



Adaptogens

Herbs that Heal and Restore



02

Adaptogens

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Which adaptogen or tonic herb is your ally?

LESSON 02

In This Lesson, You Will Learn

- To discern your own constitution
- How to match the constitution to the qualities inherent in the herb
- 10 adaptogens or tonic herbs that can be grown close to home, that don't take decades to be ready to harvest.

Adaptogens are nutritive, tonic, and biologically active.

Their energetics need to be understood and matched to the needs of each person.



In this lesson we will look more closely at 10 adaptogens that you might add to an apothecary garden.



We'll also look at “**Bioregional Herbalism**” and discover why the herbs growing close to home are better than the herbs of commerce.

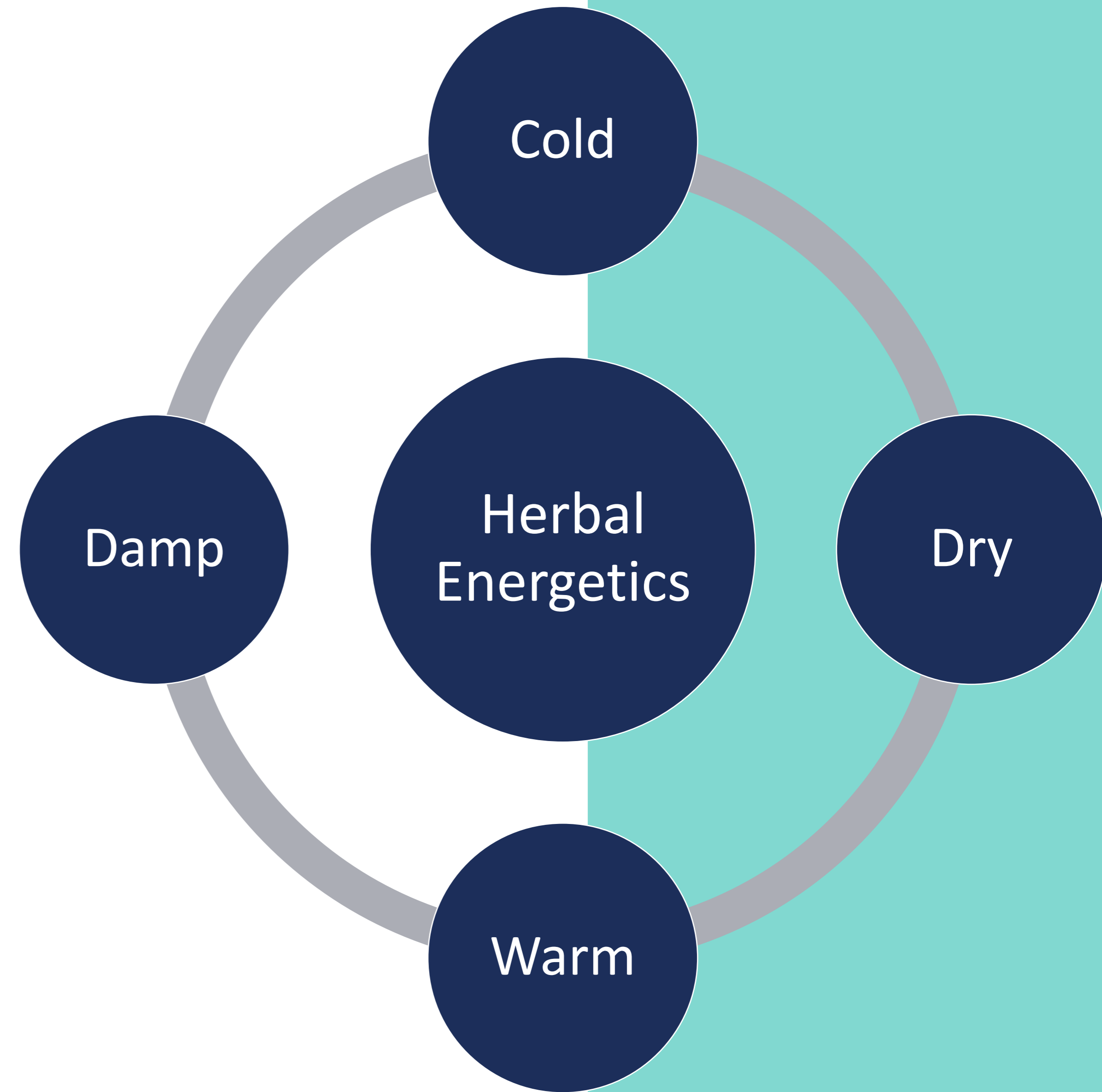


Herbalism is based on relationship — relationship between plant and human, plant and planet, human and planet. Using herbs in the healing process means taking part in an ecological cycle. This offers us the opportunity consciously to be present in the living, vital world of which we are part; to invite wholeness and our world into our lives through awareness of the remedies being used...

