

EMC
2026



4th Annual Estuary Learning
Earth Medicine Conference

For the Love of Gaia

21st & 22nd March 2026

Rydges Newcastle

8:15am to 6:00pm & 8.30am to 4.30pm

Protecting the knowledge and
wisdom of natural healing

www.estuarylearning.org.au/emc-2026

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Disclaimer

Nothing in this two-day event is intended to be a substitute for individual medical advice and should not be relied on as personal health advice for particular circumstances. Always seek the guidance of your health practitioner with any questions you may have regarding your health or a medical condition. All content is shared information for educational purposes.

Saturday Program

Rydgcs Newcastle

8:15am to 6:00pm – Saturday, 21st March 2026

TIME	SESSIONS AND PRESENTORS	
08:15 – 08:45	Registration and mingle	
08:45 – 08:50	Opening	
08:50 – 09:00	Welcome to Country Aunty Theresa Dates Dargin	
09:00 – 10:00	Keynote: Sacred activism for the love of Gaia Natalie Isaacs	
10:00 – 10:15	Saturday lucky door prize	
10:15 – 10:45	Morning tea and mingle	
10:45 – 11:30	Main Room Herbalist or cosmetic chemist: making herbal skin care – together Kaja Skraskova	Dobell Room Embodied astrology: using our natal chart to support Gaia in her evolution Nancy Evelyn & Sioux Burns
11:30 – 12:15	Main Room Connecting plants to people: herbal energetics, taste of herbs and the six tissue states in medicine making Ally Sanchez	Dobell Room Love Gaia, love community, love self Lisa Worth
12:15 – 13:15	Lunch and mingle	
13:15 – 14:15	Main Room For the love of our hormones Deanne Apostolou, Nicola Kelly & Kristin Gilmour	
14:15 – 15:00	Main Room Feng Shui for the home and why it matters Renée Longworth	Dobell Room Sustainable harvesting – respect for earth & plants Christopher Smith
15:00 – 15:30	Afternoon tea and mingle	
15:30 – 16:00	Raffle Draw	
16:00 – 17:00	Main Room Person specific dosing: creating a deeper relationship with Gaia Rixt Botello	Dobell Room Meeting our own and others' grief needs in times of change Treena Francis
17:00 – 18:00	Mingle	

Session times may adjust during the day and the program is subject to change without notice.

Sunday Program

Rydges Newcastle

8:30am to 4:30pm – Sunday, 22nd March 2026

TIME	SESSIONS AND PRESENTORS	
08:30 – 09:00	Arrival and mingle	
09:00 – 09:45	Main Room Yoga Nidra – Resting with Gaia: reconnect, release, renew Alice Reid	
09:45 – 10:00	A word from our sponsors	
10:00 – 10:15	Lucky door prize & raffle draw	
10:15 – 10:45	Morning tea and mingle	
10:45 – 11:45	Main Room For the love of digestion Ally Sanchez, Lara Ryan and Julianne Grant	
11:45 – 12:30	Main Room Healing in harmony with nature Shenel Engel	Dobell Room Elders sharing the wisdom The Elders – Nancy, Steph, Sally, Sylvia, Diana & Pat
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch and mingle	
13:30 – 14:15	Main Room Medicinal trees: the lungs and heart of Gaia Lara Ryan	Dobell Room People's medicine: Ayurvedic wisdom for everyday healing Eleni Tsikrikas
14:15 – 14:45	Afternoon tea and mingle	
14:45 – 15:30	Main Room Connecting to self Jan Heckscher	
15:30 – 15:45	Raffle draw	
15:45 – 16:15	Main Room Special Presentation Nancy Evelyn	
16:15 – 16:30	Closing Nancy Evelyn & Deanne Apostolou	
16:30	Thank you for joining us – Have a safe trip home	
Session times may adjust during the day and the program is subject to change without notice.		



Keynote Presentation

Keynote Title

Natalie Isaacs

Understanding our relationship with Mother Earth begins with radical honesty. We must ask what it is we avoid: Is this a one-way relationship? Do we keep taking from Gaia without giving back? We say we love her, but do we love her the way we love those we fiercely protect?

When I finally understood, not in my mind but in my heart, that the land, oceans and waterways are living systems, everything changed. I felt Gaia as a presence – a heartbeat. And my life came into focus through a new lens that transformed my choices, my purpose, and my relationship with Earth.

Climate action starts with connection, with love. A love that moves us to protect, to nurture, to change. When we truly fall in love with Mother Earth, her well-being becomes inseparable from our own. And that is where real transformation begins. Our call to Sacred Activism starts now.

Natalie Isaacs is the founder of 1 Million Women, a global movement of women and girls who take practical action to fight dangerous climate change by changing the way they live.

A former cosmetic manufacturer and small-business owner, her climate change journey, from apathy to action, delivers a simple message that resonates with women and girls of all ages. Natalie has motivated and empowered tens of thousands of schoolgirls and hundreds of thousands of women to change the way they use energy, buy and consume 'stuff', reduce food waste, make other food choices, travel, make fashion choices, and invest their money. Natalie's philosophy is that real behaviour change begins with personal action.

