural part of becoming in this world. Without being

seen, how will the flower attract the bee? Without being recognized by those who surround you, how can you give your gifts to the wider community? To be seen means to belong once more to everything.'

This is just such a beautiful framing of the idea of being seen. And I'm curious what your own journey into being seen has been? Like how did you come to this revelation? Was it scary for you when you first started teaching and sharing yourself?

Asia: Yeah, so I -- just to put it in astrology terms, I am a Cancer sun and a Leo rising, and so I have, like, really interesting, conflicting energies in my life. Like growing up I was a total performer and drama queen at home, and then as soon as I went out into the world, or at school, or at my friends house, I was the quiet witnesser in a way. I was not that way with other people.

And so it's always been a thing for me that when I feel really comfortable in a home, I can sort of let that inner Leo out, and there's an aspect of me that loves performing and loves being seen, and then there's this huge nascent self which is **totally** introverted, and deeply private, and you know, just wants to be in my home and be totally unseen in this way.

And I think, you, know once I sort of tuned into the awareness that being seen isn't just about being seen by humans, it really changed sort of my my challenging relationship with being seen. And I remember, I think one of the things that really illuminated this for me I was in a birding class, and they were talking about when you enter the woods, like, the birds will be telling each other that you're **there**.

So what you're hearing as like, "Oh that's just regular bird chatter" is actually them talking about you." And it just totally opened my mind! And I just had never thought of that before. Oh of course! Of course they would be talking about an unknown being who is entering their space. Like what is this person going to do? What is their M.O? How do they operate in this space? Where are they moving?

And it just hit me that, oh my goodness, of course, like all of the beings in this world are seeing you because you are actually just living, breathing, walking around, part of the ecology. You have an effect on the world around you, and so you are being seen.

[0:52:55]

Asia: And I think there is this piece of being seen by nature that helps us tune into something that we all really need, which is this sense of just, like, **objective acceptance**.

Like, the natural world isn't judging us in the same way that we experience human judgement. It's just not the way it goes. Like, you are being seen, and other beings are responding to their perception of you in a certain way. But there's this awareness. There's

this feeling of non-judgement when you're out in nature that I think is part of what's so healing about being in the more than human world.

And so it really has been a bomb for me over the years, especially when you are putting yourself out there, and you're being seen. Whether it's your business, or your art, or your writing, it can be really challenging, and it can be really hard. Or just our sense of selves, and our personalities, and our ego, like, obviously the critique and the criticism and the rejection or whatever you want to call it can be hard, but also it can be hard to have people really love what you're doing and really be into what it is you're bringing out there.

It can all be challenging because it is this thing of being seen and the complex of them, like, feelings, and projections, and emotions and triggers and programs that comes with that. And so, it's been super helpful for me to actually just go out and let myself be seen by nature. And it actually really helps me to let go of some of the heaviness that I accumulate from just being a person who is seen in the world and continually putting myself out there. And all the then self judgments that I have have been around things that happen or don't happen because of my being seen in the human world or on social media or whatever.

And the plants, the trees, the birds, the stones, the creeks, they help me to actually see myself for who I truly am again. And so, I really encourage people, especially if it feel scary to be putting yourself out there, to be seen by the human world, or you know, whatever your particular society, culture, niche is, to then sort of balance that by going out and letting the world just see you, and open your heart to then what it feels like to be seen.

[0:55:43]

Amber: Gosh, yeah, what an antidote (*Amber laughs*) to these times we're living in, and yeah, just how stressful it is to be on social media really (*Amber laughs*) as we all are and just be scrutinized, and of course in our actual living human communities, the physical space that we inhabit with others.

Umm, oh I just lost what I was about to say.

Let's -- I'd like to ask you about your relationships to flower essences. You've been one of my biggest teachers in this realm, it's something that you really focus on.

Umm, oh okay. I have my train of thought again, and I just wanted to say that I also really appreciate this "being seen by nature" perspective because it just reanimates the world around us. It reminds us that yeah, we're not the only living beings with consciousness. And the story about the birds (which is amazing, and of course, yes, makes total sense) makes me think, too, that we know with every step that we take on the earth the mycelium underfoot is like, "Oh. I felt that. Felt the pressure. Felt the change. Gonna

communicate that to the roots system of all the plants and trees that I'm in mycorrhizal relationship with. They're all gonna know you're here. They're going to know your gait and how much you weigh and which direction you're going in." (*Amber laughs*)

You know it's incredible. It's on this subtle level and coming through consciousnesses that we can't even fathom. But they are there, and they are just as present and real in their aliveness as we are. And so, approaching the idea of being seen from that perspective also really just respects umm, the livingness of all the other beings we share the earth with.

