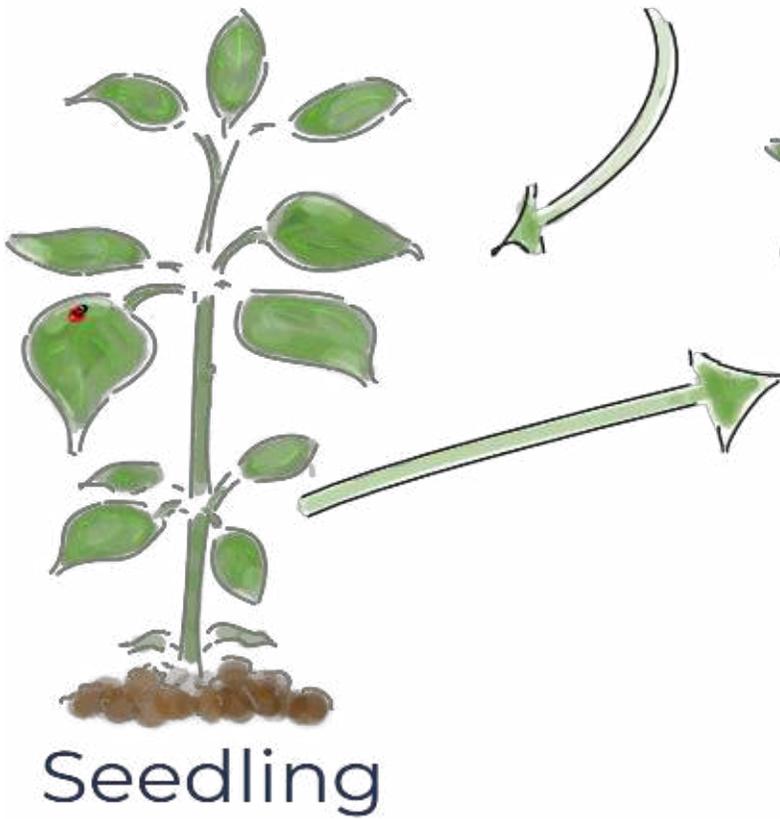




The DIY Herbalist Way



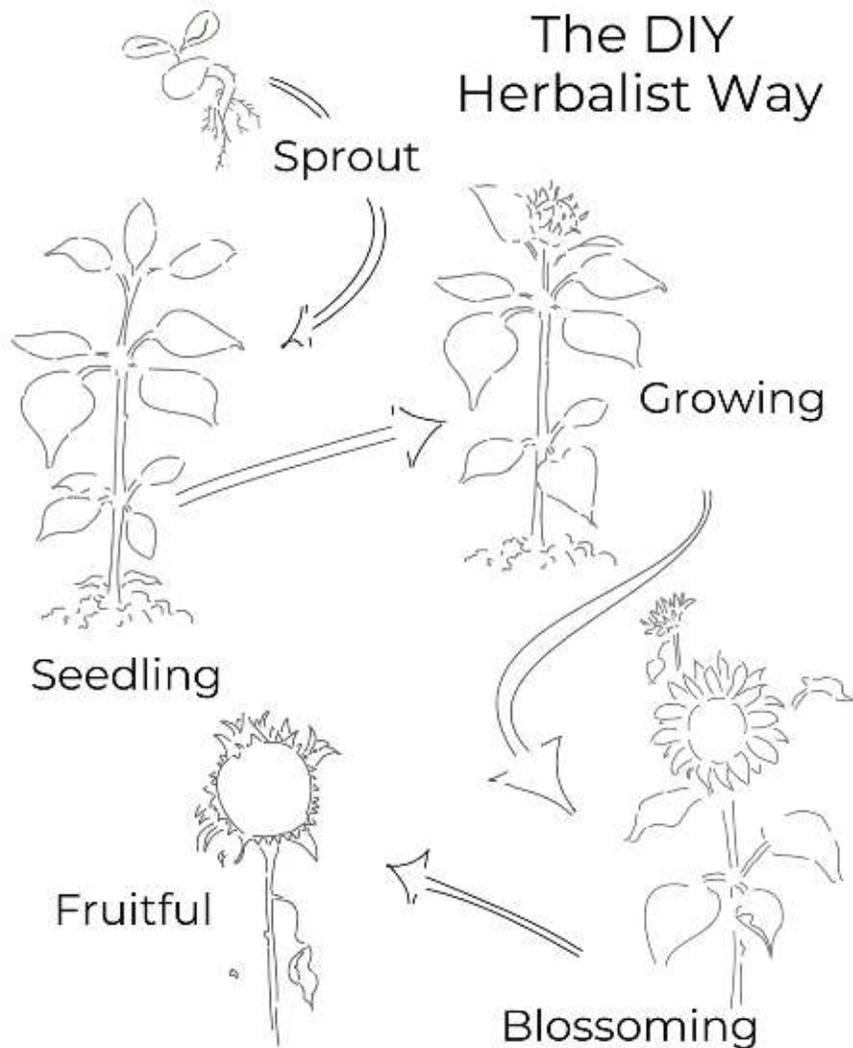


The DIY Herbalist Way

The DIY Herbalist Way is the road map that we use in [the DIY Herbal Fellowship](#) to help us conceptualize the growth of an herbalist from beginner to advance. We use a metaphor of the growth of a sunflower from the sprout to final seed head. At each level there are milestones to be reached that show that growth in mastery, in confidence, and in herbal intuition has been reached.

