



Medicine Stories Podcast

Episode 50 with Rosemary Gladstar

Kneeling to the Earth: Herbalism is Remembering

June 24, 2019

[0:00:00]

(Excerpt from today's episode by Rosemary Gladstar)

*The thing is -- and this is one of the things I think is forgotten now -- is that we stand on **incredibly long** lineage, and nothing that we think is original that we're doing is original. It's coming through us, and if we're lucky enough to be able to speak it or make it or do it, it's because we've been chosen. It's not because it's ours. It's ours to pass through us and to share and to pass on.*

[0:00:25]

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

[0:00:31]

Amber: Hello friends! And welcome to the Medicine Stories podcast, where we are remembering what it is to be human upon the earth. I am Amber Magnolia Hill and this is Episode 50. Oh my gosh. Fifty episodes. That's a lot! That's a lot, and I hope to do so, so many more, and I can't believe I've done this many.

Today I am sharing my interview with Rosemary Gladstar. I love it that it's **her** for the the fiftieth episode. You know, I didn't realize until I was saying it to her, as you will hear in the interview, I didn't really realize that she is a direct elder in my herbal lineage, in my learning of herbalism, and if it weren't for her this podcast certainly wouldn't exist. If it weren't for the herbal community in the West wouldn't look like it does **AT ALL**, in any way. We'll talk about what's she's created in this beautiful legacy brought to the world of healing and returning to the earth ways of our ancestors. So yeah, we're going to get into all that.

But first, I want to let you know that our [Queen of Heaven and Earth Breast Oil](#) is finally back in stock. It's been almost a year. You know, we make all of our Mythic Medicinals products that we either grow organically here on our land or that we sustainably, respectfully, reverentially wildcraft so they get made once a year, and they often sell out. And this one sold out so quickly last year. So we made a whole lot more of it this year. It's made from rose petals, dandelion blossoms, and violet

leaves. This regal oil honors the immense powers and endless shapes of the female body. Breast tissue is incredibly absorbent and these plants are known to nourish cells, dissolve hardness, and keep the lymph circulating. Named after Inanna, the most ancient of goddesses (at least the most ancient of written about, written down goddesses), may this oil remind you that the divine feminine is you and that self-worship is a good thing. It would also be lovely to rub into your belly and womb area and be sure to get it into the lymphatic tissue in the armpits that is connected to the breasts, and of course, just to be clear, you can rub it anywhere. To learn more about breast health and what we call breast self-massage, self-exams, and I really love the reframing of this as just getting to know the terrain of your body. Listen to Episode 33 of this podcast with Anya Robinson, it's called [Root Cause Medicine and Breasts as an Intuitive Center](#). And one ingredient that I forgot to name is Rose Essential Oil. This is the only time I use an essential oil in my medicine making and it's purely for the sensory, the light that it brings to the experience of breast massage. And if you listened a few episodes ago, All About Rose Medicine, then you know about the transportative powers of the scent of rose. So you can check that out now at [mythicmedicine.love](#).

[0:04:22]

Amber: The patreon giveaway, thank you to Rosemary for offering this for patrons at the two dollar a month level. It is two recipes, two herbal recipes. One is for an echinacea mouth rinse, and the other is for an elderberry syrup. And then there's also a coupon code to get \$75 off Rosemary's decades-long, decades-in-the-running course called [The Science and Art of Herbalism](#). So this is a ten lesson course taken at your own pace with homework review and guidance provided by carefully selected herbalists and by Rosemary herself. Though it thoroughly instills in the student the practical skills necessary to practice herbal home healthcare, it doesn't ignore the rich spirit and essence of herbalism. The heart of the course is the development of a deep personal relationship with the the plant world. Many of the students have written telling them that this course has been transformational and one of the most self-empowering studies they have undertaken. Thousands of people have taken this journey over the last 30 years, bringing herbal healing into their homes and communities. Rosemary weaves the magic of nature, a reverence for life and a commitment to share the wisdom of herbs with others throughout her teachings.

So you can choose to take it all online, you can choose to have it printed out and sent to you if you prefer to hold the materials in your hands, or there's an option to do it both ways. So at [patreon.com/,medicinstories](#) is where you can download those two recipe cards, as well as get the \$75 off coupon code which expires July 31st, 2019. So if you feel called to study with Rosemary, then be sure to check it out sooner rather than later.

A few things to mention real quick before we get into it is that Rosemary talks about the [United Plant Savers Foundation](#) which she founded. I just really want to encourage you to check it out, I'll have the link right there in the show notes and to look at the page that tells the "At-Risk" plants and the "To Watch" plants. This is a list that every herbalist should be familiar with, so you know which herbs are really at risk and being overharvested and which herbs are close to being at risk, which herbs to watch. If you are wildcrafting or interested in wildcrafting in any way, or just being in the herbal community in any way, familiarize yourself with this list. Check up on it every now and then. See what's changing.

And also, of course, check out [freefircider.com](#) (I think it's .com). Again, the link will be in the show notes to keep updated on what is going on with the really, actually insane, fire cider lawsuit.

We talk all about it in this episode, so listen on if you don't know about it, and you can donate there, too, if you would like to if you feel so-called.

And then one final thing is Rosemary mentions "woofers." She says the word "woofers", there, kind of at the beginning, and it occurred to me that probably some people don't know what that it is. It is [WWOOF](#), which stands for Worldwide Opportunities on Organic Farms. And I just know this because back in 2005, at the very beginning of my herbal wanderings when I worked at the Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op, I became familiar with the idea of WWOOF-ing. There were a lot of farms in Sacramento (still are organic farms) and people coming through who had WWOOFed on farms all over the world. It's a really amazing thing. And actually kind of did it once when I was pregnant with my almost 13 year old now. So yeah. Over 13 years ago I stayed on a little organic farm in Arizona as part of the WWOOF program and it was pretty cool.

[0:08:37]

Amber: Alright if you don't know about Rosemary, let me tell you a little bit. She has been practicing, living, learning, teaching, and writing about herbs for over 45 years. She's the author of twelve books, including *Medicinal Herbs: A Beginner's Guide*, *Herbal Healing for Women*, *Gladstar Herbal Recipes for Vibrant Well-being*, and her most recent book, *Herbal Healing for Men*.

She is also the author and director of the popular home study course, *The Science and Art of Herbalism*. Rosemary co-founded and was the former director of both the International Herb Symposium and the New England Women's Herbal Conference, is the founding president of United Plant Savers and was the co-founder and original formulator of Traditional Medicinal Tea Company. I mean, look at all that! And then doing all the Free Fire Cider stuff and the school that we talk about that she founded in Northern California back in the day? I mean, just a woman who has her hand in so many important movements in the herbal community.

