URHP Sharing Circle Meeting Memo: Jan 12th 2023

Members present: Sarah Donoghue, Laura Yarham, Tina Silva, Andy Patterson, Liz Lyden, Jean Pierre Cousin, Sandra O' Neill, Dilys Griffiths, Vicki Pitman

The group discussed the timings of the meetings and decided that a 6 weekly event worked well. Everyone agreed that Thursday at 1 pm was the most convenient time, and so it was agreed that we would continue to stick with this format for the foreseeable future.

The issue of inviting a guest speaker was also discussed. Most people agreed that it might be nice to have a speaker, but only is it was on a separate occasion and not made part of the regular circle. People could then decide if they wished to attend or not. However, it was agreed that there should be a general theme for the meeting so it had some structure rather than just being a chat. It was agreed that if participants wished to propose a theme, they could do so by sending a response to the reminder email which is sent out before the meetings. Suggestions would then be collated and sent out via email so that people could comment if there was a particular theme they felt was pertinent. This week for example, the theme of coughs and colds (we were all seeing more of this with family and friends as well as in the clinic) would be an interesting talking point. These themes are informal and would take up no more than 10 – 20 minutes so that there remained adequate time for AOB.

Sarah has agreed to make brief notes on the meeting that can be shared with members who are unable to attend. These notes will not contain any personal issues discussed, in order that the group can remain a safe space to share our concerns openly and honestly.

On the issue of privacy, Pierre brought up the importance of protecting personal data and the growing problem of spam emails. A number of suggestions were made about how to recognise these kinds of communications, as well as some helpful tools which could be added to websites to keep them safe from spam. There was also mention of clients who may attempt to book an appointment under the guise of gaining information about your practice. Please remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity to the URHP.

Other news – Liz has a spagyrics seminar coming up shortly, for more information about tickets, dates and how to attend, please contact her directly. The event is free and will take place on Friday 27th Jan. Please contact her before the 18th if you wish to attend. (Dilys has circulated an email with all the information.)

Any Patterson kindly shared some information about Kava kava and an interesting book on the topic of herbs. He also asked for information about how to obtain a licence for alcohol for making tinctures. If anyone has any other information about suppliers or helpful information about the application process, please contact him directly or feel free to share your experience with the group.

In regards to useful medicines for coughs and colds, Pierre made the pertinent point that hay fever season has already started and it is prudent to be able to

differentiate between allergies and flu symptoms. He recommended Birch as a very helpful remedy as it helps specifically to moderate the reaction to pollen.

Dilys mentioned that she had found Bilberry to be very helpful for one of her clients who it had been included in her formula with great success. She discovered this after writing an article on Bilberry for her local newspaper, a very good tactic for informing the public about the benefits of herbal medicine and gaining new customers.

Sandra mentioned that she had worked with linseed poultices which had been very helpful.

A question was asked about where to source reputable mushroom products. It was mentioned that Hybrid Herbs have a good range, as do Bristol Fungarium. If anyone else has any suggestions about where to source high quality mushroom products we would be very grateful if you could share that with the group.

Laura is conducting an experiment with red clover, and is seeking advice on making a paste / poultice from the flowers. Has anyone made this, or have any suggestions about best practice? She will update us with her success story next time no doubt!

Finally Sarah asked a question about where to source vegetable wax for base creams (specifically Ceteryl alcohol PEG 20) as all the suppliers she uses are out of stock. If anyone has some they might be willing to sell or knows a company that currently have it in stock, please send her an email on sarah@alchemilla.co

The date for the next herbal sharing circle is set for Thursday 23rd Feb at 1pm.