



Presenting August's Plant Ally:

## *Goldenrod*

**Common names:** Goldenrod, Blue Mountain Tea, Liberty Tea

**Botanical name:** Solidago spp.

**Family:** Asteraceae

**Energetics:** Warm & dry

**Taste:** Aromatic, Astringent, slightly diffusive

**Parts Used:** Aerial parts: flowers, leaves, stem

**Actions/Functions:** Digestive bitter, alterative, anodyne, stimulating & relaxing nervine, diaphoretic, astringent, digestive aromatic & carminative, diuretic, vulnerary, anti-inflammatory, bacteria-balancing or "anti-infective"

*It is now that we are beginning to enter the golden hour of summer... the great expanse of green has lorded over the land but if you look a little closer, you will begin to notice the yellow hum of Evening Primrose, the golden disc of the Hawkweed, the fuzz of Goldenrod coming into bloom. Late Summer season always arrives in this "eventually, suddenly" kind of style & one of its harbingers is the ripening of the Solidago flowers then turning into fields of waving, nodding yellow.*

Solidago is the botanical genus of this plant; a Latin word meaning, *to make whole*. The species of Goldenrod are numerous — it is thought there is anywhere between 100-120 species! This makes them one of the more tricky plants to identify & accounts for all the myriad ways in which Goldenrod can look, smell, & grow. These plants

are extremely resilient & also attract numerous pollinators, one of the primary reasons for their wide variety of species. However, they also reproduce by wind-dissemination of the seeds & by spreading their underground rhizomes, forming colonies & clones of themselves. There is much more that can be said about the botany of Solidago, but I think I will leave off here so as not to dizzy myself in the multitude of its many faces!

Perhaps as a reflection of its manifold appearances, Goldenrod is a true panacea herb. I hardly know where to begin in describing the ways in which we can use this plant for medicine. I will need to invoke the astringent qualities of Solidago to help me bring all of its uses together in this short write-up! Solidago is one of my go-to plants for the common cold, allergies, & for releasing general stagnation in the body, especially in the mucous membranes. The golden glow of this plant's medicine swoops in to dry super damp conditions & to soothe inflamed tissue. It is specific for sinus & respiratory ailments, but due to its aromatic, carminative, & bitter qualities, I have also found it to be of incredible use in supporting the liver, belly, & GI as well as in more generalized states of damp/cold/boggy/stagnant energetic conditions.

Solidago also has an affinity for the kidneys, urinary system, & reproductive system. It is diuretic & is incredible for cases where urine is scant, dark & smells strongly—usually a sign of kidney sluggishness/stagnation/retention. It also can help to break up kidney stones & can deal with both the onset of a UTI or even better in chronic urinary infections where it helps to tonify & clear out the lingering infection. On that note, look to Goldenrod in cases of yeast infection as well, especially if it is one that keeps lingering or recurring. Its astringent qualities help to heal & bring integrity back to our tissues, directing excess moisture to where it needs to go, helping us to button down the hatches in a way. So think of it for healing any type of wound for that matter, especially ones that are on the surface of the skin & just can't seem to heal entirely or are of the oozy kind.

There are a few last things I want to mention about this wonderful plant ally. It is one of my favorite anodynes (pain-relieving plants) for topical, muscular, tendon, & ligament pain. Try gently massaging an oil of it over your

pelvis for menstrual cramps if you tend towards cold or stagnancy in your cycle &/or lots of clotting. It is also great for over-used or strained muscles of any kind as well as arthritic pains, any inflammation in the tendons, or for sprains & bruises. Heat a little bit of oil in a saucepan & rub your limbs in the winter for a bright, warming, & soothing yet invigorating ritual.

I use Goldenrod as a gentle, uplifting nervine. Think of color theory—how the opposite of blue, is yellow-gold & apply it to conditions where people need a little boost in their overall emotional body. Keep some in tincture form on hand for people who feel down in the doldrums, especially in the winter or if there is an overarching sense of malaise. A few drops can do wonders for brightening the spirit. It can also be used similarly to Camomile for emotions that tend to hang out in the belly & thus upset or disturb digestion. I find that Solidago can really encourage us to release emotional stagnancy because it helps flush out things we have been holding on to. It helps to bring clarified movement to any stagnant water (the element of emotions), replacing it with some light, space, & a sense of deep connection to places that feel abandoned or dark.

In a similar vein, I love the flower essence of Goldenrod just as much as the physiological remedies it provides us with. I find that the essence helps us stand tall within ourselves & to shine our inner light/our unique personalities into the world. It can help to dry out any damp, boggy places inside of ourselves & spread the light of the sun into the places that have too long been in the dark. Helps us feel confident in ourselves, more secure in social situations, & to build self-esteem. Goldenrod mends where mending is needed, ties together the loose threads, & brings our form together. As its botanical name suggests, it helps to make us whole; it is our harvest, the integration of all the seeds we have sown turned to abundant fruit for us to rejoice & find nourishment in.

The ways in which you can prepare Goldenrod medicine is as vast as its uses. I always, always have a tincture prepared. In addition an infused oil, a liniment, dried flowers & leaves for tea, & the flower essence are staples in my apothecary. You can also make vinegar-extractions, elixirs, & I am imagining that an electuary or infused

honey would be just so divine when you need a little gold to lift the blues or when you are feeling under the weather.



## ***A Goldenrod Ritual :::::::::::***

*for celebrating the fruits of your labor & weaving some gold into your days*

### **you'll need:**

A Full Moon

A yellow candle

Scissors

Freshly harvested Goldenrod

Menstruum of your choice (vodka, honey, vinegar, oil etc.)

A jar with a lid

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On the next Full Moon, light your yellow candle & recite the following incantation:

*This day brings to me*

*The gift of the glorious sun,*

*Of warmth & light*

*& growth.*

*How mindlessly I go about the day,*

*Protected from this nourishment,*

*Unconscious of this joyful gift!*

*Surely I will find time this day*

*To take the sun to me,*

*And surely will I find a way*

*To shine **my** light with love*

— Begin to process your Goldenrod, taking your cuttings & adding them into your jar all the while making it a point to really reflect on all that you have accomplished, grown, & are grateful for these past 6 months

— Once you've filled your jar, pour your menstruum over the Goldenrod, making sure it is fully submerged

— Cover the jar tightly, label it, & allow it to sit for about a month, shaking it when you remember to (you can also recite the incantation as you shake your potion)

— Strain & re-bottle, keeping in your herb cupboard for when you need to bring some golden appreciation into your days

\*— the incantation is from the Essence Book of Meditations & Blessings by Danaan Parry

Lovingly yours /  
Chanelle + Solidago