She recently moved from her home at Sage Mountain, an herbal retreat center and botanical sanctuary where she has lived, taught and worked for the past 30 years to a smaller haven where she plans to plant a small garden, dream more, do less and spend more time with the plants. You can check out more at sagemountain.com and scienceandartofherbalism.com. Those links are in the show notes, and again, if you're interested in *The Science and Art of Herbalism* home study course, then check out my Patreon for the \$75 off coupon code and the recipe cards that will give you an idea of what it's all about.

You know, I say this at the very end to Rosemary, herself, but what a wonderful, kind, generous, humble, human being Rosemary Gladstar is. I had heard all these things about her all these years. We never had a chance to have our paths cross, and that was fine. And then a few months ago I was like, you know what? I'm just going to reach out to her and see if she would be on the podcast. She's just made such a difference in so many people's lives, and so graciously agreed, and had such a sweet time scheduling it and changing and schedules changing. And people's needs being what they are, I just was **so struck** by how the vast majority of people in her position would **not** be quite as kind and lovely as she is. So, thank you, Rosemary. You are an example to all of us, and now let's get into this lovely interview with Rosemary Gladstar.

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

[0:11:33]

Amber: Hello Rosemary! Welcome to Medicine Stories.

Rosemary: Thank you! I'm really honored to be here with you.

Amber: It's so, so sweet to have you here and just before we pressed record, I mentioned to you that I feel nervous before every interview no matter how wonderful the person is (like you) or if they're a very close friend of mine. And you mentioned you also feel nervous before you teach. And I remember that you wrote about that. I think it was in Plant Healer Magazine that -- I remember, actually, I quoted you. I put it up on Instagram and everything because you had this whole quote about how nervous you get, and you take kava before you teach. *(Rosemary laughs)*

And it was so inspiring for me to see this herbal **master** (whatever word you want to use) still gets nervous but still pushes through her own fear to spread the good word.

Rosemary: Yeah, absolutely. Well, it's not really about you, in truth, if you can remember that. There's this wonderful image of this, that I've always loved, of an old woodcut of an herbalist kneeling to the earth as she's harvesting. That's always been a powerful image to me because it really is just kneeling to the earth and receiving from the earth and then giving back to the earth. So sometimes the little person who's the channel in all of that gets nervous but you just put it aside and then the force is powerful. *(Rosemary laughs)*.

Let it flow!

Amber: That's so helpful because, as I'm sure you know, so many people are coming into herbalism right now. Just a flood of interest in healing with plants which is wonderful, and we need those people and we need those voices, so I really appreciate that perspective and guidance from you.

Rosemary: Great.

[0:13:14]

Amber: So I would love to hear this story of your name, of the name Rosemary.

Rosemary: Yeah, I feel very lucky. I was the third child in a family of five. My parents thoughtfully named each of their children: Billy, Betty, Bobby, Diane, and I was fortunate enough, I feel, to get the name, Rosemary. I used to think -- I always used to tease my sisters -- that if they'd ended up with that name I would've had to fight them for it! *(Rosemary laughs)*

But I was named after my two grandmothers: Rose and Mary. Actually, one of my grandmothers' names was Rosemary, but my mother was and my father was collectively putting those names together. And one of my grandmothers on my mother's side, my Armenian grandmother, she was an herbalist, so you know, I felt like -- I just feel like I was chosen at a very young age to carry on this tradition, even named, even being given that name, which Rosemary's a pretty fantastic plant, so I'm really honored in that way, as well.

Yeah, I feel lucky to have that name, you know? Gifted, really.

Amber: Absolutely. It's like cosmic guidance at birth.

Rosemary: (*Rosemary laughs*) Yeah.

Amber: And so, do you have a special relationship with the plant rosemary?

Rosemary: Oh I think everybody does. All you have to do is look at rosemary. It's a pretty special plant.

It is in my repertoire for certain. I have a very large group of really close plant allies at this point in my life, and rosemary is one of them, for certain. It wasn't one of my early ones. I always appreciated it. It's a very powerful medicinal, a great culinary. Even during that long period of time when people weren't using medicinal plants, rosemary was still used all the time. You could find it in every kitchen cabinet and grocery store.

And those plants that were able to do that were able to disguise their power can make themselves ordinary in every day, were of special interest to me because it's what I call 'soft power', a kind of magical power that's around us that people don't fully recognize. It's just fully there working. So rosemary is very special in that way.

But it wasn't until later in my life that I began to really recognize what a powerful medicinal it is and really use it more in medicines for mental health and as a very powerful antioxidant. I really am looking towards those plants that are very sustainable, and easy to grow, and found in wide ranges in the world because there's just -- because of what you said -- there's just **so** much interest in plants right now and not enough interest in plant conservation. So rosemary's one of those very powerful plants that lends itself to growing in a variety of habitats and can be used safely, you know, even in our cooking, but also as a very strong medicine.

And then the personality of it, just the being of that plant, it grows in many different forms, but one of the forms, it's kind of this small shrub or a tree, almost, a very healthy, hearty plant. And it can withstand a lot of -- it doesn't like **super** cold weather, but can stand a lot of harsh weather. And it's just rich in aromatic oils, so just the plant itself has it's own protective energy and the legends of it, of course, are remarkable. There's many, but one of my favorite that when Joseph and Mary were fleeing and Mary was trying to protect her unborn baby, they stopped in the desert, and Joseph took off the cape, the blue cape, off of Mary's shoulders and draped it over an unflowering shrub. And then the morning when they prepared to travel on and he took that cape off, the shrub had burst into blue flowers and Joseph said, "Behold the rose of Mary." And that's how the plant was named.

So even just those stories, they're just so beautiful and they tell us so much about the power of the plant.

Amber: Absolutely. The mythic element of plants is something we talk about a lot on this show.

[0:17:31]

Amber: So your Armenian grandmother, did she, did your lives overlap enough in time for her to teach some herbalism?

Rosemary: Oh yeah, she was my very first herb teacher, actually. So when we were growing up, my grandparents, both of my sets of grandparents, lived near the river. We were dairy farmers. We

had a small dairy farm in Northern California. So, my Armenian grandmother, she was a survivor of the Armenian genocide, and she used to tell us when we were children growing up, it was her knowledge of the plants and her faith in God, because she was a deeply religious woman, as well, that saved her life. And she meant that literally, you know. There was nothing to eat and so she was able to collect foods. And then when they came to this country, they were still a young couple, she and my grandmother, you know, they had nothing because they were refugees from a terrible war. And so, again, having that use of plants and knowing how to use the plants for healing was a very powerful element in her life.

