

DIY Herbal Fellowship

# Adaptogens

*Herbs that Heal and Restore*



**01**

**Adaptogens**

**01**



**The Latest herbal fad**

## LESSON 01

# In This Lesson, You Will Learn

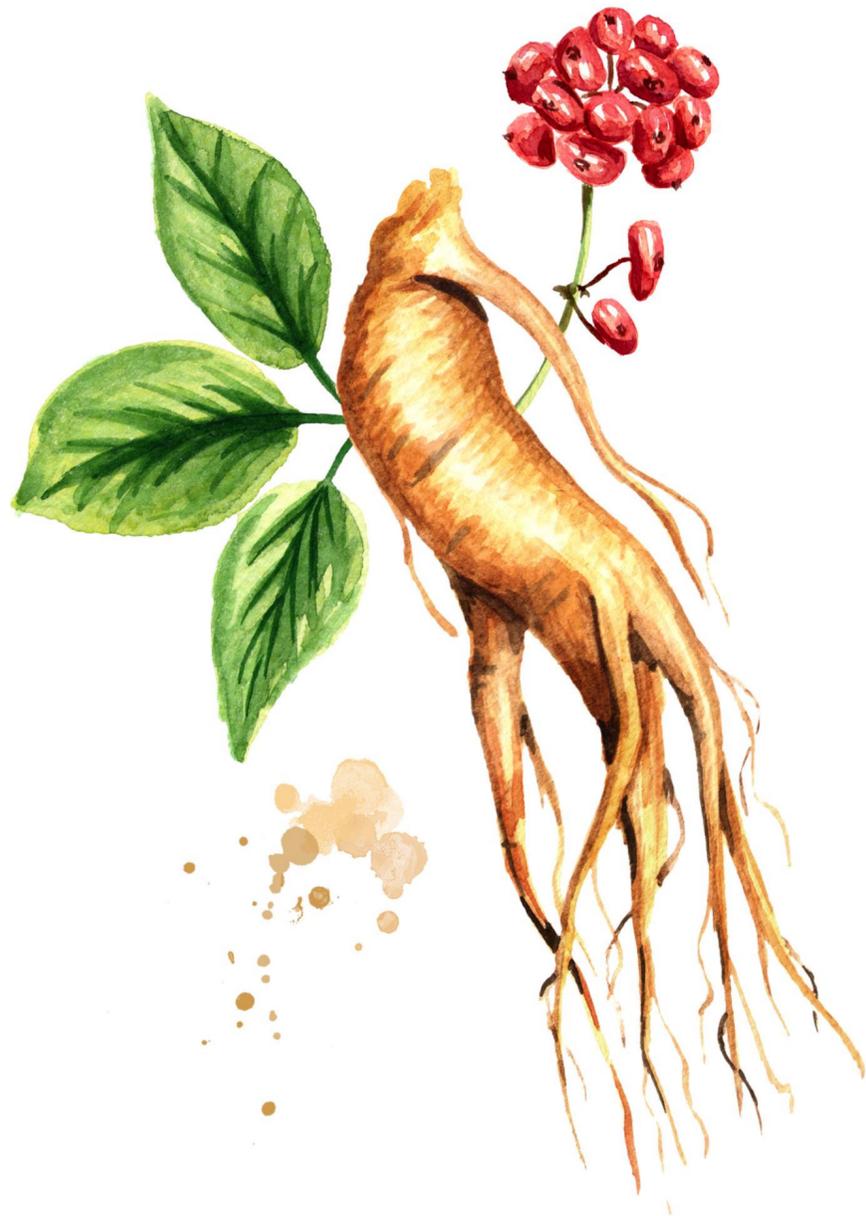
- Where the term “adaptogen came from”
- What qualities ALL adaptogens have for human health
- Cautions to heed when using adaptogens for your personal health.



Adaptogens are plants that have learned to adapt in harsh environments and thrive where other plants would die of the stress.



