

# Whole Food Medicine

*An evidence-based CPD-accredited hands-on food and nutrition workshop for health professionals.*

*An immersive experience, in person on Haymans Farm, in West Sussex.*

*Whole food Medicine* is face-to-face, hands-on, food & nutrition learning that engages the senses; the textures, the tastes, the sounds, and the sights, in the garden and the kitchen. This significantly enhances memory retention and helps embed the knowledge to counsel patients on nutrition. In a small group, around the table, you're able to learn, not just from the workshop content but from other healthcare professionals. Each participant brings their unique knowledge and experience to provide a platform for discussion

We all know that the type of food we eat has an effect on our health, but how significant is the way it is grown? To optimise our nutrition, it's not just what we eat, it's how it is grown, which is why anyone who cares about health needs to care about soil. Medical education rarely, if ever, takes students back to the soil. *Whole Food Medicine* starts with soil, creating a deep understanding and appreciation of soil as the foundation of health.

Farming systems that work in harmony with nature, are based on practices that protect and improve the soil. Healthy soil is fundamental to our wellbeing it affects the quality of the food we eat, the water we drink and the air that we breathe.

The cost of treating disease weighs heavily on our health systems. Research shows that in the UK we do not eat enough fruit, vegetables & fibre and we are deficient in minerals and vitamins. In 2023, ultra processed foods (UPF's) made up 57% of calories consumed by the average adult, and 65% for children. Transforming our diets to one that supports health & wellbeing is a must and now is the time.

Preparing fresh meals in the kitchen is fundamental to healthy eating. Johns Hopkins research has shown that people who frequently cook meals at home eat healthier and consume fewer calories than those who cook less.

The practical hands-on approach of *Whole Food Medicine* includes harvesting fresh produce from the garden; preparing delicious medicinal seasonal food; an in-depth look at evidence based nutrition to support health and wellbeing and simple lifestyle changes that can help create a healthy diet.

## **Key elements of the workshop**

### **Soil**

Healthy soils are the foundation of healthy food production. Agro-ecological farming practices such as biodynamic and organic that constantly replenish soil health through organic matter underpin healthy nutritious food. These natural farming practices also help maintain an environment essential for healthy living. Foods produced from ecologically vital soils are the foundation of health and well-being. These foods provide the nutrients that allow our bodies to function at their optimum best.

### **Whole foods**

Whole foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and legumes have a complex matrix of bioactive components including macronutrients, fibre, vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and other phytochemicals. Scientists have isolated a number of these compounds for fortification and supplementation, and whilst in cases of deficiency this might have been life-saving, more often than not these isolated compounds do not confer the same benefits as compounds acting synergistically in a natural wholefood matrix.

### **Food as Information**

Components of whole food act as information which can affect genetic switches inside cells. Gene products influence cells in many ways, including how they grow, divide, move and send and receive signals to other cells. As a result of this, the messages in food can shape our physiology in profound ways. Ultra-processed foods or food-like substances are constructed from novel molecules using processes never previously encountered in our evolutionary history. They can negatively modify our biology promoting disease.

### **Nutritionism**

First introduced by Gyorgy Scrinis the concept of nutritionism refers to the reductive understanding of nutrients as the key indicators of healthy food. Current dietary advice promotes this formalised knowledge. Just focusing on nutrients limits our understanding of the way the food we eat can create health & well-being. Provenance, food preparation, eating with others, gut microbiome, cultural influences, and the mental & emotional state when you eat all affect the way food nourishes us.