It's really interesting, because even as I've grown older, once in a while my mother will tell me another story about my grandmother that just totally amazes me and confirms how much my grandmother knew. Just a couple of years ago, my mother was visiting me, she is right now, she's also an elder now, 95, and wise and wonderful woman. But my mother was visiting me and I had my cupping set. And my mother saw them and she said, "Oh yeah! The cups! My mom used to do that all the time to the neighbors. They'd come in, and she would cup them." So I mean, another lost art, of course, in our lifetime, but not in my grandmother's. And then also, when my grandmother was a young woman, still living in Armenia, she was very interested in healing and had been trained. I'm not sure who she got her training from, but I would have imagined her grandmother in that traditional way that herbalism has been passed down. But she was interested enough that she was in nursing school. She was actually studying to be a nurse so that she could further her healing, but that, of course, was interrupted and was never resumed.

So yeah, she had a very powerful knowledge, but I always like to point out, that my grandmother was probably trained in much the same way that many of the people of that generation was because herbs were the primary system of healing used by these people. And it wasn't something that you went off to study, you just learned it from your family and you incorporated it into your daily life. So, it wasn't something **unique** that you did. You can even see in this country if you look back at the earliest cookbooks, all of the cookbooks, there are entire sections in the back of how to use herbs for healing. So it's just part of what you were trained to do.

So my grandmother knew how to use plants probably on a deeper level than most people, but similar in the sense that using know how to use them for everyday health and wellness.

[0:20:34]

Amber: So it sounds like this transmission, this herbalism being in your bones, may have come from your pure matrilineal line, as your mother's mother, and you were saying she probably learned it from her grandmother... I just really love thinking about the mother line and that sounds like a very powerful legacy.

Rosemary: Yes, it was a very powerful legacy. Yeah.

Amber: Do you have any specific memories of her using plants?

Rosemary: Umm. Yeah, I remember one time, I don't know, maybe I was seven or eight years old, and it was -- I mention I lived on a dairy farm, and this is always a good quote or a good story I like to say. It's not specifically about my grandmother, but I'll get back to that.

So we grew up, there were five kids in my family, and we grew up on a small dairy farm. In our entire childhood, there were only two times that our parents had to take us to the hospital. So, everything was taken care of by my parents and through home remedies and home healthcare, except for two instances:

Once when my sister fell off a horse and broke her hip. Obviously, that required medical assistance. And then, my little sister swallowed rat poison, which was terribly frightening, and she did survive. It was a good story, but, of course, they took her to the hospital.

So my grandmother lived near to us, as I said, and sometimes very close. So anytime we had colds, flus, and fevers and stuff, grandma was there using things. But most of everything that she used was just common kitchen stuff or things that they were growing in the garden. But one time I do remember, I ran into a pitchfork, I still have the scar on my leg. You know, the pitchfork was laying upwards, and I was just running to the barn and got that stuck in my leg. Especially in a barnyard situation, there's always the fear of tetanus, today, that's what all responsible parents would do. But back in those days, especially if you were immigrants, you were worried about hospitals and you couldn't afford medicine.

So, my grandmother soaked vinegar. That was a very common household ingredient. So it was hot, hot water and Epsom salts and then vinegar packs on it. And it healed up wonderfully, of course, and all I have is this little scar to remind me of this time that I ran into a pitchfork. (*Amber laughs*) And I remember it because it was very painful.

So yeah, things like that. And I think one of my best memories of my grandmother was being in the garden with her. And she would be weeding, and she would always have a basket where half of the weeds went into the basket, the other half went into the compost. But like, all the common weeds that we use today: chickweed, amaranth, lamb's quarter, purslane, which was one of her very favorites, those would all go into the gathering basket and come in and be made into soups and stews.

And when I first started teaching, I was in my early twenties, so it was, like, in the 1970s, my grandmother was still quite well, and she was, at that point, maybe, in her early eighties or maybe late seventies. And I would bring her with me to some of my classes because somehow in me I recognized the power and the necessity of bringing the elders around. It's always been something that I've been proud of in myself is recognizing, even at a young age, how powerful these powerful older people were and how precious it was to have them be with us. So they were always included in our herbal gatherings.

So my grandmother would come, and she would make what she'd call (*unclear what name Rosemary says here*), her stews, which were all those wild greens, and mostly purslane. She loved purslane. And then serve that to my students, so that was always cool.

Amber: That's amazing! How sweet! (*Amber laughs*) What, I mean, what truly a blessed childhood and family.

Rosemary: Well, in those ways, yes, but growing up extremely poor on a dairy farm, yeah, I would say it was blessed, really. There wasn't a lot of hardships for us. For my parents there were. They were always trying to figure out how to greet the bill collectors at the door. (*Rosemary laughs*) But for us children, it was pretty ideal. And certainly, an idyllic time, where you know, you kids could

get off the bus and no parents ever waited for them. I mean, who would do that? Parents weren't home because you could just go play in the entire fields and meadows and cross over to the neighbor two miles. Yeah, that was a very different time, and I do feel very fortunate.

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Amber: Yeah, and just so many of our intergenerational relationships have been lost today. So many people, you know, don't grow up with their grandparents.

Rosemary: Oh yeah, that was very precious. (*Rosemary laughs*)

Amber: Yeah, and so amazing that your mother is still with you at 95!

Rosemary: Oh yeah, and very vital and strong and fun and zesty. (*Amber laughs*) We were just talking about it the other day. She says she doesn't -- I mean, her body feels older now, and I know that's confusing to her, but she still feels about 17. That was her favorite age. Go figure, right? Most of us want to get out of those teen years, but mom loved being 17.

(*both laugh*)

Amber: So, wow. You started teaching classes in your early twenties. So was there ever, was this a straight trajectory for you, from, like, childhood, did you always know that you were going to herbalism? And it sorta sounds like it, that you were coming into it when there was the beginning wave of the herbal renaissance in America.

How did that all... weave that together.

Rosemary: Yeah, I think it was a straight, umm, kind of this, thought out path for me, not necessarily by me but for me. Definitely not by my parents or anything. They were always a little bit worried about me wondering when I was going to grow up and find something to earn a livelihood, right? (*Rosemary laughs*) But I think, really, at a very early age, there's a selection process by the plants, you know, and if you even show any interest, they grab you, put you into service, and then you better watch because you are signed up for life, which is a good life.

Umm. Yeah, so, it wasn't like I ever made a conscious decision I was going to be an herbalist because herbalism was not really a profession in the 1970s or the 1980s really, even in the beginning of them. And people who went into it following a passion, they certainly weren't doing it thinking they were going to earn a livelihood from it. It was just not a possibility at that point, or, at least, I think we created that possibility, right? Jumping in and actually hoping to defend this renaissance that we have seen take off.

But even when I was, like, in my earliest years in high school and elementary school, all of my projects were always centered around plants. My 7th and 8th-grade science projects were native uses of wild medicinal plants in Sonoma River. I composed these books made of the plants and how the Native people used them to the best of my knowledge with what limited information was available then.

