

THE HOME REFERENCE TO

HOLISTIC HEALTH

&

HEALING

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Easy-to-Use Natural
Remedies, Herbs, Flower
Essences, Essential
Oils, Supplements, and
Therapeutic Practices for
Health, Happiness, and
Well-Being

Brigitte Mars and Chrystle Fiedler,
*Authors of *The Country Almanac of Home Remedies**



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I AM ALWAYS MOVED BY THE GRACE, wisdom, *joie de vivre*, and charismatic charm that Brigitte Mars brings to life and shares so generously with others through her teachings, books, and classes. The numerous books she's written on herbs and natural health are among my favorite herbal references and are frequently on my recommended reading lists for students. They are also on the rather hefty shelf of go-to books I refer to most often when seeking reliable herbal information. Brigitte writes not only from her years of experience as an herbal practitioner, but also weaves together a wide spectrum of natural healing modalities she's integrated into her practice. Her books are always comprehensive, well-researched, user-friendly, and practical.

Chrystle, too, has had a long love affair with herbs and natural remedies and has combined her interest in alternative medicine with her excellent communication and writing skills. She's authored several excellent books on natural healing, including *Beat Sugar Addiction Now!* and *The Complete Idiots Guide to Natural Remedies*, and has written numerous articles on natural health for major publications. Her latest offerings are a fictional mystery series that feature natural remedies. Together, she and Brigitte teamed up to co-author *The Country Almanac of Home Remedies*.

So when I was asked to write the foreword for their most recent book, I was delighted and honored. Though I was expecting it to be, at least, as interesting and comprehensive as the other books they've written, I was even more deeply impressed. *The Home Reference to Holistic Health and Healing* is quite simply one of the best self-help books available on natural therapies for mental and emotional well-being. It contains a wealth of information, tools, and insightful suggestions to help one deal with the daily stresses of modern life as well the illnesses and imbalances that arise from an overly stressed system.

It is estimated that more than 100 million Americans suffer from stress-related problems and that stress-related issues account for more than 80 percent of visits to the doctor. Yet many of these issues and visits can be circumvented by understanding the underlying problem(s) and are often resolved by natural remedies and lifestyle changes. Although there are undoubtedly times when medical intervention is necessary and lifesaving—and this book clearly points to that direction when needed—most of the daily stress-related issues we encounter are safely and effectively treated by less invasive and equally effective home remedies.

Mental and emotional well-being are essential for health and are as equally important as physical health, yet are often overlooked. Our go-go culture doesn't allow time for nurturing the soul, but it's essential for a happy, joyful life. The healing power of herbs and other natural practices can help do just that. Natural cures help soothe stress, ease anxiety, and boost mood, immunity, mental acuity, and energy, and make room in our lives for joy and happiness. This book is filled with the best suggestions for just how to do that, and equally important, gives practical step-by-step instructions.

Although Americans are just waking up to the power of herbal and natural medicine, these practices are as old as civilization itself. According to the World Health Organization, 80 percent of the world uses herbal and natural remedies as a primary source of health care. The Natural Pharmacy reports that one out of every three adult Americans uses complementary and alternative medical care.

There is no denying that conventional (allopathic) medicine is making amazing progress today, and is an essential path of treatment if you have severe mental and emotional challenges. Any life-threatening illness needs to be treated by a competent health professional.

Alternatively, herbs, whether in capsule, tincture, salve, or tea, are the medicine of the home, helping us to be more self-reliant and proactive in our own health. Herbs are most effectively used for non-emergency health problems that pop up in daily life. Problems such as stress, anxiety, mild depression, low energy and immunity, and sleep and memory issues are among the many imbalances that can be effectively, safely, and inexpensively treated at home.

Rather than curing illnesses, plants and herbal medicine are best at preventing them. By providing rich nutrients that can help to bolster the body's immunity, we can often mobilize the immune system and, in turn, its ability to fight off infections before we get sick. When we eat medicinal plants or use them in some way, we become hardier, more tenacious and disease-resistant, just as our favorite weeds are in the wild—and in our gardens!

Holistic healing works in myriad ways. For example, learning how to naturally manage stress, the root of a majority of modern illnesses, will help you not only feel better today but may also help prevent it from manifesting into a serious illness, such as heart disease or stroke, down the line. Herbal and natural cures create a foundation of wellness by addressing the root of chronic health problems, which can include lifestyle choices, environmental factors, and genetics. *The Home Reference to Holistic*

Health and Healing is full of lifestyle and dietary suggestions along with herbal remedies, and natural and holistic therapies that can address these problems and begin the healing process.

Herbal medicine and other time-tested holistic practices can help you find lasting solutions for mental health and healing and can make you healthier than you've ever been before, in mind, body, and spirit. The good news is that these cures can be used in conjunction with conventional medicine under the guidance of a doctor. The choice is up to you.

Brigitte and Chrystle are long-time soul sisters when it comes to herbal and holistic medicine. So, I have no doubt that you'll benefit from their wise, health-giving, joyful advice. Like each of their other books, *The Home Reference to Holistic Health and Healing* is written in that eminently practical and self-empowering manner that's a signature of their work. Read, practice, enjoy, and be at peace.

In Joy,
Rosemary Gladstar
Herbalist & Author
From her home on Sage Mountain, Vermont

GREETINGS! Get ready to learn hundreds of natural ways to improve the many functions of your brain, nervous system, and emotional health so that you can be your brightest self for the highest good.

So many people suffer from common concerns such as stress, depression, anxiety, pain, and others that can drain the possibilities of a joyful life. We grow through the hardships in life, but they can be incapacitating when we have a job to do, children to raise, and all the rigors of life before us.

Simply relying on medication to get us through trying times can take its own toll, leading to physical side effects, low energy, diminished libido, weight gain, and even organ damage.

What You'll Find Here

The Home Reference to Holistic Health and Healing offers time-tested, natural methods to help you manage life's mental and emotional challenges. It addresses lifestyle techniques, food choices, herbal remedies, essential oils, vitamin supplements, homeopathy, and flower essences that can help nourish and support your body and mind so that each challenge becomes an opportunity to grow stronger than ever.

A Brief History of Natural Cures for Health

Methods for treating mental disorders have varied through the ages. Asclepius (considered one of the fathers of medicine, about 130 BCE) restored balance with massage, fresh air, diet, and exercise. He was one of the first to release insane people from the confinements of dark cellars and recommended occupational therapy, calming herbs, soothing music, and exercise to improve attention and memory.

Hippocrates placed the site of mental functioning in the brain and speculated that those with mental illness were imbalanced in the humours: bile, wind, and phlegm. He introduced the terms *melancholy* and *mania*.

During the Middle Ages, there was belief in supernatural causes of mental disease, including evil spirits, the stars, and wicked spells. During the Renaissance, the emphasis again shifted toward more natural causes of mental illness, though there was little change in the actual treatment of it.

Historically, depression (and insanity) was treated by whipping, bloodletting, exorcism, and water treatments (cold plunges, showers, and sprays). Thankfully, kindness has mostly replaced brutality.