### **Smart ways**

Quality food for all means ensuring that people experiencing food poverty can access culturally appropriate, affordable food to create a healthy diet. Raising awareness of what constitutes a healthy diet and giving people access to the skills, resources and support needed to feed themselves well will help to ensure affordable healthy food is available to all. Wholefood Medicine delves into and provides resources for

- saving energy in food preparation
- tips to save time in the kitchen
- how to avoid UPFs
- different ways to access nutritious food
- avoiding waste

### **workshop participants will gain**

- an understanding of the connection between soil & human health
- greater awareness of food systems that heal the body and the planet
- how food diversity leads to a far greater diversity of microorganisms in the gut
- practical strategies for healthy, accessible & affordable food
- techniques to maximise nutrition & minimise waste
- knowledge of whole foods and the food matrix
- research on food as biological information interacting with the genome
- different ways of knowing food - beyond nutrients
- enjoyable session making lunch and your own lacto ferment to take home
- shared knowledge & experiences from workshop participants
- free downloadable resources including recipe cards for participants & patients

### **Workshop tutor**

#### **Daphne Lambert - *medicinal chef, eco-nutritionist***

Daphne Lambert has spent 30 years pioneering soil-food-health programmes. Daphne studied at The British School of Medicinal Nutrition and has worked in her capacity as an eco nutritionist for schools, universities and organisations including Mrs. Ethelston's Primary Academy, Neal's Yard Remedies, The University of Wales, Abel & Cole and The University of Sussex.

In 2010 Daphne created Greencuisine Trust a food education charity that brings people together in the kitchen for practical food experiences, conversations around the table, for in-depth thinking and wide-ranging visioning concerning the future of food. Daphne focuses on the inter-relationship between food, cooking, culture, bio-diversity, agriculture, the environment and health

Through this pioneering work, Greencuisine Trust promotes food systems that provide everyone with access to safe, affordable and nutritious diets. Recent collaborations include: chef for *The Real Junk Food Project* Brighton, including running workshops on minimising waste and maximising nutrition; *Return to the Larder* tutor at Hawkwood Centre for Future Thinking; medicinal chef tutor at the University of Sussex for a *Forest Food Garden* elective which fosters student food citizen agency for changing environments of our times.

*'For years Daphne has been promoting awareness and changes needed to the way we eat: the vital importance of connecting food, health and the environment.  
Her programmes and workshops are exciting and thoughtful.  
She combines the practical ability to make food delicious and beautiful whilst inspiring us to understand that through food we can transform health & global well-being'*

Dr Romy Fraser OBE, Educator & Founder Neals Yard Remedies

## Haymans Farm & Flora Stubbs

Haymans Farm, home to Flora Stubbs, is a beautiful Wealden pasture farm situated near the hamlet of Shillinglee in West Sussex. It comprises 152 acres of lowland grassland and lies adjacent to Chiddingfold Forest, a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for butterflies. Slightly off the beaten track, it is an absolute haven for wildlife and has a rich diversity of animal and plant species.

The food from Haymans Farm is grown according to biodynamic principles – a holistic sustainable form of agriculture that seeks to maximise the health and well-being of the soil, plants and animals. Biodynamic farming practices take into consideration the life force and natural elements of the land, establishing a biologically harmonious environment and more efficient farm management.

Increasing the diversity of farming practices is central to the current farm operation, as this will create more biodiversity and build resilience into the system at this time of climate change. Above all, the farm business strives to have minimal impact on the environment, and the balance and harmony of the landscape are prioritised in order to enhance both biodiversity and the genius loci of the farm.

In addition to her work on the farm, Flora has worked as a therapist, supporting physical and mental health initiatives and cancer care. Her experience has led her to believe that food is medicine and that a better understanding of the relationship between food, soil, social activity and health could significantly enhance the work of those working within healthcare systems and beyond.

*'As we face a growing health and climate crisis there is little more powerful than re-connecting our health professionals with the land and nature-based food production. To navigate the coming years it is essential we understand that soil health and human health are interconnected'*

Dr Antonia Wrigley BSc, MBBS, MRCGP, FRSA

Trustee/co-chair - British Association for Holistic Medicine & Health Care <https://bhma.org>

Bookings [www.greencuisinetrust.org/wholefood-medicine](http://www.greencuisinetrust.org/wholefood-medicine)

Further information contact [daphne@greencuisinetrust.org](mailto:daphne@greencuisinetrust.org)



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