

“Courage doesn’t always roar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying, ‘I will try again tomorrow.’”

– Mary Anne Radmacher

For many reasons, this month I was moved to find a quote about courage and this is a fantastic one. These days, with everything going on in the world, we must all be courageous, even if it's just in our own way. The political scene has gotten so toxic that people are literally killing (or threatening to kill) those who don't agree with them. This breeds fear and that's not the type of environment in which I want to exist. I think we are all braver than we believe we are, stronger than we seem to be and smarter than we imagine. It's important not to fear difficult moments because sometimes, the best things can come from them. We can't just (f)orget (e)verything (a)nd (r)un when we're afraid. Instead, we must rise up and fight for those things in which we believe. My stance on the COVID shot and many natural health remedies haven't always been popular, but over time, I've been proven right. Whether it was me writing about or talking about avoiding fluoride, aluminum, "vaccines", aspartame, Splenda and countless other products, I knew the truth would come to light. It finally is. There's a verse in the Bible, specifically in John 8:32, which says, *“and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”* Being a truth teller certainly hasn't been easy. But honestly, it has set me free. The truth isn't always popular. But telling the truth is always the right thing to do. I want to be a truth teller, help people and save people, whether it's popular or not. The pain of losing my father is just indescribable and if I can save just one person because of the things I've learned since his death, he wouldn't have died in vain. Luke 8:17 says: *“For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither anything hid, that shall not be known and come abroad.”* The truth is always eventually revealed. You may not like it. But sometimes you just need to open your heart and your mind to something different. It could save your life. That's why every day, I find the strength and the courage to just keep trying again to educate people regarding matters of health and try to reverse the brainwashing that's taken place from the media and Big Pharma. I'm not going to stop. Your life could depend on it.

Yours in health,

Susan Monaco, Certified Health Coach
Health and Wellness by Design
www.healthnwellnessbydesign.com
susan@healthnwellnessbydesign.com

Nature's Healing Ally: Goldenrod



I was hiking a couple of weeks ago and was curious about a plant I kept seeing along the trail. Using my “Seek” app, I learned it was Goldenrod, which is a member of the daisy family and often considered a weed. I remember hearing that Goldenrod is a healing plant, so I brought a few stalks home with me and started researching it. For those of you who have never heard of it, Goldenrod is a bright yellow flowering plant that blooms in late summer and early fall. So right now, it's everywhere. It's a perennial that grows 2-5 feet tall and has hairy stems. Its botanical name is *Solidago*, which is Latin for *solidus*, meaning “to make whole.” This refers to the plant's healing and medicinal properties. It's been used to heal wounds of the skin and to treat inflammation of the mouth and throat. Often mistaken as the cause of seasonal allergies (which is actually ragweed's fault), goldenrod is a powerful medicinal herb with a long history in traditional medicine used by Indigenous people and European herbalists for centuries. Native Americans have used its leaves as a poultice for bee stings and have made tea with its flowers to reduce fever. There are about 120 edible species of Goldenrod, which offer different tastes and smells, but they all offer a surprising number of health benefits. The seeds, flowers and leaves are edible. The leaves are best harvested before the flowers appear. You can harvest the seeds when most of the plant has dried in late fall by shaking it over a large bowl. The seeds can be powdered and used as a thickener in soups and stews instead of cornstarch. Crush a leaf when the plant is blooming to learn its unique aroma.

Here are several health benefits provided by Goldenrod:

- **Respiratory Benefits.** Goldenrod acts as an expectorant and decongestant, helping break up mucus and ease breathing. It can be used in teas for colds, sinus congestion and bronchitis.

- **Supports Urinary Tract Health:** Goldenrod acts as an antimicrobial and an anti-inflammatory as well as a mild natural diuretic, helping to flush the urinary system and prevent infections. It's often used in herbal remedies for urinary tract infections ("UTIs"), kidney stones, gout and bladder irritation and is helpful in addressing both the symptoms and the root cause of UTIs. Echinacea also helps stimulate the immune system when taken in conjunction with Goldenrod.
- **Reduces Inflammation and Allergies:** Goldenrod contains anti-inflammatory compounds like flavonoids and saponins, which may help reduce mucus and congestion from seasonal allergies and colds. Despite the myth, goldenrod is not a major allergen due to the fact that its pollen is heavy and doesn't travel far in the wind.
- **Boosts Immune Function:** Rich in antioxidants, Goldenrod can help protect the body from oxidative stress and support the immune system during cold and flu season.
- **Soothes Sore Muscles and Joints:** When used topically, Goldenrod-infused oils or salves can ease muscle aches, joint pain, and minor skin irritations. Its natural anti-inflammatory action makes it a favorite in traditional pain-relief blends. It can also aid with sores, toothaches, burns and other skin wounds.
- **Digestive Aid:** Goldenrod has mild astringent and bitter properties, which can help support better digestion after meals. It can also be used to help relieve diarrhea, bloating and gas due to its high tannin levels.

There are a few different ways to use Goldenrod. The best time to harvest it is late summer to early fall, when the flowers are in full bloom. This is literally right now and there's a ton of it in the Shenandoah National Park. Cut the top third of the plant and lay it out to dry on trays in a warm, well-ventilated area. Here are a few uses.

- **Tea:** Steep 1-2 tsp dried flowers and leaves of dried goldenrod flowers in 8 ounces of hot water for 10-15 minutes. If you drink the tea at room temperature, it increases its diuretic effect.
- **Tincture:** This is an alcohol extraction in which you can use fresh or dried Goldenrod. Steep it in 40%-50% alcohol (like vodka) for 4-6 weeks. Strain and bottle in amber glass. A standard dose is 1-2 ml (20-40 drops) 2-3 times daily. This is a more concentrated way to take Goldenrod for urinary and general immune support.
- **Topical Oil:** Used for muscle pain or skin care.
- **In Formulas:** Often blended with other herbs like echinacea or nettle.

Goldenrod is generally safe for most people, but should be avoided if you're allergic to ragweed or daisies. It may interact with diuretics or blood pressure meds. It's not recommended in pregnancy or for people with kidney issues. If you experience dizziness, nausea or a rash, discontinue its use. Please be aware that a toxic fungus can grow on the leaves, so be sure to use only plants that are fungus-free.

A Fun Fact about Goldenrod is it's actually the state flower of several U.S. states, including Kentucky and Nebraska, and it's beloved by bees, butterflies and other pollinators. Goldenrod is a versatile, underappreciated herbal ally for most people. In fact, eleven species of native bees are specialists in Goldenrod and seek it specifically for their diet. It even helps restore degraded land and prevents soil erosion. Whether you're exploring it for urinary health, immune resilience, or just want to connect more with local wild plants, Goldenrod offers a strong and safe starting point for using herbs for healing.

Please keep in mind that the Goldenrod flower has number of dangerous and potentially deadly look-alikes. Ragwort, staggerweed, life root and groundsel are just a few. Be sure have actually picked Goldenrod and not a look-alike, by using something like the "Seek" app, before using it.

I hope this piqued your interest enough to learn more about this versatile herb. Please reach out with any questions. Have a wonderful month!