The author of *Every Woman's Guide to Saving the Planet* (HarperCollins/ABC Books, 2018, UK 2020, USA 2021) and *Right Here Right Now: How Women Can Lead the Climate Emergency* (HarperCollins, 2022), Natalie's books are changing behaviours and making a difference.

In 2017, Natalie was named the Australian Geographical Society Conservationist of the Year. In 2019, 1 Million Women won the Rare People's Choice Award, a global award that honours behaviour change innovation, topping the popular vote out of 200 entries from 46 countries.

Website: www.1millionwomen.com.au/



Saturday & Sunday

Master of ceremonies

Christina Gerakiteys

Christina Gerakiteys is a founding member and a key enabler of Estuary Learning. We find Christina at the crossroads of science and spirituality, where quantum physics meets metaphysics. She makes what seems impossible achievable. Christina designs programs that disrupt current mindsets with *moonshot thinking*, exploring what is possible rather than what is acceptable or limiting. A past herbalist who after ten years of clinical practice, ventured into business and entrepreneurship, Christina is CEO of UtopiaX, author of *Celebrating Success One Failure at a Time*, and founder of IdeaSparx, an innovation platform. She is a sought-after keynote speaker, facilitator, and program designer. Christina creates interactive educational experiences driven by design thinking, purpose, engagement, and play. Her mission is to enable the enablers, to empower and inspire leaders and emerging leaders to converge minds, technology and different fields for maximum impact.

Website: www.utopiax.global



Saturday

Welcome to Country Aunty Theresa Dates Dargin

Aunty Theresa Dates Dargin is a traditional custodian and a next generation Worimi Elder of the Newcastle Worimi gathang speaking people. She is a spiritual healer, visionary and wisdom keeper and founder of Spiritual Waterways a proudly owned Aboriginal business dedicated to closing the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Theresa knows that traditional ways through connecting to song lines, storytelling on country, reviving traditional language, knowledge sharing, and simply connecting as one in the lore of humanity can change the world. She develops and facilitates programs significant for walking on country, within a ceremonial circle of healing, teaching awareness through deep listening, is important to clearing the spiritual waterways within us.

Website: www.spiritualwaterways.com.au



Saturday Presentation

Herbalist or cosmetic chemist: making herbal skin care – together **Karolina “Kaja” Skraskova**

Manufacture of herbal skin care and topical herbal medicines is a broad interdisciplinary field, encompassing the expertise from herbalism, cosmetic science and dermatology. In this talk, Kaja will go over the specifics of herbal skin care as made by a herbalist versus a cosmetic chemist. Rather than deciding on which way is “better” or “right”, she will emphasise how the two approaches can enrich one another. From the stability of herbal skin care to sustainable use of herbal medicines, she will guide attendees through her unique rich practice that falls back onto the groundwork of generations that came before her.

If we are to preserve humanity on this beautiful planet, the only way forward is via collaboration, through an intricate synthesis of the old with that of what is new. The making of herbal skin care may sound trivial and unimportant in the big scheme of things; yet, you will be surprised just how strongly this field can demonstrate such collaborative efforts.

Dr. Karolina “Kaja” Skraskova is a herbalist with a formal background in European pharmacy (MPharm) and a PhD in analytical chemistry. She specialises in the crafting of topical herbal medicines, drawing on the principles of Galenic formulation. With over nine years of hands-on experience, Kaja is the founder and formulator behind *Herbae Thylacini*, an award-winning herbal skin care range.

Kaja operates at the intersection of traditional herbalism, pharmaceutical compounding, and cosmetic science. Through her online course, *Herbal Skin Craft*, she trains health practitioners to formulate and prescribe personalised herbal skincare for a wide range of dermatological conditions. In addition to teaching, she offers bespoke skincare formulations for individual clients and provides compounding services to other healthcare practitioners.

Website: www.herbaethylacini.com.au

Saturday Workshop

Embodied astrology: using our natal chart to support Gaia in her evolution Nancy Evelyn & Sioux Burns

An astrology chart is a snap shot of the solar system taken from Earth. A moment in time in the ongoing conversations and energies of the solar system as they influence Earth and Earthlings collectively. Astrology is actually more about Gaia than any one of her creatures.

While it is customary to consult an astrology chart to see how the current transits are influencing our personal life, this workshop acknowledges that the transits are for Gaia. We will use our individual natal chart to explore how we can best support Gaia in this time in her evolution, in her turning of an age.

This workshop uses western seasonal astrology to enable attendees to see exactly where they can be of authentic service to Gaia in her evolving spiritual journey and open doors to deep personal satisfaction and good karma in the process.