WENDELL BERRY



Energetics:



What are your personal energetics?

- › Are you predominantly cold or hot?
- › Are you predominantly dry or damp?
- › Is your tissue tight or loose?



- Your constitution is what you were born with – it doesn't change dramatically over the years
- It can be affected by illness, hormones, or other factors though.
- If you struggle to determine an answer think back to how you were as a child.

Determining Hot or Cold

From Rosalee de la Forêt's Alchemy of Herbs

Mark an X next to each statement that feels true to you, then add up the number of true statements in each column. A higher total in the first column indicates more heat qualities. A higher total in the second column indicates more cooling qualities.

- I tend to feel warmer than others.
- I tend to have a loud voice.
- My entire face can easily get red or flushed.
- My tongue tends to be bright red
- I have lots of opinions and I'm not afraid to share them.
- I prefer cold weather.
- I have a large appetite.
- I am a more active person.

Total: _____

- I tend to feel colder than others.
- I tend to have a quiet voice.
- My face and/or fingernail beds tend to be pale.
- My tongue tends to be a pale color.
- I often feel like I have a low energy level.
- I prefer warm weather.
- I have a small or poor appetite
- I am a less active person.

Total: _____

Determining Damp or Dry

From Rosalee de la Forêt's Alchemy of Herbs

Mark an X next to each statement that feels true to you, then add up the number of true statements in each column. A higher total in the first column indicates more damp qualities. A higher total in the second column indicates more dry qualities.

- I tend to sweat more easily than others.
- My skin and hair are often oily.
- My arms and legs can feel heavy.
- I often have a stuffy or runny nose.
- I tend to have a thick coating on my tongue.
- I prefer dry climates and don't like humidity.

Total: _____

- My skin tends to be rough and dry.
- My hair tends to be dry.
- My fingernails are dry and/or brittle.
- I often have itchy skin or scalp.
- I often have a dry throat, nose, eyes, and/or mouth.
- My tongue does not usually have a coating on it.

Total: _____

What is your basic constitution?

Total your score: _____ Hot _____ Cold

_____ Damp _____ Dry



When herbs don't seem to work it may be because the herbal energetics don't compliment your personal constitution.

**Knowing your personal
energetic constitution
can help you find the
right herbs for you.**



**10 Easy to Grow Adaptogen
and tonic herbs and their
energetics**



5 Adaptogens



Siberian Ginseng (*Eleutherococcus senticosus*); Eleuthero; Ci wu jia

- USDA zone 3 to 8; Needs part shade; Understory plant. Germination takes 1 to 2 years. Shrub up to 20 foot tall. Protect from late spring frosts.
- Very important Adaptogen, tonic, restorative, immune tonic, nervine, hypoglycemic, endurance booster, Qi tonic, analgesic, antianxiety,
- Energetics: moistening and warming
- Root bark is medicinal part.



Rhodiola (*Rhodiola rosea*); Roseroot; Golden Root

- USDA zone 1 to 7; Growth 5 to 15 inches;
- Antiviral, nervine, immune support, heart tonic, detoxifying, neuroprotective, adaptogen
- Support thyroid, adrenals, and ovaries
- Energetics: Cooling and stimulating
- Roots are harvested at 5 to 7 years
- Wild populations are endangered.