[0:57:42]

Asia: Yeah absolutely. Thanks for putting that into words like you just did, Amber.

[0:57:48]

Amber: Yeah, I'm glad it hit me again before we get into flower essences.

So I've heard you share about, umm, the first time you heard about flower essences. You read it in a book, and you just started crying? Tell me about that.

Asia: Yes, so this was when I was living in New York City, so I was already on the plant train, and I remember -- I was actually -- my mom gave me this book about flower essences that one of her clients (my mom is a psychotherapist) one of her clients gave her, and she was like "You're into plants. I think you might like this," and I was like, "Ok."

I had never hear of them, didn't know what they were at all, and I just started reading the first chapter and by the end of it I spontaneously started crying. And I remember exactly where I was sitting (*Asia laughs*): I was in my room in Brooklyn that had no windows, and I just was like. "Oh my goodness, why am I crying right now? I don't feel sad. What is happening? Something is happening inside of me, and I'm not sure what it is." And you know, I know now what I call them are "truth cries." Sometimes I will just cry when something really hits me deeply, like, as a truth that I resonate with, and there was something about reading about flower essences that reminded me of this truth; of who I am; of sort of these natural, unseen laws of the universe.

And so before I got into, you know, **whole** herbs, I was into flower essences. And you know, I didn't even make flower essences, and I just loved the concept and would get flower essences from the store, and they really totally helped me turn into something that I was already innately feeling. And I think what has been a big part of my journey and probably many people's journeys, that when you hear something that really resonates with you as really true, it's not like this feeling of like, "Oh my goodness, I just learned something totally new." It's this feeling of like, "Ah! Now I have words for this thing that I've felt. Like, I intuitively felt and knew this. And now, oh my goodness, I'm seeing it reflected back to me."

It's almost like more like remembering. And so for me, flower essences was, you know in that book in particular, it was remembering that I really am this multidimensional being, and that a lot of issues that manifest in our life come from this space of us actually blocking our connection to what I call our wider selves, and the blueprint of what is possible in our lives. And these things that we feel are standing in our way are helping us to see the unconscious blocks that we have erected between ourselves and the incredible possibility that exists for us in this lifetime.

So that's just sort of, in a very basic way, some of the philosophy behind flower essences.

[1:01:00]

Asia: And it just, it really was just the seed that opened up my awareness of working with plants as medicine and medicine-making rather than what I had previously been doing, which was sitting with the plants (which was absolutely wonderful and something obviously I still do). But I didn't know that this kind of what I now would call now as "vibrational medicine" even existed. So it completely changed the trajectory of my life to read that book and to begin with flower essences.

And what's really fascinating is I, you know, I started with flower essences, and then I went to herb school, and then I sort of knew how to make all the other medicines, and I made gallons and gallons of tinctures, and drying massive herbs for teas, and making vinegars and honeys, it's like I've come back to flower essences in this full circle kind of way.

And of course, I will still use herbs for, you know, specific things that are going on in my body. But in terms of like the ongoing medicine that I'm always working with and that I feel like is doing the most to help me shift these deeper, emotional, spiritual patterns, that are then causing the cascade of everything else that is happening or not happening in my life is flower essences. **That** I'm always working with and that continues to help my life journey to unfold.

[1:02:32]

Amber: Tell me about your practice of making a new core essence every year.

Asia: Yeah, so honestly, often times I just, I start. I get a hit about a flower, uhh, and you know I think this is something that can be, you know, that can cause disbelief or mistrust in people. Like, they think in order to find the right flower essence you have to consult an expert or find the perfect one in a book. But honestly, the flower essence that's wanting to work with you is the flower that you're most captivated by. It's the flower that's often blooming around your house, that you're just like, "Wow! Holy shit! That flower's so beautiful" or "I've never seen how amazing violets are!" or "Snowdrops? How have I never, like, really tuned into how **incredible** snowdrops are?"

So just notice when that happens, and that is the the essence that wants to work with you.