Bring a copy of your chart on your phone to this workshop. If you don't have a copy of your chart you can calculate a free chart at:

<https://astro-charts.com/tools/new/birth-chart/>

Nancy Evelyn is a founding member and the much loved and respected president of Estuary Learning. She is a herbalist, iridologist, educator, mentor and astrologer who has been in practice since 1978, accumulating all manner of wisdom from wherever she finds it and integrating it into her practice and teachings. Nancy brings to life her intention of 'every clinic a classroom, every practitioner a teacher' through her nurturing, encouragement and counselling. Nancy is known for past master classes in the clinical practice of herbal medicine and is known for her small interactive classes in astrology for the practitioner and counsellor. She is currently feeling her way through earth changes and unsure what her next classes will be, but we are certain they will be remarkable.

Email: info@estuarylearning.org.au

Sioux Burns is a lifelong collector of wisdom and wisdom stories. An avid explorer of the Great Mystery who delights in knowing that the Mystery can never be fully known. She spent 20 years in study and teaching with Shanti Mission, a multi-faith mystery school with a central pillar of cultivating both inner peace and peace in the world. She dedicated 2023 to a deep dive into The Mythic Body with Josh Schrei. Sioux expresses a cohesive eclectic view of the Cosmos we all call home. She works with energy medicine, plant medicines, myth, music, meditation and astrology to help people discover their essential magic as part of a magnificent whole.

Email: info@estuarylearning.org.au





Saturday Workshop

Connecting plants to people: herbal energetics, taste of herbs and the six tissue states in medicine making

Ally Sanchez

What if healing is less about fixing and more about remembering our place in nature as a whole? Ally Sanchez explores the six tissue states, heat, cold, damp, dry, tension and relaxation, as a way of seeing imbalance as pattern rather than pathology, guiding practitioners toward herbs that restore balance.

She also introduces the taste of herbs as an embodied way of knowing, where bitter, pungent, sweet, sour, and astringent each offer insight. Tasting becomes an act of listening, a moment where plant, practitioner, and client meet.

Drawing on clinical experience, traditional philosophy, and practical examples, Ally shows how energetics, tissue states, and taste bring depth to prescribing and strengthen connection with the person before us. Participants will leave with practical tools and renewed inspiration for working with the healing power of nature's gifts.

Ally Sanchez is a herbalist, nutritionist, and teacher who has walked the plant path for more than two decades. Based in the Blue Mountains, NSW, her work is rooted in traditional ways of healing, where plants are allies and the body is understood as a reflection of nature. Drawing on vitalism, traditional energetics, and tissue state philosophy, she weaves science with story and intuition with practice, guiding final-year naturopathy and herbal medicine students through an energetic lens that deepens their relationship with plants and people.

Through her Home Healer program, Ally empowers community members to reclaim confidence in everyday remedies, teaching the craft of tinctures, teas, salves, and syrups while fostering connection with the living world. Her work is grounded in the belief that healing is about relationship, and she places connection at the centre of every consultation, classroom, and community group. She often reminds students and clients that “plants are our healers”, as medicines, as foods, and as living beings whose presence restores and steadies us.

Website: www.allysanchez.com.au



Saturday Workshop

Love Gaia, love community, love self

Lisa Worth

A garden can be a magical place, or it can be a barren, clinical space shaped by the old idea that humans must control and perfect everything around us. As that notion softens, we begin to recognise our small place within a much larger system, one we often work against rather than with. It is the enduring love of Gaia, our nurturing mother, that reveals our place in this web of life and offers us the chance to repair what has been damaged.

This session explores how we can create garden spaces with room for all. Herbs, like people, are individuals, some delicate, some bold, yet all rely on sustenance, community and the rhythms of the earth. By drawing parallels between plant communities and human communities, this workshop highlights the shared systems that support life and the ways regenerative herbalism and gardening can guide us toward healing. Through these principles, we reconnect with Gaia's rhythms and remember that community, in soil, in gardens and among people, is the foundation for restoring both land and self.

Lisa Worth is an educator, herbalist, nutritionist, horticulturist and sustainability advocate based in Tea Gardens, NSW. She is a member of the Estuary Learning Education and Mentoring team and brings together a diverse background with a deep connection to Earth, soil, plant medicine and Australian native plants. Lisa is an active member of IPHA and Therapeutic Horticulture Australia and is currently weaving therapeutic horticulture into her evolving practice.

A lifelong student, Lisa's work is shaped by her studies in herbal medicine, nutrition and horticulture. Each area strengthens her relationship with the plants we rely on for food, medicine and connection. This breadth of knowledge allows her to create learning experiences that are practical and nourishing, inviting people to cultivate plants, skills and new ways of seeing. Her approach honours the idea that healing grows through relationship with land, with knowledge and with the living world that sustains us.

Email: theecologicalapothecary@gmail.com

Saturday Workshop

For the love of our hormones

**Deanne Apostolou, Nicola Kelly
& Kristin Gilmour**

In the tradition of treating the person not the disease, Deanne, Nicola and Kristin, will explore in depth a range of herbs that support the endocrine system in specific ways that will help you to differentiate which medicine is best for you and your clients needs.