And then, you know, right after high school, I was born in the midst of the back to the earth movement or not born in it, but it was taking off right at that time, and I just was compelled to

head into the mountains and backpack. And I learned so much doing that and spent a couple of years free-spiriting and learning a lot from old people, how to eat in the woods and work for them on their farms. This was before WWOOFers was even a thing. And then I just, I felt compelled to come back and give back. I described it then, which I laugh because I was so young, but I described it as this period of grace, and now I needed to go back and do something for people.

[0:28:28]

Rosemary: And so, I went back. It was 1972. I opened my first herb store Sonoma County. It's called Rosemary's Garden. It's actually still there. (*both laugh*) It's pretty incredible to go back after all these years and still see that old store.

And that was really started as kind of home apothecary, a place where people could come and get herbs because there really, in California even, there wasn't much available. There was one really good herb store, one, and one only, and that was located in San Francisco which was an hour and a half south of where I lived. There might have been an herb store also in Southern California, in L.A., and there were definitely herb stores in the Chinatowns.

So, during that period -- it's really hard to really embrace this, but it's absolutely true -- there were small ethnic communities that were still using plants like the Chinese communities were still, they still had their Chinese herb doctors, some of the Middle Eastern communities and stuff, and also in very rural pockets, like in the Appalachians because people were too poor. It wasn't because of choice, like, "Oh great, let's use herbs!" It was they didn't have access to other types of medicine, so they were using it. It's a very different time than what we're witnessing now.

So yeah. Yeah, it was kind of an organic thing. I opened that herb store, and I had no intention of teaching. I'm basically a kind of shy, quiet individual, who'd much rather be in the background, but I always say I'm an introvert living an extrovert's life. I had Cancer Rising and Sagittarian Sun, so my Sag is kind of dominated, but my Cancer's been screaming out all this time, right? (*Amber laughs*)

So it was my neighbors and friends who were saying, "Oh you should start teaching. Teach us about the plants." I held a few little classes in my living room. I had maybe four or five people, and then six or seven. Very quickly it grew. It was amazing how quickly it grew. So then I was teaching and renting big halls and churches for teaching. And I remember teaching at the Unitarian Life Fellowship and having a couple of hundred people. This was just, really just a few months after it started because people were just **craving** this information, and it wasn't available.

And also, I have to say, I was *impassioned*. I was on fire with it. It was just pouring through me, and I felt like I could really engage with people and bring them into that magical world that plants offered us. So, I feel very blessed and fortunate to be a voice and channel for the plants.

[0:31:10]

Amber: I have to echo the introvert living the extrovert's life thing. And also mention that I'm also Cancer rising.

Rosemary: Oh! So you know!

Amber: I know, I just want to be home. (*Amber laughs*)

Rosemary: Yeah.

Amber: And so then you started the California School of Herbal Studies, as well, right? In Sebastopol area?

Rosemary: Yeah. Well, really what happened after the classes was people kept asking, you know, “We need to do more.” So I thought, well, I have a little retreat. See if other people out there are interested. I had gone to this incredible spiritual retreat that was offered by a very famous person at that time, Hari Dass Baba, who was Ram Dass’ teacher. It was just wonderful. It was a weekend where people would come do yoga and saunas and meditate, and I was thinking, oh we could do something similar like this for herbalism.

Nothing like that was happening that I know of in the country. So it was in 1974 we hosted the first herbal conference, and we had about 50 people come that first weekend. It was \$25 for the weekend. It was lodging and food, and music and dancing at night, and these fabulous classes during the day and these hot tubs. It was like, this is actually **magical** to be in a circle of other people who feel the same, that are as impassioned and being moved by the plants. It was just like we had come home.

And so we started doing those on a seasonal basis and operating them as Friday - Saturday - Sunday events. They grew rapidly. They went from, like, 50 to 100 to a couple hundred people really quickly.

And then from there, that’s when people were saying, “Well, we want to study more.” Right? So it was always -- so then, I thought, “Well, we’ll start a school!” I knew **NOTHING** about starting schools and there were no models. I mean, there was no other schools. Mastery schools had closed down in the United States in the 1930s, those eclectic medical schools. There were a couple of correspondence courses offered by Dr. Christopher and another by the Dominion Herb School that was in Canada, and they were both really good courses run by wonderful people. So we just opened this herb school. And you know, I’m not really sure. It was just my inspiration of how to put it together and the classes to offer, and then I wanted to bring in lots of different herb teachers. So I started finding other herbalists who were doing this work, and this fabulous amazing staff, and we ran programs almost year round. We had ten-month programs, we had intern programs. We had weekend program. When I look back at those calendars, it was like we were teaching herbs 24/7 about 11 ½ months out of the year. *(Rosemary laughs)*

And the only thing I could say is that I could do it because I was young, you know, and on fire. I was really impassioned with the work. I felt like I could see the difference it was making. It was incredible. I could see the difference it was making in people’s lives. I could see the difference it was making in a bigger circle. I could even, at that time, begin to see the difference we were making in the medical field, where healthcare was beginning to emphasize the care in the health in the midst of sickness and illness. Yeah. *(Rosemary laughs)*

[0:34:39]

Amber: And so, at some point in the eighties, my future teacher, Kami McBride, came to study with you. And Kami, she was my first teacher, and I always say, my most important teacher, and I mean, I just look at that lineage transmission, you know, from you to Kami. And I’m sure many

other students who you had in those years who now Kami has gone on to reach so many people and now I've have gone on to reach so many people with this podcast. It's all thanks to you, Rosemary.

Rosemary: (*Rosemary laughs*) Well, now, I can just look behind me and say it's all thanks to the people who were behind me. The thing is -- and this is one of the things that's forgotten now -- is that we stand on incredibly long lineage, and nothing that we think is original is original. It's coming through us, and if we're lucky enough to be able to speak it, or make it, or do it, it's because we've been chosen. It's not because it's ours. It's ours to pass through us and to share and to pass on.

And I just think sometimes, you know, all this claiming going on of all this stuff, you know, "My Formulas" and "My This" and "My That" and, you know? It's like it's one thing -- I remember early on when there weren't a lot of people doing things, and you had the opportunity to feel a little original and different. And I remember I would go to somebody else's class, or read something, maybe an article somebody had written and I'd be going, "My God. That's almost the same thing that I thought or said or did!" And I began, at first, you might think, "Oh maybe they heard my tape or my lecture and they were saying it." But really, what it was is we were all collectively hearing a similar message. You know? Again, as I've said, if we're fortunate enough to be able to channel that, it's a luscious feast to be shared with others is really what it is.