Adaptogens bring these same plant constituents to aid humans through supporting the immune system, protecting organs, and balancing hormones



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Many adaptogens, like ginseng are long lived.

Ginseng is harvested after 7 years of growth.

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Others, like Rose Root live in high altitudes.

Many adaptogens are very slow growing.



Adaptogens have been used in ancient herbal medicine in India and China for thousands of years.

In Ayurvedic medicine they were called: Rajsayanas, herbs that increase longevity

In TCM they were called: Qi tonics or Blood tonics

# Origins of the Term “Adaptogen”

Soviet scientist began studying adaptogens scientifically to find natural substances that would increase the stamina and performance of elite athletes and military.

In 1947 Dr. Likolai Lazarev coined the term “adaptogen” as an agent that allows the body to counter physical, chemical, or biological stressors by raising resistance to stress.

# Characteristics of Adaptogens

- Nontoxic
- Increase resistance to multiple stressors
- Help to normalize physiological responses despite prior stress-related changes in the body.

# Herbal Actions of Adaptogens

- › Antioxidant
- › Anticancer
- › Antiulcer
- › Digestive
- › Immunomodulating

# Herbal Actions of Adaptogens

- › Hepato-protective
- › Radio-protective
- › Supports CNS
- › Aphrodisiac
- › Hormone balancing

# Herbal Actions of Adaptogens

- › Neuro-protective
- › Energizing
- › Modulates stress hormones
- › Anti-aging



**Adaptogens  
increase stamina  
and support life.**



Adaptogens and Tonic herbs  
are not the same thing.

Though in they are being  
used interchangeably in  
many popular herbal books.