Deanne Apostolou is the Secretary and a founding member of Estuary Learning. She is a medical herbalist, iridologist, educator and speaker with over 30 years of clinical experience. Deanne studied traditional herbal medicine with Nancy Evelyn, added evidence-based training in complementary medicine, and keeps her passion for teaching the traditions of natural medicine. She reminds us frequently that science proves traditional knowing. Deanne has written course material for the Academy of Complementary Health Newcastle and Switch *on* Health for their Diploma of Herbal Medicine. She is a perennial educator, mentor and guide for students and practitioners and is a leader in our community.

Website: www.natureofhealth.com.au

Nicola Kelly is a herbalist and iridologist in clinical practice since 2010 with an Adv.Dip from AIAS after having studied at both ACNM (now Endeavour) and the AIAS (Australian Institute of Applied Sciences). Healing with plants is in Nicola's DNA through her English herbalist ancestry, but she took her apprenticeship in wildcrafting, medicine making and plant spirit medicine in North America. Nicola is a practitioner consultant with the Herbal Extract Company and we recognise her natural affinity with every principle of Estuary Learning.

Email: nicola.kelly@herbalextracts.com.au

Kristin Gilmour is an experienced Melbourne-based Naturopathic practitioner with a special interest in the management of immune health, mental health, and chronic inflammatory disorders. Alongside her longstanding Naturopathic practice, Kristin is an author, technical writer, researcher, educator, and co-presenter of the herbal medicine podcast, *Tech Talk with OptimalRx*. Kristin has a great love of herbal medicine, which is the focus of much of her research, writing and lecturing. With her colleague Julianne Grant, Kristin has co-authored the herbal medicine text, *Phytomedicine Compendium – A Desk Resource for Naturopaths and Herbalists*, detailing 180 medicinal plants and fungi. This herbal text is an incredible resource for Naturopaths and Herbalists in their clinical practice.

Email: kristin@optimalrx.com.au





Saturday Presentation

Feng Shui for the home and why it matters

Renée Longworth

This presentation explores the powerful influence of the Qi within our homes and how it shapes health, relationships and the flow of daily life. Feng Shui is often mistaken for simple aesthetics, yet it is a detailed study of how Qi moves, gathers and becomes activated in the spaces we live in. Participants will learn how the Qi of a home interacts with personal Qi, why this interaction affects opportunities and wellbeing, and how recognising these patterns allows for meaningful and lasting change. The session introduces the Three Lucks, a framework that helps explain the forces that shape our circumstances, and includes real examples of Feng Shui in action where small adjustments created profound shifts in health, harmony and abundance.

The home is the centre of our lives, the place where we nurture ourselves and our families, and the container for our hopes and dreams. This session highlights how working with the Qi of the home can support a more balanced, connected and cohesive life. When we live in a space that is aligned and abundant, the energy we carry into our communities becomes more generous and grounded. Participants will take home practical Feng Shui practices that can be applied immediately to open new opportunities, release stagnation and strengthen the sense of harmony within the home.

Renée Longworth is a highly qualified Feng Shui Consultant and a 40th Generation Disciple of the Liu Jiang Dong lineage, one of only a small number of consultants in Australia to be initiated into this centuries old tradition. She is also a Qi Men Dun Jia Practitioner, Geomancer, Chinese Astrologer, Energetic Healing Practitioner, Clinical Hypnotherapist specialising in trauma and PTSD, and Meditation Facilitator. With more than sixteen years of professional experience, Renée has supported hundreds of clients in transforming their lives by aligning their homes, energy and personal potential. She specialises in both Home and Business Feng Shui and is trained in the specialised field of Fertility Feng Shui.

Drawing on lineage based knowledge that has been carefully safeguarded and passed directly from Master to student for generations, Renée brings depth, accuracy and compassion to her work. Her Feng Shui audits create meaningful and lasting change, supporting health, fertility, wealth and business success. Through her therapeutic practice she helps clients release the past, reconnect with their own agency and step into a more enriched and balanced life.

Website: www.reneelongworth.com



Saturday Presentation

Sustainable harvesting – respect for earth & plants

Christopher Smith

This session explores what it means to shift from exploiting medicinal plants to cultivating them with care. Participants are invited to consider how horticulture, environmental science and herbal medicine come together to support true plant stewardship. The focus is on sustainable growing and harvesting practices that protect ecosystems, strengthen local economies and ensure the long term availability of medicinal herbs. The session also introduces the principles behind engaging directly with the plants we rely on, and how growing our own herbs becomes an act of empowerment and respect for the Earth. Through the work of Herbology Hub, this approach shows how herbalism can evolve into conservation, offering a practical and grounded path forward for practitioners and growers alike.

Christopher Smith brings 40 years of experience in horticulture, environmental science and herbal medicine to his work, shaped by a lifelong relationship with the green world. His focus is on cultivating endangered medicinal plants and showing that herbalism requires stewardship rather than exploitation. He supports growers through Herbology Hub, where he shares the principles of sustainable cultivation and the deeper practice of engaging directly with the plants we rely on. This work has grown from his belief that caring for these plants protects the land, supports the communities around them and helps ensure that the herbs we depend on remain part of our lives for generations to come.