Astragalus (*Astragalus membranaceus*) Milk vetch; Huang qi



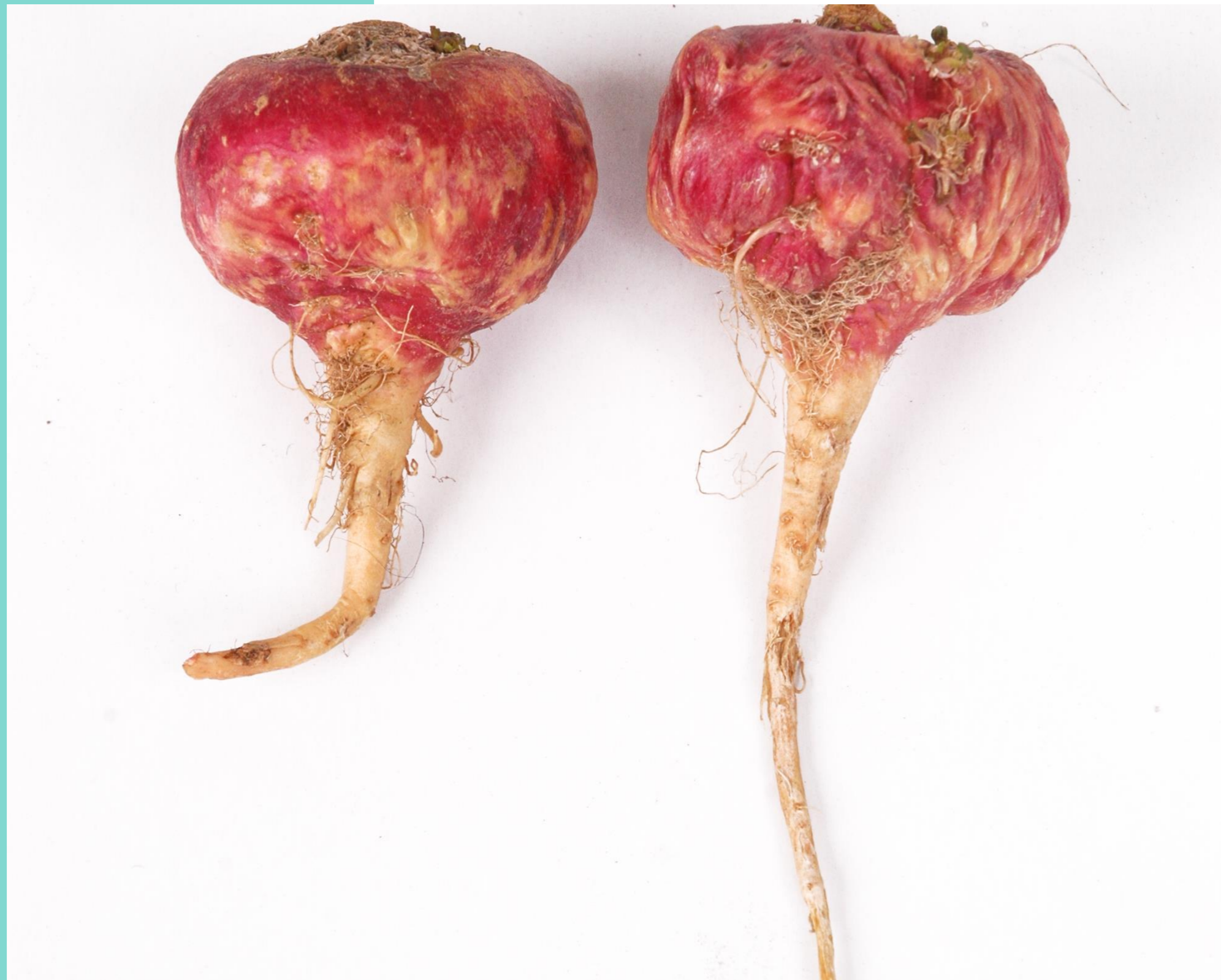
- Plant hardiness zone: 5 to 8; Perennial vine. Easy to grow. Roots are harvested in the fall, from 3 to 4 year old plants.
- Antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, immune tonic, cardiogenic, liver protector, spleen tonic, circulatory, balances hormones, adaptogenic, lung tonic, energizing
- Energetics: Warming and moistening
- Safe for children.
- **If you have a fever, discontinue astragalus as it may prolong the fever.**

Goji Berry (*Lycium barbarum*) Wolf berry



- Plant hardiness zone: 5 to 9; Perennial vine. Easy to grow. Berries are the part used.
- Antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, liver protector, immune tonic, hypoglycemic, nutritive, supports eye health, adaptogen, aphrodisiac, weightloss aid, energizing,
- Energetics: Cooling and moistening
- Berries harvested annually.