Amber: Yeah, I mean. It's such a -- working with plants is such a deeply human thing. Every single one of our ancestors, except for maybe for most of us the last few generations had really deep relationships with plants. And so, it's just a remembering. And I've had that same experience where I come to some "Oh my God" realization about herbalism, and then I start reading other people's books or posts, and I'm like, "Oh, yeah. Everyone's realizing the same thing" because we're all just remembering.

Rosemary: Yeah, we're all on the same wavelength. It's actually really beautiful once you let your ego, like, you know, pat it on its head and say, "Sit down..." (*Rosemary laughs*) "Back down there."

Then it's a really beautiful thing.

[0:37:23]

Rosemary: A really great example of that is when we first formed United Plant Savers the process that led up to that first meeting that we had, that I called together because I was concerned. I had been noticing and observing. First of all, I had been noticing and observing that herbalism was becoming very popular, and that was incredible and wonderful. Yes, it did engender a different set of problems, but the overall picture was really awesome. But then I began to wonder, and this was primarily through my travels in other countries, where the herbal lineage hadn't been broken, like, Say when you travel through Western Europe or Eastern Europe, those people have always used herbs, and yes, they use modern medicine, but they don't think using St. John's Wort is strange or anything. And there never was a break in that tradition.

But the plants that the tradition was based on are in dire straits. And in some of those countries, it's illegal. You can't even pick common, weedy plants because they're just not abundant. And the only place you see very many of those are in protected areas. So I remember one time I came back from one of those trips, and I was standing on my front porch at Sage Mountain, looking out over

hundreds of acres of wilderness, just contemplating how lucky and fortunate we were to still have this kind of wilderness with still fairly vast amounts (we know it's diminishing quickly), and we still have all of our medicinal plants pretty much. And the minute I thought of that, right along with that thought came, "Really? Is that really the case? Because where are all these plants?"

And I remember the first few years that I had been living in Vermont, and I had just hiked and hiked and hiked looking for all of those beautiful medicinals that should be growing there. Like, bloodroot and black cohosh and goldenseal and ginseng, which would be rare, of course, but there I was on the range for them. And I found NO ginseng, of course, and no goldenseal, of course. I found bloodroot and very little black cohosh. And many of these medicinal plants were just no longer there. It just was going, my brain was going, click-click-click-click.

And we were getting ready to have an International Herb Symposium, so there were herbalists coming from all over the country. And I just decided to invite a few of them, there was maybe about 15 or 20 to stay after the symposium and to have a forum, a discussion. To ask them, "Have you been noticing that there are problems?"

So, lo and behold, as we're sitting in that circle, there was -- I had been smart enough to invite -- manufacturers, practitioners, wildcrafters, just a whole segue of different herbalists, a whole group of different herbalists there. And every single one of them had the same realization: they had all been concerned. And again, that's an example. You know, it wasn't like I was just going, "Oh the plants really need our help. Let's form an organization." Everybody at that time was concerned and not sure what to do about it. So that's when we said, well, if there's a problem, what should we do about it? That was how we started United Plant Savers.

[0:40:27]

Rosemary: So it's a long, roundabout kind of communication about how we are almost really on the same wavelength. When we're tuned in, we definitely are. (*Rosemary laughs*)

And also, it's a good story about how United Plant Savers got started because that's really changed the voice of American Herbalism.

Amber: Absolutely, and that was going to be one of my questions so that was perfect. Why don't you explain a little bit about what UPS does?

Rosemary: Yeah, so really before United Plant Savers was formed, the primary interest in herbs was what the plants could do for us, you know. And there was, of course, a huge, that included a huge number of things. People were looking at them for their intelligence, and the way they connected with our hearts, and the way they helped us heal and the beauty that they were. But really, there was very little thought about medicinal plant conservation. Now, there are many wonderful organizations in the United States that are plant-protective, you know. There's The Wildflower Society, the very first organization in the United States that focused on conservation of all wildflowers. But there was nothing really that was looking at the market value of these plants and how they were being marketed. And, you know, those ones that have such a demand in the market, and so that was where we stepped in.

Our, you know, we started off by not -- you know, we had to define what our mission statement was, and it was to really ensure an everlasting supply of these plants, both for people to use and

also for the earth itself. So conservation, preservation, and cultivation were our primary things that we wanted to focus on. And we did decide to limit it at that time to North American plants, not necessarily plants around the world. And that was because, as a very small organization with no money, we needed to have a manageable goal. And so, we felt like if we could focus on what was here, we could create a model of conservation, for medicinal conservation, that other countries could use. But we could at least manage, we could perhaps accomplish what we wanted to.

So the number of things right from the beginning was we established a Sanctuary Project so people had the opportunity to create botanical sanctuaries on their own properties, and replant the wild, and that would be maybe taking a patch of your yard and ensuring that you had native medicinal plants growing there that would then bring in native pollinators and bring in the question from your neighbors, you know. So that's been a wonderfully successful part of our organization.

We also were able to purchase, through the really good will of a couple of our supporting members, Michael and Judy Funk, a 350-acre botanical sanctuary. That's really, like, our crown jewel because it's in forever protection, and it is NATIVELY growing, found on the land is almost all of the at-risk plants. At least all of them in the temperate United States. So you find growing there, naturally, goldenseal and ginseng and black cohosh and *Mitchella repens* and so many of these plants are just thriving there.

And then a big project was to identify which plants, as communities and also as manufacturers and even for the government's sake, which plants we needed to be most concerned about. So you can imagine, you know, how challenging that was because everybody has their favorite plants on that list. Nobody wants to see osha on that list or white sage or sandalwood or you know, unicorn, false unicorn root, you know? So it took a lot of work to create a list. And it's a non-definitive list, it's always open for discussion. And what's pretty magical -- I know I'm rambling on about this so you can stop me, anytime --

Amber: No, please, go ahead.

[0:44:34]

Rosemary: What's magical is how we created that list in the beginning was we did it by surveys. We sent surveys out to hundreds of different types of herbalists: the wildcrafter, the manufacturer, but people who worked with plants, right? And they would send back their answers of what they thought in their bioregions needed to have focus. And it took a long time. It took a couple of years, and Richo Cech of Horizon Seed was one of the primary movers on this project and also, Tim Blakely. There was a group of herbalists who really poured their heart and energy into this. And over a couple years, we came up with this At Risk list and then To Watch list.

And then, of course, as our organization grew and became more credible, the question became, "Well, how can you prove that these plants are? You can't just do it by people's surveys and their thoughts." So we had to develop an at-risk assessment tool, and it had to have credibility and stand up to government scrutiny and university scrutiny. So we had Kelly Kindscher of the University of Kansas and some of his graduate students work on this. It took about four or five years to develop. And I just have to say that it's amazing to me that the at-risk assessment tool and that list that we put together in the very beginning, they really, you know, there are some shifts and some changes, but it's remarkable how much they support each other. Am I making sense?