Just as in real life there is no hurry to reach these milestones. Those on the DIY Herbal Way reach them inherently because the milestones are crafted into the DNA of the DIY Herbal Fellowship program.

Let's take a closer look at the DIY Herbalist Way so you can determine which part of the path you are standing on right now. By determining where you are, you can know what your next step is.





Knowing your next step will bring clarity so that you aren't stuck going around in circles and can know exactly how to keep making progress on your goals of gaining confidence using herbs to upgrade your health and to heal your family.

There are 5 steps in the DIY Herbalist Way. Each of these steps has some specific characteristics and milestones that are common. Each one has a next step. If you follow through on this next step you WILL make massive progress in learning herbs and creating your own customized apothecary.



The Sprout

Those at the sprout level are just beginning on the DIY Herbalist Way. They might use herbal tea and a few herbs and spices in their cooking but these are more for flavor than health benefit.

The sprout needs the fundamentals. Jumping ahead or relying on Google searches for herbal information can leave the sprout confused. This is the critical time to lay a good foundation in herbal practice.

Next Step:

If you are **on the sprout step of the DIY Herbalist Way** your next step is to take a hard look at where you can make improvements in your health by removing toxins, and focusing on healthier eating. Then start adding more herbs and spices intentionally into your meals to improve digestion, increase energy, and lift your mood so that you have the energy you need for the next stage. Begin foraging in your own garden with herbs you know well since childhood.

Some strategies to safe foraging:

- Use a field guide of wild plants for your region
- If you are unfamiliar with local weeds, talk to an experienced gardener to get help to ID them
- Use more herbs and spices in your meal preparations, they are rich in antioxidants
- Start your DIY Herbal Apothecary with easy herbal remedies for cold and flu season like Elderberry syrup and fire cider.
- Get to know the herbs you can easily ID by studying one herb at a time over 30 days. You can get help with this and save time by picking one of the herbs in the Herb of the Month classes inside the DIY Herbal Fellowship.



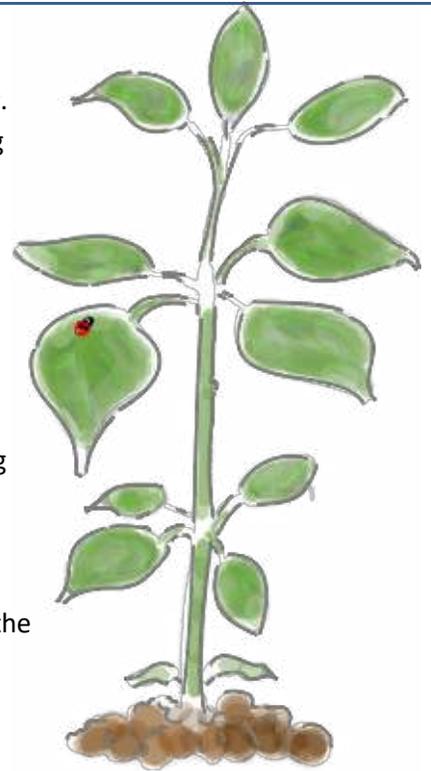
The Seedling

Those at the seedling level are the advanced beginners on the DIY Herbalist Way. The seedling needs confidence in herbal medicine making, foraging, and growing medicinal and culinary herbs. Many herbalists at the seedling level have been dabbling in herbal medicine and essential oils for years, using Google and trade paperbacks to move them along in the journey. But they may lack an organized method of study, since their focus has been on solving problems and not laying the foundation necessary for progress.

Next step:

If you are a seedling on the DIY Herbalist Path you should be focusing on getting to know one herbal ally really well. Like our plantain example in Video 2. By focusing on one herb at a time and getting to know it really well, you can make huge gains in your Herbal understanding and grow your herbal intuition at the same time. A little and often is the best way to make progress when you are at the seedling stage.

Engage all your senses in learning about your favorite herbal ally. Use it in the kitchen, if appropriate; make herbal remedies with it to use it in your herbal apothecary. Study its uses in history as a medicinal herb. Look at the scientific papers that have been published in peer-reviewed journals to gain a sense of the evidence that supports its historical use. Learn how to propagate it, cultivate it, and grow it yourself. Understand its chemical constituents, antioxidants and volatile oils to gain a sense of how these different parts of the herbs can work synergistically together to support your well-being.



Our members inside the DIY Herbal Fellowship practice getting to know one herb at a time every month, with a guided journey that takes just 5 to 15 minutes a day, through the month. Like a professional pianist continuing to do scales to keep their skills sharp, herbalists at all levels benefit from focusing on one herb at a time over a month.



The Growing Herbalist

The growing stage on the DIY Herbalist Path is the early Intermediate stage. The growing herbalist is ready to stretch outside her comfort zone and learn the hard things to make progress on the DIY Herbalist Way.