Maca (*Lepidium meyenii*)



- Plant hardiness zone: 5 to 8; Annual but needs a long season; doesn't take heat well. Grow like turnip.
- Aphrodisiac, nutritive tonic, fertility support, antioxidant, adaptogen, increases memory, eases perimenopausal symptoms, balances blood pressure.
- Energetics: Warming and moistening
- Annual root crop. Grows at high altitudes in full sun.

5 Tonics that help with stress



Schisandra (*Schisandra chinensis*); 5 flavors berry

- USDA zone 4 to 8; Cultivated vine.
- Antioxidant, nervine, immune support, expectorant, detoxifying, anti-anxiety, hepatoprotective, adaptogen
- Support thyroid, adrenals, and ovaries
- Energetics: Drying and warming; Some consider this a balanced energetics.
- Annual crop of berries



Stinging Nettle (*Urtica dioica*)

- USDA zone 2 to 10; Wild population.
- alterative, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, diuretic, tonic, styptic, vulnerary, Kidney tonic, tonic
- Energetics: Drying and warming
- Nettle seed, dried and used as adaptogen. Leaves and roots are also used.



Hawthorn (*Crataegus spp.*)

- USDA zone 3 to 9; Wild population.
- Antioxidant, nervine, cardiotonic, supports in loss, heals a broken heart, antidepressant, anti-anxiety, digestive tonic, nutritive, astringent, hypotensive, circulatory, tonic
- Energetics: Drying and warming
- Berry, leaves, and flowers used



Holy Basil (*Ocimum sanctum*); Tulsi

- Perennial in USDA zone 10-11; Grown as an annual in zones 4 to 9.
- Nervine, immune tonic, antioxidant, antiviral, carminative digestive, diuretic, expectorant, adaptogen - tonic, anti-depressant, helps memory, nutritive.
- Energetics: Drying and warming
- Leaves used.
- **Note: Avoid during pregnancy.**



Burdock (*Arctium lappa*)



- Plant hardiness zone: 2 to 10; Biennial
Easy to grow. Weedy. Roots are harvested in the fall, from 1st year plants.
- Blood purifying, alterative, diuretic, lymphatic, anti-cancer, liver tonic, detoxifying, restorative tonic, helps restore glandular function, some consider it an adaptogen. Useful for skin rashes, eczema, psoriasis as an alterative that promotes elimination from the sebaceous glands.
- Energetics: cooling and mildly drying
- Safe for children.

Key take away:

Many adaptogens and tonic herbs can be easily grown in an apothecary garden or seeded in forested land in permaculture plantings.

In this way we protect wild, endangered plants and insure that the plants we do harvest have the most potent medicine. The plants you most need right now are probably growing close by.

“The herbs you need grow near your house, just take the time to learn who they are—a demulcent is going to act like a demulcent, regardless of what herbs are reviewed in the latest blog on the Herbarium. You do not need to send away for herbs from the opposite end of the earth to care for yourself. If you did, we’d all be dead..”

Juliette Carr, Herbalist

Birth Control Failure

Many herbs have been linked to birth-control failure (aka. Pregnancy). They can change the way the liver metabolizes medications. Many adaptogens are used to enhance fertility and support women's sexual health. If you are taking birth control pills you may want to avoid adaptogens that are used for fertility, as well as other herbs that promote fertility like black cohosh, vitex, and St. Johns Wort.

LESSON 02

In This Lesson, You Learned:

- ✓ **How to discern your personal constitutional energetics.**
- ✓ **You looked at 10 adaptogen and tonic herbs that are easy to grow and can be grown in an apothecary garden or permaculture planting.**
- ✓ **You looked briefly at the value of bioregional herbalism.**

Take Action Now

- **Make a list of 3 plants you consider growing in your own garden this spring for their medicinal benefit.**
- **Make a list of 3 adaptogens or tonic herbs that fit your energetic constitution that you might try.**
- **Make a list of 5 herbs that are growing near you that have medicinal benefit. Pick one to study in more detail – as your herbal ally this month.**

LESSON PREVIEW

In The Next Lesson, You'll Learn:

- **Medicinal Mushrooms and their benefits**
- **The techniques necessary to preserve the medicine from medicinal mushrooms.**