Website: www.tinderrymountainherbs.com.au



Saturday Workshop

Person specific dosing: creating a deeper relationship with Gaia

Rixt Botello

This presentation explores the idea of the person specific dose and how thoughtful dosing can support a more respectful and collaborative relationship with Gaia. Rixt introduces the concept of selecting the right dose for the individual and shows how this choice ripples outward into the wider web of life. The common belief that more is better has shaped much of modern herbal thinking, yet it often overlooks the impact on plants, ecosystems and future generations. By reconsidering how much we use, we begin to shift from extraction toward relationship.

Participants will be guided through the practical foundations of person specific dosing, including where to begin and how to recognise the dose that meets the person without placing unnecessary strain on the earth. Real case studies from international herbalists and Rixt's own clinical experience illustrate how low-dose prescribing can be both effective and deeply ecological. This approach honours our interconnectedness and reminds us that using less plant material creates more room for regeneration, more oxygen for the planet and more opportunity for healing. The session includes examples, blends and recipes that invite practitioners to contribute to the wellbeing of Gaia by working with lower, more considered doses.

Rixt Botello is a medical herbalist who embraces aromatherapy and flower essences. She is an educator, researcher and author. She is a small batch manufacturer of herbal medicine who's herb garden is 50 acres of bush and meadows in Peria the Far North New Zealand. Her Bach flower journey began at the Edward Bach Centre UK and eventually led her to be their Australasian co-ordinator/trainer. Rixt enjoys teaching wherever she is called to teach, from community classes, polytechnics, massage schools to midwifery classes at university level. She is a global earth focused practitioner and the research for her recently published third book, *Low Dosage Methodology in Herbal Medicine—History, Philosophy and Application*, has taken her around the world.

Website: www.rixtsherbals.co.nz



Saturday Presentation

Meeting our own and others' grief needs in times of change

Treena Francis

This workshop is an opportunity to explore the many forms of grief and loss that touch our lives every day. It looks at how paradigm shifts create ripples through our systems, communities, and personal worlds, and acknowledges the courage, creativity, and endurance required to meet both our own grief and the grief of others. Participants are invited to consider how compassion, optimism, and hope can coexist with the realities of change.

In a world where transformation is accelerating, the losses that accompany change can feel overwhelming. This session offers space to recognise those experiences with steadiness and care, exploring ways to meet grief with equanimity rather than resistance. By understanding the patterns of change and the emotional landscapes they create, we can navigate uncertainty with greater clarity and remain connected to what sustains us.

Treena Francis Treena Francis is a PACFA Registered Certified Practising Counsellor based in Newcastle, Australia. She brings an integrative, person-centred approach to her work and is an experienced educator with a strong sense of community and a deep commitment to learning. Treena has worked extensively with children, young people and families in roles that include coach, educator, advocate, facilitator, learning support therapist and yoga and mindfulness teacher. She celebrates the strengths within diversity and intersectionality and is comfortable working with unique needs across a wide range of communities. Fascinated by relational dynamics in all their forms, between us, within us and in the world around us, she draws inspiration from astrology, neuroscience and somatic, body-based therapies that support emotional release and integration.

Treena's therapeutic approach centres on creating safety for clients to attune to their own truth. She draws on polyvagal regulation, somatic awareness, solutions-focused therapy, narrative therapy, nature-based therapy, ACT, Mindfulness, and trauma-informed principles to support meaningful and sustainable change.

Website: www.comewhatmaycounselling.com.au



Sunday Workshop

Yoga Nidra – Resting with Gaia: reconnect, release, renew.

Alice Reid

Yoga Nidra, often called yogic sleep, is a guided relaxation practice that invites deep rest while maintaining gentle awareness. Resting close to the Earth, the practice weaves body sensing, breath awareness and elemental imagery to evoke connection with nature and renew body, mind and spirit.

This session explores how Yoga Nidra reflects Gaia's wisdom through rest, renewal and interconnection. By consciously surrendering to the support of the Earth, we attune to her steady rhythms and the cycles that sustain life. This form of rest nurtures the nervous system and awakens a sense of gratitude and stewardship for the planet. Practicing Yoga Nidra becomes an act of reverence, a way of caring for ourselves as part of caring for Mother Earth.

Alice Reid is a naturopath (BHSc), yoga teacher, singer, sound healer and former radiographer with a deep passion for the body–mind–spirit connection. Drawing on over 30 years in healthcare and extensive yoga training, Alice weaves modern understanding and ancient wisdom to create a safe, nurturing space for renewal and harmony.

Her Yoga Nidra sessions offer a sacred pause, a gift of rest in a restless world, inviting profound relaxation, nervous system regulation and a renewed sense of connection with Mother Earth. Her approach helps release tension, restore vitality and remember our place within the living web of nature.

Grounded in compassion and informed by her experience, Alice blends naturopathy, yoga, sound and breath to create accessible, nurturing experiences that help people manage stress, restore vitality and reconnect with themselves and the world around them. Alice finds joy and delight in the transformative power of music and singing, embodied movement and the restorative power of being immersed in nature.