Like, just in a very non-scientific way of “well what plants do you think should be at risk?” really holds up. It’s kind like in the medicine world, too, you know. You don’t really need to have, necessarily need to have all that science to prove what really is troubled out there. Anyway, yeah. So those are, you know, we’ve written books, we’ve held conferences, we’ve worked so hard at education, and this year we’re celebrating our 25th anniversary. (*Rosemary laughs*)

Amber: Oh wow. Wow!

[0:46:31]

Rosemary: So we’ve been at this work for 25 years, and it really has changed the focus of herbalism. So conservation is usually a big issue. Looking at cultivated plants, especially of those plants that are at risk, or to watch, looking for cultivated sources has become a better way rather than just going after the wildcrafted. So there’s been a lot of shifts in those 25 years and a lot more that still need to happen.

Amber: I’m so happy to hear that whole story. You answered so many questions that I’ve just had floating around in my mind for a long time. And the list of the “At Risk” plants and the “To Watch” is so important and I see herbalists reference it all the time on social media. You know? When they’re trying to educate individuals or larger companies who are overharvesting and this whole line of thought that you began with United Plant Savers has really trickled down to my husband and I, who are doing this huge process of plant local, native medicinals on our acre of land out here. We’ve done an herbal products business for years, and we’re trying to really cut back on the wildcrafting. Even though we do it super respectfully and all that stuff, if we could just be growing these plants on our own land, we can have that less of an impact on the land around us.

Rosemary: I think that’s so true. And also, for this whole project, like, when you really look at how big it is, it’s really supporting another endangered species, which is the American farmer. It gives the farmers the opportunity to grow plants, some of them which are high-end crops, like goldenseal and ginseng, they’re very intensive to grow. Or even something like false unicorn root, the demand is really high.

So I just think it’s another opportunity. And, you know, that’s always something that comes up, too. Does this mean that herbalists shouldn’t wildcraft ‘cause it’s such an ancient art? There’s so much wildcraft. You have all the dandelion, and burdocks, that at this point in history, those plants are very prolific because they’re designed to be prolific. They’re designed to travel with people, to seed rapidly, they like ALL different kinds of places to live.

But, when you start to look at those medicinal, native plants, they’re usually very habitat-specific. They usually have a much more difficult reproductive, more challenging reproductive system. They don’t usually produce thousands of seeds that will just grow anywhere. And the interesting thing about it is all of those weedy species that are so prolific are really those plants that we use for everyday health and wellness, the everyday illnesses. And it’s the rarer plants that are used for specific things. Not to be used so much.

Rosemary: In our culture, we don’t focus enough on health and wellness. We’re having to reach for these heavy medicines, whether it’s pharmaceuticals or herbs, far more than our ancestors had to. We just have to refocus on how to build strength and health, and then we can eat dandelion and be healthy, right? (*Amber laughs*)

If we take care of our illnesses with simple weedy plants and save those more at risk specific ones for occasion use and then **buy** those from organic farmers. (*Rosemary laughs*)

[0:49:53]

Amber: Mhmm. Yep. Umm, so man, you just, you're involved, you've been at the **beginnings** of so many important movements in herbalism, and I want to talk now about what's happening with fire cider.

And let's just assume that the listener has no idea what fire cider is or what is happening with it right now.

Rosemary: Great! Well, fire cider is just one of those many simple herbal formulas. It was developed in the Herb School kitchen in the form where we can figure, either the late 1970s or the very early 1980s. Because it appeared for the very first time in my home study course that I published in 1981, so we know that it was in there. I still have a printed copy of that.

And it was fun. It was one of those fun recipes. I had the intention of wanting to make a formula that was kind of everyday wellness that you could use, common kitchen ingredients. There were other formulas out of the same time. There was one really popular formula called Cyclone Cider. We've never been able to figure out whether Cyclone Cider came first or Fire Cider, but they were very similar.

And there was, of course, Dr. Christopher's Apple Cider Vinegar Cayenne Formula. So there's been apple cider vinegar formulas forever. But this particular apple cider vinegar based formula was a little different in that it was hot, spicy, pungent, and sweet. And it was also just, as I mentioned, that the intention of it was to create something that was, you know, you could just go to the grocery store. You didn't have to be an herbalist. You could gather up the herbs that you grew, even, and make this remedy.

And so it was kind of an experiment in the kitchen. We had these ingredients and we chopped them up and we made a cider vinegar product and we added honey to it, and it was really delicious. And so, it was one of the many recipes that I taught people to make. And this one became particularly popular. I think partly because people could so easily adjust it, partly because it was very effective and tasty. So you could give it to your sweetie pies and your relatives, and most people thought it was good. Some people, of course, as with all things, thought it's just hot and spicy and a lot of people didn't like it as well. And it was inexpensive.

And so it began its own life. It went out there the way formulas should and lots of people started making it and I started seeing it in other people's books and classes, it was always in classes. It was part of the herbs for winter health because it's a warming, stimulating, decongesting formula. The ingredients in it were horseradish -- the original ingredients were -- horseradish, onion, garlic, ginger, and cayenne peppers in a raw apple cider vinegar base and then sweetened to taste with honey or maple syrup. And so, yeah, it just went out and became pretty well known and actually I'd say very well known. Lots of people, when, as herbalism became more popular, lots of small businesses sprang up and people were making it and selling it in their co-ops along with their other products. And you know, everything was kosher in the herbal world.

[0:53:07]

Rosemary: And then, it's been about five years ago, a young company that had just started had discovered the recipe somewhere. They said they found it on the herbal underground, and they made it and they were really excited about it like we all get when we make a product, right? They thought, "Oh look what we've done!" They weren't herbalists, and they weren't involved in the herbal world so they didn't really understand the tradition so much. They just were excited -- the way herbalism is right now. It's kind of the in thing and people are doing it -- and they had some success selling it.

So they decided to get some investors and they decided to make the company bigger and to grow it. And in that process, they trademarked the name. So, we can say right there that was when the fire cider hit the fan, right? *(both laugh)*

Amber: They trademarked the name "Fire Cider."

Rosemary: They trademarked the name, yeah.

Amber: Which you actually came up with.

Rosemary: And that was really the only bad, you know. The fact that they started making it and selling it was great because that was what was meant to happen. But once they trademarked it, they claimed ownership of the name, and then they claimed ownership of the formula. One of the owners, then, created a story that said his grandmother had made it and gave it to him.

But the story has since changed. There's lots of versions of the story that they've told. But nonetheless, the recipe had been out and been printed. There were many companies that were making it and selling it not on a national level, you know. Most herbalists are selling it at their local farmers market or Etsy or whatever. But in order to keep your trademark, you have to kind of patrol. And if other people are using your name, you have to tell them you can't. So they began that process.