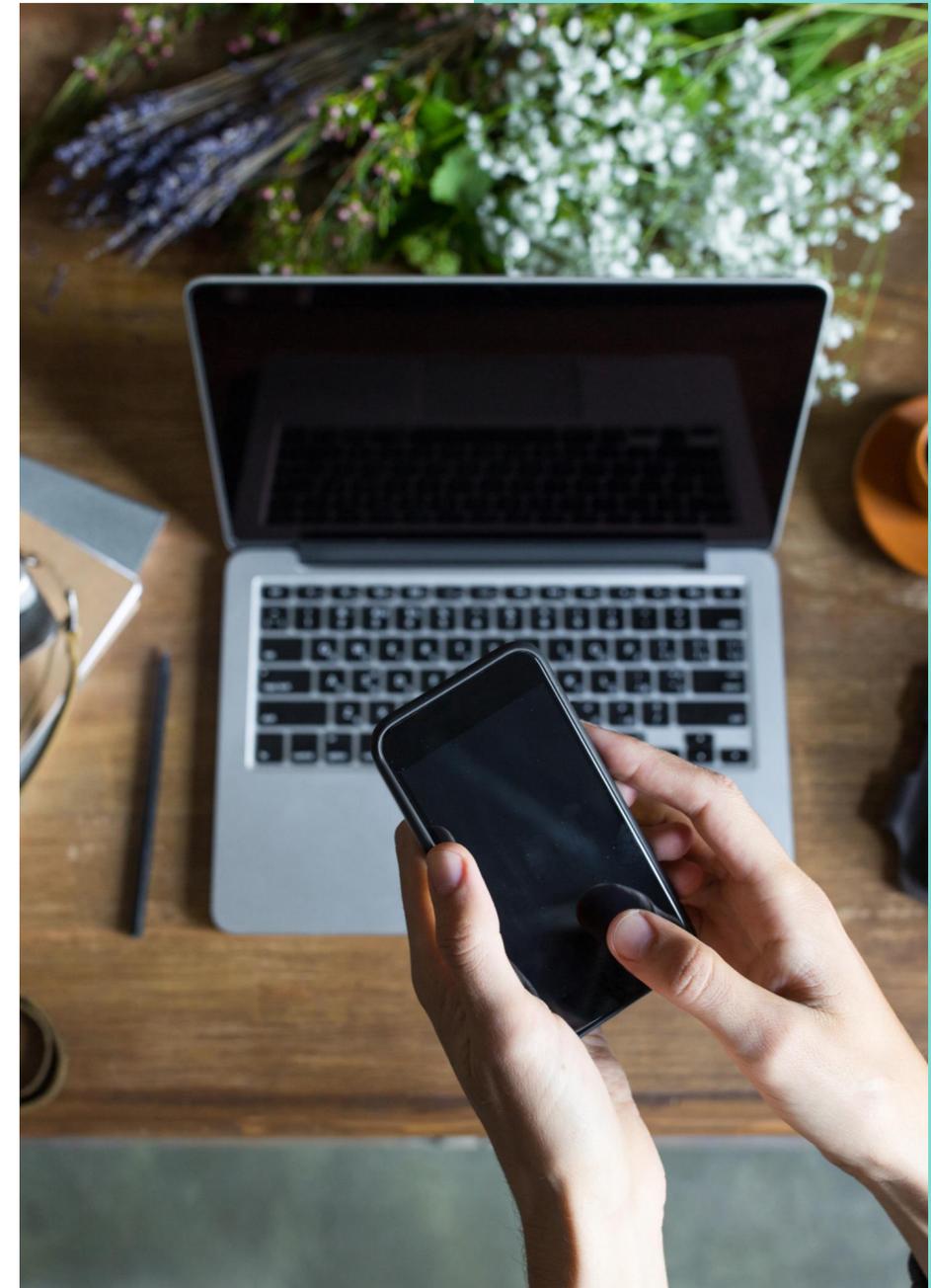




- Adaptogens can be added to food recipes like these date balls.
- They can be added to smoothies, fruit leather, or other treats.
- Since they are nutritive foods they can be freely used as you would herbs and spices.

# Safety of Adaptogens

- Herb safety should be assessed individually.
- While adaptogens are tonic, some should not be used by pregnant or nursing mothers.
- They are not a substitute for good nutrition, adequate rest, and other lifestyle changes.
- Generally adaptogens are not given to children without supervision by a professional.



# **Foraging for adaptogens**

**Where possible grow your own!**



# Wild populations may be endangered



# Endangered wild populations

Wild American ginseng is endangered and harvesting and taking it across state lines or international borders may be illegal.

Farm grown is not illegal, but very expensive.





# Harvesting roots

With many adaptogens the roots are used and harvesting the roots kills the whole plant.

If possible put the crown back to continue growing.



# Choose adaptogens that allow for annual harvests

Adaptogens that are harvested for leaves or berries can be easily grown in many home gardens, providing perpetual harvests.



# Perpetual harvests

Others like maca only need one growing season to produce a harvest.

If you have a long enough growing season you can save seed.

# **WARNING**

The importance of ethical harvesting

## **Ethical Harvesting:**

Be a steward!

Go back and monitor the effects of your harvest...become a steward and study the plants and how they respond.



- Know what species are at risk in your bioregion.
- Never collect threatened, endangered or sensitive plants.
- Be opportunistic and harvest from areas that will be disturbed by logging or development.

**Be a GOOD STEWARD**

## LESSON 01

# In This Lesson, You Learned:

- ✓ The unique value of herbal adaptogens and tonics
- ✓ The ethical concerns to keep in mind when sourcing adaptogens

# Take Action Now

- Understand the challenges wild herb populations face with over harvesting.
- Learn which adaptogens can grow in your bio-region and growing zone.
- Write down a short-list of herbal adaptogens and tonics that are likely candidates for your garden or for wild foraging in your area.

## LESSON PREVIEW

# In The Next Lesson, You'll Learn:

- The best adaptogens for YOU
- How to grow a few adaptogens in your garden
- Which adaptogens are worth the expense because of their specialized herbal actions