Website: www.alicereidmedicinewoman.com.au

Sunday Workshop

For the love of our digestion

Ally Sanchez, Lara Ryan & Julianne Grant

In the tradition of treating the person not the disease, Ally, Lara and Julianne, will explore in depth a range of herbs that support the digestive system in specific ways that will help you to differentiate which medicine is best for you and your client needs.

Ally Sanchez is a herbalist, nutritionist and teacher who has walked the plant path for more than two decades. Rooted in traditional ways of healing, she weaves vitalism, traditional energetics and tissue state philosophy with science, story and practice, guiding students to see the body and the plants through an energetic lens. Through her Home Healer program, she helps community members reclaim confidence in everyday remedies while deepening their connection with the living world. Her work is grounded in the belief that healing is about relationship, and she often reminds students and clients that plants are our healers, as medicines, as foods and as living beings whose presence steadies us.

Website: www.allysanchez.com.au

Lara Ryan is a Sydney based naturopath, herbalist and somatic therapist with more than thirty years of experience in natural health. Beginning with an early apprenticeship to a gifted herbalist, she developed a deep and embodied understanding of plant medicine that weaves together science and the sacred, supported by qualifications in naturopathy, complementary medicine and international public health. Lara supports practitioners through her work with The Herbal Extract Company and lectures in nutrition within the Master of Mental Health program at the Nan Tien Institute. Her clinical and teaching work is grounded in a trauma informed, heart centred approach that integrates naturopathy, herbal medicine and somatic therapy, and as a speaker she brings warmth, clarity and a strong sense of connection, inviting audiences to rediscover the healing intelligence shared between the human body and the living Earth.

Email: lara.ryan@herbalextracts.com.au

Julianne Grant is an experienced naturopathic and herbal medicine practitioner who has practiced in complementary medicine for over 20 years. Alongside her clinical practice, Julianne is also a researcher, technical writer, author and speaker, as well as co-presenter of the herbal medicine podcast, *Tech Talk with OptimalRx*. Julianne is passionate about education, both of her patients and of the Naturopathic profession, and has a keen interest in herbal medicine. She is co-author of the herbal medicine text, *Phytomedicine Compendium – A Desk Resource for Naturopaths and Herbalists*. Julianne is a full member of the Naturopaths and Herbalists Association of Australia (NHAA).

Email: julianne@optimalrx.com.au





Sunday Presentation

People's medicine: Ayurvedic wisdom for everyday healing

Eleni Tsikrikas

Discover People's Medicine, a simple and everyday way of practicing Ayurveda that brings healing into the kitchen, garden and daily routines. Ayurvedic practitioner Eleni Tsikrikas will share accessible tools for nurturing food, sleep and vitality, the three pillars of health. Participants will learn how to align their routines with natural cycles, choose seasonal foods and use practical techniques such as oil massage, breath awareness and quiet time to restore balance. This session is ideal for anyone wanting to care for themselves, their family or their community through grounded, daily acts of healing.

The workshop highlights the Ayurvedic understanding that caring for our health is inseparable from caring for the Earth. The same cycles that shape digestion, sleep and vitality also guide the seasons, the soil and the wider living world. By working in harmony with these rhythms, we strengthen our relationship with Gaia and recognise that personal healing contributes to planetary wellbeing. Participants will leave with practical tools for restoring balance in their bodies and in their connection to nature, honouring the truth that healing ourselves is also an act of healing the Earth.

Eleni Tsikrikas is the founder of People's Medicine, a platform dedicated to making Ayurveda accessible to modern lives. Her work blends classical Ayurvedic teachings with contemporary health science, offering practical tools to support digestion, sleep, vitality and nervous system resilience. She has taught workshops, led group programs and supported hundreds of clients through individual consultations, always emphasising that health begins in the choices we make each day, in the kitchen, the garden and the rhythms of daily life.

Her upcoming book, *People's Medicine: A Guide to Optimal Health*, distills three decades of practice into a guide that reconnects individuals to nature's wisdom. Through her writing and teaching, Eleni inspires others to live in alignment with natural cycles, to cultivate resilience and to experience health as an act of love for self, for community and for Gaia.

Website: www.eleniayurveda.com



Sunday Workshop

For the love of Gaia – healing in harmony with nature

Shenel Engel

For the Love of Gaia is a reflective and practical session on healing in harmony with nature. It explores how homeopathy, flower essences and tissue salts support the vital force and encourage balance across body, mind and energy. Participants will learn how aligning with natural rhythms can enhance resilience and deepen connection with themselves, the collective and the living world around them.

The presentation shows how these gentle remedies act as subtle guides that help the body return to harmony rather than forcing change. Practical examples highlight ways to work with the rhythms of Gaia and recognise the interconnectedness between personal healing, community wellbeing and the wider environment. Attendees will gain insight into using natural supports to strengthen vitality, build self awareness and foster a deeper sense of relationship with themselves, each other and Gaia.