They began to write to other companies who were selling it on Etsy and writing nice letters that say, "We're so sorry. We own that name. It's our recipe. You can't make it." And some of these companies were making it for 10 or 20 years before Shire City. So it caused quite a stir from the internet, a big storm happened on the internet on Facebook and stuff, which I never go on so I didn't really know it was happening.

And it was my son who notified me and he said, "There's some pretty nasty stuff going on out there about this recipe that you made, Mom." And he said, "I think you might want to get involved." And so, my involvement was to say, "Calm down everybody. This is a mistake. I just need to write to them and let them know the history of it and everything will be fine."

But unfortunately, it wasn't fine. They refused to drop the trademark. They ended up then suing three of the young herbalists who had mobilized and helped to create an online resource and a boycott, to boycott the product, right? And they sued these -- they're three farmers -- and so they sued them \$100,000, which they continually claim they didn't do, but it's in all the court records.

And so, anyway, we've been going to trial now. The trial has just been happening. We've been seven days in federal court, and the outcome is still yet to be decided. I do have to say, you know, it's nervewracking and scary, and there's a lot of money involved against us and all of that. But I do have to say, the process has been fabulous, and I am so proud of the way the whole herbal community has stood up. For, it's not just for fire cider. Really if it was about just one name, it would hardly be worth the effort. But it's really about the process because if one traditional name can be trademarked, then that will leave all of the herbal products that are out there up for trademark. It means that something that you've been making, that you might have been making from your grandmother, and somebody decides to trademark it, you won't be able to sell it anymore.

[0:57:02]

Rosemary: A good example of that is, you know, fire cider's been around for 40 years as a popular herbal formula, but another one after fire cider was trademarked, then again, the second time it happened, another company came in and trademarked four thieves. Four Thieves Vinegar has been made, sold, and used for over 400, 500 years. So we do not want to see that precedent happen in the herbal community because this warm, sharing community that has readily shared recipes across the board, you know, "Here's my formulas. Here's my recipes," that's going to really change.

And I do really want to clarify, it's not that people don't trademark names. In the herbal community, lots of people do. And it's the reason that you spend a lot of money and energy developing a product and naming it, and then you're gonna market it and sell it, you don't want somebody to come along and go, "Look how good she's doing. I'm going to take that name." So, it's really a good thing to do, you know, if you're in the herbal business.

But not to trademark names that are already popular and already well-used. So I started to mention this, but in the court case, I was so proud and felt so much relief and was proud of how well the herbal community represented itself. We had unbelievable witnesses that, almost all of them paid their own way and took time out of their busy life to come and stand up for their herbal traditions. We had so much incredible evidence that proved that it had been sold. We had, people had documents, their sales receipts, that went back 20 and 30 years. So everything, it points to the fact that we'll win, except that in trademark laws everybody tells us that it's a very slippery slope. And it's not based on, it's based on other things. It's not always "who had it the longest." It's, you know, they've made it into a big company, so maybe who knows, maybe they'll end up with it.

No matter what happens, I feel like we've won because we did stand up and we did -- we put in a very good, ethical fight. We've been very well-mannered through this all. We've gotten a lot of accusations of being the "angry, herbal crowd," but we were not the angry, herbal crowd. We were just saying, "You know, you can make this like everybody else. Nobody's ever told you that you can't sell it. You can be the national company, you know, and do all these great things. We'd all be happy for you. Just let the trademark go because you don't own it. It's not yours. You didn't make it. It's not your recipe."

So anyway, that's kind of that. So we just ask people not to buy, you know, if they want to help with this in any way, not to buy trademarked the TM Fire Cider. Nobody else can call their products Fire Cider now, they're always camouflaged, but you'll recognize them as hot, spicy vinegar recipes. They're called, like, "Hot Shots" and umm "Fire Tonics."

Amber: It's very fun seeing all of the creative names people are coming up with. Hell Fire Cider, Wildfire Cider. (*Amber laughs*)

Rosemary: Yeah, that's right. There's some great ones.

Yeah, and you know, also, all of the publicity -- there's always a silver lining in everything that you have to look for -- but I have to say that all of the publicity has made vinegar products **really** popular. (*Rosemary laughs*)

Amber: Mhmm. Yep. Yeah, I see all the ways it's a win, too. There's the awareness raised around the product and I don't know, ethics in herbalism. I would've been shocked to have received the response back from that company saying, "Too bad. We trademarked it." I mean, I would've been like, "Oh it's just a misunderstanding. This is all gonna get worked out. Don't even worry about it."

And I don't know. It's just so hard to understand what's going on in their minds and why they would fight this when there's proof. There's proof that that's your name and your recipe. It's just. It's so hard to understand.

Rosemary: Well, I think that they had investors, and I think that they were, all in all, they probably started off with really great intentions and then they had investors and then they had lawyers who were probably making a lot of money. So maybe some bad advice, you know.

And it also made me realize how important this was to us. Like, umm, it was important, as I said, it was important not only just for fire cider, because that's just a product. We can always make it and change the name, but it's very important because it just shouldn't have happened. It's wrong. It's not a good thing, and it will change. There's clauses, liniments, and zoom balls and miracle grains and kava chai and all of these names you see everywhere, they can just be swooped up. And they will be strictly because people can make money now selling them.

And I don't... it's too bad. But on the other hand, it's really great that people can earn a livelihood, right? It's just -- do it ethically. Let's keep it clean and let's just rejoice in the plants and share them with our hearts wide open.

[1:02:08]

Amber: Yeah, I love the slogan that the Free Fire Cider Movement is using "Traditions not Trademarks." So, what's next? Do you have an idea of when the ruling will happen?

Rosemary: Yeah, so, the trial is officially over, you know, the witnesses and all of that. And sometime in June, so the lawyers -- so this is a Federal Court, so it's different than the county courts and all that. It's a very different process, which of course, none of us knew. So it's been very educational -- so in June the lawyers do a debriefing, and they present their -- I think the debriefing is you take all of the evidence and you make it brief, a briefer statement, and you present that to the lawyer. And then in July, they'll do a closing argument. And then after that, the judge has the opportunity to decide. So sometime probably by the end of July, we'll know.

If they win we'll have to do a MAJOR celebration. I was just thinking of everybody uncorking Fire Cider into the streets! And if they lose, we're going to have to really support those three women with more than love, because yeah, it will be pretty hard.

Amber: Yeah.

Rosemary: I think we're going to stay really positive and, like I said, no matter what happens, we will have won. As an herbal community, we stood really together on this one.

Amber: Yeah and it seems like they are receiving a lot of support already, and I really think the herbal community would rally if it doesn't go in their favor.

Rosemary: Yeah, I think so too.

Amber: So people can find out more at freefirecider.com.