And so for me, the way it works is that I will -- that will happen, and I will make a flower essence, and I will work with that essence until it feels complete. And so I used to tell my clients when I did flower essence consultations, "How long should I take this essence long for?" And I'd be like, "Take it everyday until you forget. When you start to forget to take it, then you're complete."

And it really is that simple, and I will notice that I will think about it everyday. You know, every time I take it in the morning or at night, I'm like, "Oh, thank God! My flower essence." And then the day will come when I forget or I look at it, and I'm like, "Umm... Yeah I don't know. I just don't feel like I need that." And then I know that my work with that essence is complete for that time.

So I promise you that there are flowers that are really wanting to work with you as an essence. And if you know how to make flower essence, go ahead and make an essence from that flower that's around your house. If you don't know how to make a flower essence, or that's just not something you have access to, even for me, sometimes I will go into the store. Now, there's flower essences in pretty much every health food store. You can just go to the aisle, and just even close your eyes and like, just swipe your hand over them and see which bottle feels the warmest, and go ahead and take that one.

Sometimes it can be really helpful to go off our body's intuition, and get our brain out of the way, and that can then help us to then open up these deeper layers or levels of intuition.

Amber: Let me just interject-- that it's really easy to make them. You can figure it out very quickly (*Amber laughs*) online or in a book or through Asia!

[1:05:32]

Amber: But yeah, I totally agree that making essences out of the flowers around you that call to you is just going to be so powerful, because with energy medicine a big aspect of it is story medicine. And so the story that you are bringing into your relationship with, your feelings toward the flower, the day you make the essence, what was happening that day, there's almost always some sort of magical something that happens during the making of a flower essence; like a raven landing nearby, or you have a bee sting you nearby when you're making a poppy essence. That story becomes part of the medicine of everytime you take that essence, and what you're hoping to cultivate or banish, or whatever medicine you're hoping this flower essence brings into your life *a/so* becomes part of the story that you remember everytime you take it.

So yeah. Oh man, there's this flower... we live in serpentine soil here in California. It's a rare kind of soil, and so there's rare flowers that come up. And there's this flower called "Sierra Fawn Lily" (*Amber laughs*). It's so beautiful. It's so cute! I really don't have words for how this flower makes me feel. Over the last two years I've made flower essences out of other lilies that grow out here but not this one. So this really inspired me this year to finally, finally make an essence out of the sierra fawn lily.

[1:07:13]

Amber: And umm, you have this incredible guided meditation as part of your [Intuitive Plant Medicine Online Course](#) that helps people to sort of tap into, like, particularly what that medicine, the flower essence that they made or that they're holding in their hand, can open up for them. And that has been incredibly powerful for me. I've done it twice with two different flower essences that I made and was just like completely in tears both times.

Asia: Oh, thanks Amber! I'm so delighted to hear that. That's so wonderful. I'm really excited for you to make this essence. Even hearing you talk about it, I got goosebumps and tingles.

Amber: It's the most beautiful flower! (*Amber laughs*) I'll put a photo of it in the blog post here that will be on my website when this podcast comes out.

So, we're getting close to the end, and I would love you to tell people about your free online course, which I *loove*, which just came out either the day that this was released or really close to it which is called "Opening Earth Intuition."

Asia: Yeah, so this course is a four video course that is helping you to reconnect to this intuition that is really embedded into your relationship with the earth. So with each video there's new concepts and practical things that you're going to be doing in between each video release to actually, really concretely make this relationships.

And I've been **SO** blown away! This is the third year that I've run this free course. It's only open for the month of April every year. And I've just been completely amazed by the downloads, and breakthroughs, and incredible experiences that have happened for people through this course. And so, that is available starting beginning of April and will be available through April, if you are interesting in signing up for that. The videos are released every few days the first two weeks of April. And it's a moderated forum, so I'm going to be there. I'm going to be with you on the journey. And I'm always just so excited to see what kind of magic happens inside of this course.

So if you're feeling drawn to anything we've talked about here today, and you're just ready to like, stir things up and make more connections (whether this is totally new or you've been in this world for years and years and years). This course I've just really found

has been able to open such a powerful gateway for people and their intuition, and yeah, their really magical relationship to the earth.

If you're interested that, then I know Amber will have the links on her website, and you can also hop over to my website, [One Willow Apothecaries](#) for that.

[1:10:22]

Amber: Yeah, I'll have the link right here in the show notes. But yeah, then also, just check out Asia's whole website and the blog. It's amazing.