The Growing herbalist is still learning basic skills but at a deeper level gaining confidence in herbal medicine making, foraging, growing medicinal and culinary herbs, and making decisions on what herbs to use in various circumstances for herself and for her family members.



Next step:

If you **are at the growing stage of the DIY Herbalist Way**, your next step is to plan your DIY herbal apothecary with a focus on cold and flu remedies and first aid. Elderberry syrup, fire cider, grape leaf tincture, peppermint-chamomile tea, ginger syrup, echinacea tincture, and more, will set your family up with all the essential remedies to weather the flu, indigestion, and bowel complaints. It may seem like jumping in with both feet. But don't get overwhelmed.

Just do one thing at a time, until the job is complete. You'll be golden. In the DIY Herbal Fellowship we'll be making 5 of these remedies in September together, in our annual Apothecary Pursuit Game so you'll get a big jumpstart on your project when you join the DIY Herbal Fellowship now.

Blossoming Herbalist

The blossoming herbalist is firmly in the intermediate step on the DIY Herbalist Way. In the **DIY Herbalist blossoming stage**, you are getting into the groove. Herbal remedies are crafted on an as needed basis in the margins of your healthy life. When a family member bangs their shin on the truck hitch, they know where to find the bruise salve, without even asking you. It was made when the yarrow and arnica were in season months ago.



A stranger walking into your kitchen might think you were a botanist or a chemist based on the plants hanging up in your living room, and the bottles and jars of plant infusions on window sills and in dark cupboards. The local liquor store is dropping hints about joining alanon based on your monthly purchases of vodka and brandy.

While you have more energy than you had 10 years ago, you are coming up against a few minor issues.

Organization is your bane. Bottles of infused oils and infused tinctures, are in boxes under your bed. In November the herbs you bundled to dry back in August are still hanging and gathering dust. You bought a pound of dried calendula from an online herb supplier not realizing that you'd need 10 quart jars to store it all. By the time it actually arrived you've forgotten where the recipe was that you wanted to make with it.

You are in the **full glory of the DIY Herbalist Path and your blooming is radiant**. Freedom feels amazing! You haven't touched the over the counter medicines you brought home from the drug store 5 years ago. It might be time to throw them out. Your herbs are more potent and safer than any of those.

You are no longer second guessing your herbal intuition. You know which herbs you need. And what you really need is guidance to focus on one herbal ally, one DIY herbal project or one aspect of herbalism at a time. You need discipline to get those projects finished, bottled or packaged, labeled and tucked away. Is it time to add some physical books to your herbal library, for reference as your practice expands?



Books to look for:

- Region field guide of medicinal plants
- Herbal Medicine Makers Handbook
- Historical Herb References from your cultural past
- Herb Gardening and Companion Planting Books
- Botany
- Foraging
- Herbal Cookbooks and Traditional Cooking
- Food preservation : Canning, Dehydrating, Fermenting

The blossoming herbalist is beginning to take a deeper look into the scientific studies that support or refute the traditional uses of plants and herbal medicine. If you are at the blossoming stage you might really enjoy science and be looking at the original study instead of just reading about it in the news media.

Next step:

If you **are at the blossoming stage of the DIY Herbalist Path**, you are in the right place. Your next step is to take those tinctures, and oils you were making this summer and strain them, label them, and store them in a place that you can easily find them. Do one bottle every night before you go to bed, in the margins, and you'll be done before the holidays. Then enroll in one of the Anatomy and Physiology masterclasses inside the DIY Herbal Fellowship and expand your understanding of the beauty of herbs and how they work to support the body's innate healing virtues.



The Fruitful Herbalist

The fruitful herbalist is at the advanced level. She may have credentials already or be working toward a clinical or advanced herbalist certificate. She has developed not just herbal knowledge but an herbal intuition by making her own herbal remedies and crafting exacting remedies for clients or community as well.

When you enter **the "Fruitful stage"** Neighbors and friends start to notice your gift. You get phone calls asking for advice or recommendations on herbs for stomach pain, herbs for backaches or toe nail fungus. You might be making herbal remedies for adult family members. Your herbal practice is maturing. Maybe you are selling soap, salves, and herbal bitters. Maybe you already have a mature herbal practice.

Next Step

But it's lonely at the top. If you are **in the fruitful stage of the DIY Herbalist Path**, your next step is to write down where you'd like to be 12 months from now on your herbal journey. But don't forget to continue to develop a deeper relationship with your herbal allies by revisiting what you thought you



knew when you were starting out. Spending a month focusing on just one herb can renew your first love and help you not get bogged down in the minutia.

Some 12 months goals to seed your thinking:

- Get involved in a community garden projects with Companion planting
- Teach herb walks in your community to spread the love of your favorite herbs
- Create a new herbal product line for barter, for selling, and to support your family
- Pitch a book to a publisher to share you love of herbs
- Create a documentary about herbs to broaden your audience.

Now it's YOUR TURN:

What stage on the DIY Herbalist Way are you on? _____

What is YOUR next step?

Where would you like to be in 1 year?

Anything else that you want to remember about this lesson?
