



Corinna Wood

Gathers together herbs and people ready to learn about them

Corinna Wood's relationship with herbal healing began 20 years ago when she learned how to eat wild plants such as chickweed and dandelion. From there, she learned about their medicinal uses and apprenticed with renowned herbalist Susun Weed. Armed with an in-depth education, she started her own herbal medicine business, Red Moon Herbs, and began teaching classes. It was in those classes that she noticed people were "hungry for the hands-on knowledge of how to incorporate plants into their daily lives as food and medicine." So, in 2005, she decided it was time our area had a women's herbal conference like the ones she'd seen thrive in other parts of the country. According to Corinna, response to the Southeast Women's Herbal Conference has been tremendous.

What were the initial goals of the Southeast Women's Herbal Conference (SEWHC)? Have these goals changed or expanded over the years?

The initial goal was to create a place for women to deepen their connection with the earth, the plants, each other, and their own bodies. As the community has grown stronger each year, this goal has expanded to holding a voice in the Southeast for the Wise Woman Tradition—simple living, earth-based healing and local plants.

Can you share a bit about the scholarships you offer for those who can't afford to attend the conference?

The scholarship fund has developed in response to needs that women have expressed over the years. We prioritize women with financial need, particularly those who are disadvantaged in their access to resources. The first year I read through a stack of scholarship applications, I wept! I was astounded not only by the level of challenges these women were facing and the courage it took to live their lives, but also by their hunger for this opportunity to learn about herbs and women's health.

We offer scholarships through the donations of registrants and the support of *New Life Journal*, as well as matching scholarship funds from the conference.

Your business, Red Moon Herbs, which puts on the conference, is also involved in helping other communities. Can you tell us more about that?

Red Moon Herbs donates back to the greater community in a variety of ways. For example, after the flooding in New Orleans caused by Katrina, we donated thousands of dollars worth of herbal extracts to Common Ground Health Clinic, which was set up to provide disaster relief health care.

What is your go-to herb when you're feeling under the weather?

Nettles! From my early days when I started cooking nettles, my love-affair with her continues. I still drink nettle infusion daily. ☘

Corinna Wood, Wise Woman Herbalist, serves as director of the SEWHC and Red Moon Herbs. She teaches private classes, at conferences, and as faculty of the Appalachian School of Holistic Herbalism. For more information about the SEWHC—October 2-4 in Black Mountain, NC—visit www.sewisewomen.com. For more information about Corinna, her classes or Red Moon Herbs, visit www.redmoonherbs.com.



Photos by Mike Belleme

What roles do you feel community and education play in herbal medicine?

Gathering together as herbalists and healers allows us to nourish and strengthen ourselves and one another and share knowledge of the plants and other aspects of natural health. I know that for many the SEWHC has become a tradition in sisterhood, empowerment, herbal education and community.



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Interview by Maggie Cramer