

Questions for Mary Light



Mary Light has a local healing arts practice, and she is the director of the Gaia Center for Holistic Studies.

What do you love most about your work as an herbalist and healer?

Being able to combine inner gifts, creativity, expression and intuition in a way that truly helps make much needed paradigm shifts is awesome! And offering various teachings in the healing arts, to others, is great fun. I see working with nature and healing as innate life skills that we all possess. We just need to reclaim them and rediscover them, for that is a path to personal empowerment and inner strength.

Were you into herbs, plants and gardens as a little girl?

There is no experience in life that most convinces me that we come into this incarnation with “built in” coding to take on a life path. At the age of 9, I was reading Juliette di Bairclay Levy- the matriarch of our modern herbalism- and Euell Gibbons and Adelle Davis. My father, who had a southern country background, showed me numerous woodland plants, such as bloodroot, jack in the pulpit, buttercups - and trees! I discovered nature spirits at that time. Also, at that age, I went collecting flowers to set out in water- not really knowing why, surely, but pre-saging the time, ten years later, when I learned of flower essences. I am not sure I was so much “into” them, as simply merged with them - we lived in a beautiful, natural area with wildflowers, orchards, and wildlife-it was awhile before I knew of any other kind of world.

What do you remember most fondly about your childhood?

I would say it was that - the world of nature as described above, as well as the time given to children in that era to just “be” and enjoy life. I would play, of course, but often also sit out in our yard and read by the side of a stream that ran through the land, under large shade trees. My brothers, sister- we all had that precious time to just be, with beautiful nature enfolding us. We balanced that with doing fun things in a city - games, amusement parks, museums, concerts, parks. I loved school, too - but in that era we really had our down time.

You live on beautiful land in a lovely part of Washtenaw County. How does living there affect you?

I am so grateful to have been guided to my home, and the home of the healing practice and herb school. I am nourished by this experience, and fortunate to work in a way which allows me to share it with others in meaningful ways. I established Gaia Center as a non-profit this year as a pathway to conserving more land, such as this, for these rich life experiences and learning.

Where is the most beautiful place you’ve ever been to?

It is truly impossible to single out one place, but this one comes to mind now: when I lived on the Vineyard for ten years, there was a magical place down island, where sheep and land grazed amid salt marshes, with a sweeping view of the ocean beyond. Woodlands, flower meadows and lush cranberry bogs surrounded this picture. Above all, it was quiet- not a highway, or road -sound, existed on this island. This was my pathway to a private beach, and a piece of heaven itself.