[1:03:53]

Amber: So you are in sort of a transition phase in life or moving into a different stage where you recently moved off of Sage Mountain, which had been your home and sanctuary, and teaching location for decades, right?

Rosemary: Yeah thirty years.

Amber: Yeah. Yeah. What -- tell us about that transition.

Rosemary: Yeah, well that was a really hard one. That was probably my longest most passionate love affair - 30 years with a mountain. In every way it was nourishing and incredible. It's a 500-acre wilderness retreat center that's sort of in the middle, surrounded by thousands of acres of woodlands.

Amber: In Vermont.

Rosemary: Yeah, it's in Vermont, and umm. Yeah, it's not the easiest place to live. It's way up in the mountains, and we have long, cold winters and lots of snow, which is why I could write all these books. WE had these long winters and so I had to do something creative then.

But it really was powerful for me because it actually provided, like, a cave time where every winter I could stop that busy outer world flow of traveling and teaching and being out in the world so much that I could come deep inside and you know, sit by that big wood fire and drink my tea and read and write. It was very beautiful. And it really transformed thousands of people's lives. All the students that came would have these wonderful experiences, and we have them saying thinking they've come to the mountain to study with me, but it's really with the mountain spirits. It's really the mountain that is the teacher here.

Yeah, so, I just, my husband and I, it was a big plot of land. Even though it's wilderness, there's still a lot of maintenance and upkeep and there's lots of buildings and trails that had to be cleared and roofs had to be so we just couldn't do it. I'm in my seventies. I turned 70 this year and my husband is in his late sixties. It was just proving to be a lot of work and a lot of work for us. And we were ready for change. It's like, I like change. I've had major big changes in my life, and you know, was just kind of looking forward to the next one. So we decided we wanted to look for new stewards, new owners, and people to caretake that land. It took us a long time. We had a lot of interest, but we were very, you know, our first concern was finding people that would carry on the wilderness, the dream of the wilderness and really stand up for those trees, because our wildernesses are just under terrible demise from logging interests and building and sprawl, and you know, all the things, along with all the natural things that are going on with the tree bores and everything.

Anyways, so it took a while. And my really good friend, Emily, who is another fabulous herbalist and activist and just a kind and sensitive person, she had been coming up to Sage Mountain for about ten years and she started really looking at taking over the stewardship. And she's from Florida, she's a Florida girl, and she's never spent a winter in Vermont. So there was a lot of concern about that. But she's really thinking of, you know, not moving there full time and still keeping her business there in Florida. So we talked, and it was a really good switchover and I feel really good about her ability. She's doing it with a team of people of really wonderfully good people. And I'm close enough to Mother Hen, we only live about an hour and half north of it. So, yeah, that transition happened and it wasn't just about leaving my land, the land, it was also about transiting my workload as well, shifting what the next stage of my life is, which I'm not sure yet actually. I'm, I decided it's time to empty my overfull cup, and just to stand it out in the rain again and see what happens (*Rosemary laughs*). Not to just fill it up with all these dreams and desire and things I want to do. I have a few more years left in my life, and I think I might just want to open it up to Spirit and see what Spirit wants to fill it with.

But yeah, it's an interesting thing. I've been a mover and a doer for a lot of years, and I just want to step back from that a little bit. And so, I've handed off organizing the big gatherings that I've been working to really worthy people and who they are caring for. And I've also had to do, too, like, with organizing those big events which I've been doing since 1974 was the first one. I loved doing it, all the aspects of it, they were complex and fun, but bringing those people together, those numbers of people together, and watching that herbal circle grow and grow and grow, just having a small part in it was just amazing. But as the last few years, as the herbal community has grown, its needs have changed and shifted. And where I felt like I could always stay ahead of things and was a leader in some ways in those areas, with these new shifts I'm not the leader. I have so much to learn. So it's kind of time for me to step back into the circle and just have to hold it and allow other people, mostly young, brilliant minds and passionate hearts to move it forward. So, it's that period in my life, where I think all elders come to, where you have to step aside to let, to allow space for those young brilliant minds that are so ready to lead to step in to do their work. So that's kind of where I'm at now. I'm asking the questions! (*Rosemary laughs*)

[1:09:29]

Rosemary: "Now, how do you deal with that?" Some of the questions around social justice issues, which I'm HUGELY supportive of, sometimes I question it the ways that it goes because sometimes it seems more divisive than coming together. But then I have to say, I'm not aware of these things. So again, just sitting back and listening and watching things unfold and having my own thoughts

and opinions, but also, being open because that's how we learn. We always let our thoughts and opinions lead and it's not really a very suitable learning ground. So, yeah.

Amber: I really appreciate the wisdom of your humility. *(both laugh)* It's a good lesson for everyone.

Rosemary: It's the practice of herbalism: you're always kneeling to the ground.

[1:10:27]

Amber: Exactly. Exactly. I think that came up before on this show that "humus" or soil and "humble" come from the same root word.

Rosemary: Yeah, and then we reach it to the sky so there's both, you know, we're like these conduits. It's fabulous! *(both laugh)* Which is why it's captured the spirit of so many people around the globe, yeah. And it's also direct messaging that we can hear. They have such clear voices. Just bend to listen a little more, and shut off all the chatter in your minds, and then it's like, "Oh, yeah. I can do this. I can hear these creatures."

Amber: Absolutely. Again, it's just remembering how to do it.

Okay, well, I think that that's a nice conclusion, Rosemary. Thank you so, so much. And I just have to say, you were so lovely through the whole process of scheduling and for someone who's kind of a big deal, *(Rosemary laughs)* you just could not have been more kind and easy to deal with and generous! So generous! So thank you.

Rosemary: Thank you. I've enjoyed it. It's always really a blessing to be able to share your passion. that, you know, imagine people are interested. That's amazing! *(Amber laughs)* Thank you, Amber. Thank you for the work you're doing.

Amber: Thank you, Rosemary.

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

[1:11:52]

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 Spirit Medicine?](#)" It's fun and lighthearted, but the results are really in depth and designed to bring you into closer alignment with the medicine you are in need of and the medicine that you already carry and can bring to others.

If you love this show, please consider supporting my work at Patreon.com/MedicineStories. It is so worth your while. There's dozens and dozens of killer rewards there, and I've been told by many folks that it's the best Patreon out there. We've got e-books, downloadable PDF's, bonus interviews, guided meditations, giveaways, resource guides, links to online learning, and behind-the-scenes stuff and just so much more. The best of it is available at the two dollar a month level.

And please subscribe in whatever app you use, just click that little subscribe button and review on iTunes. It's so helpful, and if you do that you just might be featured in a listener spotlight in the future.

The music that opens the show is by The music that opens and closes the show is Mariee Sioux. It's from her beautiful song "Wild Eyes." Thank you, Mariee.

And thanks to you all. I look forward to next time!