Shenel Engel is a homeopathic practitioner based in Newcastle, NSW. Her path into natural medicine began at twenty one during a period of personal health challenges that led her to seek a deeper and more holistic way of healing. Through nutrition, lifestyle changes and homeopathy she experienced meaningful shifts in her wellbeing and later went on to conceive and raise three children. This lived experience continues to shape her gentle and respectful approach to care. Shenel works with women and children both online and in person. She encourages families to build personalised first aid kits so parents feel confident and supported in caring for their loved ones.

Shenel is the founder of Your Homeopath and has a particular interest in complex and chronic presentations, especially where people feel unheard or unsure where to turn next. She believes the body, like nature itself, holds innate wisdom and the capacity for balance, and that the right remedy can help those inner signals express themselves more clearly. Shenel works with Fibonacci potencies, a method inspired by the spiral patterns found throughout nature, offering a gentle vibrational spectrum that allows the vital force to respond in its own time. Her work reflects a commitment to healing in harmony with Gaia, the individual and the wider living system.

Website: www.yourhomeopath.com

Sunday Presentation

Medicinal trees: the lungs and heart of Gaia

Lara Ryan

In this talk, naturopath and herbalist Lara Ryan explores the intimate relationship between trees, the Earth and the human body. Through the lens of herbal medicine, she reveals how trees mirror our own physiology as the lungs and heart of Gaia and how they offer profound support for our respiratory, circulatory and emotional systems. Drawing on both science and tradition, Lara introduces key medicinal trees such as maritime pine, magnolia, oak bark, pau d'arco, hawthorn, white willow, hyssop and prickly ash, sharing their therapeutic gifts and the lessons they hold about connection, resilience and reciprocity.

This presentation invites practitioners to recognise the shared breath, pulse and healing intelligence that link us with the trees. It encourages a renewed relationship with the plant kingdom, seeing trees not only as sources of medicine but as companions in restoring vitality to people and planet. Through this understanding, participants are guided toward a deeper sense of love for Gaia and a more conscious way of working with the living world.

Lara Ryan is a Sydney based naturopath, herbalist and somatic therapist with more than 30 years of experience in natural health. Beginning with an early apprenticeship to a gifted herbalist, she developed a deep and embodied understanding of plant medicine that weaves together science and the sacred. She holds qualifications in naturopathy, complementary medicine and international public health.

Lara supports practitioners through her work with The Herbal Extract Company and lectures in nutrition within the Master of Mental Health program at the Nan Tien Institute. Her clinical and teaching work is grounded in a trauma informed, heart centred approach that integrates naturopathy, herbal medicine and somatic therapy. As a speaker she brings warmth, clarity and a strong sense of connection, inviting audiences to rediscover the healing intelligence shared between the human body and the living Earth.

Website: www.lararyan.com.au





Sunday Presentation

Elders sharing the wisdom

Eight ELders

Gaia is at a key turning point in her evolutionary transformational journey. While it is a gift to be alive to witness this turning of an age, we are all of us feeling the stretch and challenge of meeting the needs of our communities in this time of change

Eight ELders will present their experience, strategies, philosophies, humour, warmth and wisdom gained on the bitter/sweet path of spirit, healing and service.

Sally Kingsford-Smith, Steph Quinn, Diana Mund, Nancy Evelyn, Pat Collins, and Sylvia Reitsma.

Email: info@estuarylearning.org.au





Sunday Workshop

Connecting to self

Jan Heckscher

This workshop invites participants to explore what happens when we become disconnected from ourselves and how this disconnection affects the way we show up for others and for Gaia. It begins by gently opening the space, allowing people to arrive, settle and meet one another before moving into a shared reflection on the impact of losing touch with our own inner landscape. From here, participants are guided through a visualisation with music that supports grounding, energy balancing and a deeper sense of presence.

The session then turns toward practical ways to nurture a steadier relationship with self, offering simple strategies that can be woven into daily life. There is time for shared reflection so participants can integrate what they experienced and recognise the common threads in the room. The workshop closes with an invitation to continue tending this inner connection, honouring the understanding that the care we offer ourselves shapes the care we bring to our communities and to the Earth.

Jan Heckscher is a Melbourne-based executive coach and consultant with a difference. Jan is an energy healer and passionate advocate for bringing a holistic approach to leadership and wellness in the workplace. She integrates the principles of Reiki and provides highly intuitive and empathic energy balancing sessions alongside more structured, objective assessment and coaching techniques. Working with individuals and groups, Jan's aim is to help her clients find solutions relevant to the complex challenges that present in the work environment, and to expand their capacity and their ability to thrive in both their professional and personal lives. Burnout is Jan's personal healing pathway. Anxiety, low energy or feeling completely overwhelmed, Jan understands that everyone experiences burnout differently and that managing it involves not just a change of pace, but in many cases, a shift in self-perception. Her message is the importance of prioritising our own well-being.

Website: www.janheckschersolutions.com



Special Presentation

The seed is the intention

Nancy Evelyn

The seed holds the memory of all that has come before, carrying the quiet intelligence of an ancestral line shaped by joy, challenge and change. It is also the place where intention begins, where the future gathers itself in a small, potent form. Many people sense that we are living at a threshold, witnessing the early stirrings of a new way of being on Earth. Gaia rests at her own seed point, and our awareness, held with care, becomes part of the wider field that shapes what will grow.