The first year that you offered this one of my childhood best friends and her mom took the course. It was cool because we grew up together in South Lake Tahoe, but then she moved away to Grass Valley at the end of 8th grade, and we lost contact. And then when I moved up to Grass Valley we found each other again and totally reconnected, and it's just been one of the most meaningful things for me. And I just -- I loved her mom so much and missed her all those years and reconnecting with her was great, too. And they both took the class and just loved it. And it was just so much fun watching them post their photos, making their flower essences and tagging you (*Amber laughs*). And it's just something I've heard them talk about with so much gratitude and joy. Also, I really feel grateful to you for opening up that realm of consciousness to my dear friend.

Asia: Oh yeah, absolutely! I mean, it's just been an amazing experience. And the free course, Opening Earth Intuition, that's available now. You know part of my intention with offering it, too, is to give something solid to folks who are interested in beginning, but if they are interested in deepening that practice, like, sort of **really** diving in, then my yearly intensive online course, Intuitive Plant Medicine begins May 1st. So if you take the free course and you're like, "This is really lighting up my world," then yeah, the registration for intuitive plant medicine opens up the second half of April.

Amber: I love that: that you start the course on Beltane, and then it completes at the Summer Solstice. It's just a really, like, perfect, natural rhythm for the course. And it's so well done! Like, everything you do is so well done. Like you don't put out anything that's half-assed (*Amber laughs*). And it's all just beautiful: like the videos, everything. And it's just a sweet community to be a part of, too, you have the forums so people can interact and connect with one another. I find that always to be super valuable.

Asia: Yeah, it's just -- every year I'm just blown away by the experience. And we also have an amazing line-up of bonus contributors (which includes Amber) and so, yeah, I just feel super honored to be uplifting your work and other people's work in the course. And it's just an amazing series of gateways that's going to be available there.

Amber: Yeah, it's just so, so worth the money. I feel like (*Amber laughs*) you could probably be charging a lot more for the content that's provided. And very, very happy to

be a contributor, be an affiliate and be a part of it. I love what you do, Asia. I love it so much, and I'm always umm, just in gratitude for your presence and for what you bring to the world.

Asia: Thank you Amber! I feel exactly the same way. And it's been such an honor to be back here on the podcast with you.

Amber: Yeah I can't wait to get it out. People are going to be stooooooked!!!

(Exit Music: acoustic guitar folk song "Wild Eyes" by Mariee Sioux)

[1:13:41]

Amber: Thank you for taking these Medicine Stories in. I hope they inspire you to keep walking the mythic path of your own unfolding self. I love sharing information and will always put any relevant links in the show notes. You can find my blog, handmade herbal medicines, and past podcast episodes, and a lot more at MythicMedicine.love.

While you're there, I invite you to click the purple banner to take my quiz "[Which Healing Herb is your Plant Familiar?](#)" It's a fun and lighthearted quiz, but the results are really in depth and designed to bring you into closer alignment with the medicine you are in need of.

If you love this show, please consider supporting my work at Patreon.com/MedicineStories. There's some killer rewards there: exclusive content, access to online courses, free beautiful downloadable e-books, coupon codes, giveaways, and just amazing gifts provided by past guests of the podcasts. All of that stuff is at the two dollar a month level.

For a little more, you can access my herbal e-book or my small online course, and that's all there as a thank you, a HUGE thank you from me and from my guests for listening, for supporting this work. I love figuring out what I can gift to people on Patreon. It's so fun. And I love that Patreon makes it so that you can contribute for such a small amount each month.

I'm a crazy busy and overwhelmed mom and adding this project into my life has been a questionable move for sure, but I love doing it, and I love the feedback I get from you all. And I just pray that Patreon allows me the financial wiggle room to keep on doing it while giving back to everyone who is listening.

If you're unable to do that, or if you'd like to support further, I would love it if you would subscribe on iTunes or wherever you get your podcasts. And if you would review the podcasts on iTunes, too, it really helps getting it into other ears. It means so much to me

when I read those reviews. It's, like, the highlight of my week when I check them and see new ones.

People are amazing. You guys are wonderful. Thank you so much.

The music that opens and closes the show is Mariee Sioux. It's from her song "Wild Eyes." It's one of my favorite songs of all time. Thank you and I look forward to next time!