Nancy Evelyn is a founding member and the much loved and respected president of Estuary Learning. She is a herbalist, iridologist, educator, mentor and astrologer who has been in practice since 1978, accumulating all manner of wisdom from wherever she finds it and integrating it into her practice and teachings. Nancy brings to life her intention of 'every clinic is a classroom, every practitioner a teacher' through her nurturing, encouragement and counselling. Nancy is known for past master classes in the clinical practice of herbal medicine and is known for her small interactive classes in astrology for the practitioner and counsellor. She is currently feeling her way through earth changes and unsure what her next classes will be, but we are certain they will be remarkable.

Email: info@estuarylearning.org.au

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We are excited to acknowledge the Herbal Extract Company as our valued corporate partner. Their year round support enables Estuary Learning to develop accessible and affordable high quality vocational education programs in natural earth medicine. Together we hold the intention of creating a harmonious and generous new culture in our profession.

The Herbal Extract Company are one of Australia's leading providers of liquid herbal extracts and like you, they're passionate about the healing power of herbs. They are holistic in everything they do, from using the whole plant to responsible production from start to finish, they honour what nature has to offer and are proud to bring you over a century's worth of herbal medicine knowledge.

Website: www.herbalextracts.com.au

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OptimalRx prides itself on providing optimal quality, optimal education and optimal innovation for natural medicine practitioners. They are an Australian owned practitioner dispensing brand for practitioners by practitioners.

Leading the way in innovation, OptimalRx, regularly introduces clinically relevant, unique liquid herbal extracts to the Australian practitioner market. They recognise the changing face of practice and respond by providing practitioners with well researched, clinically relevant, innovative herbal medicines. In association with this, they continue to provide quality technical information and mentoring opportunities for practitioners.

Website: www.optimalrx.com.au

Lunar Sponsors

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N U T R A C E U T I C A L S

BioMedica is an Australian owned company dedicated to supporting natural healthcare practitioners in clinical practice. Their work centres on providing reliable products and resources that uphold strong clinical standards and reflect a long-standing commitment to practitioner-only care. BioMedica maintains clear values that guide their decisions and keep practitioner needs at the heart of the business. When they say 'practitioner only', they actually mean it.

Website: www.biomedica.com.au



NucheV is an Australian health and nutrition company creating trusted products that support wellbeing across all stages of life. Through brands such as Oli6, Bio-Practica and Medicine Tree Therapeutics, they combine scientific understanding with a commitment to dependable, accessible care. They focus on digestive health, immune support and everyday vitality, offering products that align with modern clinical needs and support long-term outcomes.

Website: www.nuchev.com.au

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Interclinical Laboratories is an Australian company known for high quality mineral testing and practitioner supplements. They provide clear clinical insight into mineral balance and its role in overall health, supporting practitioners with precise, reliable information. With a focus on integrity and accuracy, they offer tools that help strengthen the foundations of wellbeing and guide informed clinical decision-making, contributing to a deeper understanding of individual health needs.

Website: www.interclinical.com.au

vital.ly

Vital.ly is an Australian practitioner-only distributor supporting natural health practitioners through education, research and secure product dispensing. Designed for practitioners, they provide evidence-informed learning, practitioner resources and a reliable ordering and fulfilment system that supports confident clinical care and better patient outcomes. Guided by professional standards, they contribute to a strong, sustainable natural health community.

Website: www.vital.ly

Star Sponsors



Switch *on* Health is the only college of its kind that is owned and operated by an Australian naturopath. They offer anyone, anywhere, the opportunity to gain an education and a recognised qualification that enables them to have a successful career helping themselves, their families, and their clients, to live a happier and healthier life. Switch *on* Health is accredited with ATMS.

Website: www.switchonhealth.com.au



Natural Script is a national dispensary service for natural and integrative practitioners, created by Natural Chemist, a certified PBS and compounding pharmacy in Sydney's north. Pharmacists, naturopaths and nutritionists work together to provide high quality products and personalised dispensing, with a strong focus on integrity, accessibility and practitioner support.

Website: www.naturalscript.au



Cell Logic is an Australian company specialising in nutrigenomic formulations that support cellular health and overall vitality. Grounded in scientific research, their products help practitioners address deeper drivers of imbalance. With a focus on integrity and thoughtful formulation, Cell Logic provides reliable tools for building strong foundations for wellbeing.

Website: www.cell-logic.com.au



Herb Wholesalers is an Australian supplier of high-quality dried herbs, extracts and raw materials for natural medicine practitioners and manufacturers. With a long history of sourcing reliable, ethically produced botanicals, they provide dependable ingredients for clinical and educational use and remain a trusted resource within the herbal medicine community.

Website: www.herbwholesalers.com



Wisdom, Connection, Accessibility

*Estuary Learning is a not-for-profit education
and mentoring movement. Our purpose is to
enrich and support the art of natural earth
medicine.*