

This is work of Montserrat Gutiérrez Mesegué and was developed during the MA Situated Practice at The Bartlett, School of Architecture, UCL from 2019-2021. The work was created under the wonderful supervision of Jane Rendell, Henrietta Williams, David Roberts and James O'Leary.

The work can be printed and shared but make sure to be respectful to those who have contributed to the work by always giving credit. If in doubt, please contact me at montserrat.mesegue@gmail.com if you have any questions on distribution, printing, sharing etc.

If you are interested in knowing more about the work, sharing a remedy or collaborating please also do get in touch.

Warm regards,
Montserrat



Our Starter Culture
The Practice of Sowing,
Cultivating and Harvesting
Empathy to Better Understand
the Climate Crisis

Of Fever
Written by Monserrat Gutiérrez Mesquité

Of treatment of the eyes, heat, blood-shot eyes, glaucoma, numbness of the eyebrows, or rather of the eyelids, tumour of the eyes, induction of sleep, prevention of drowsiness,

When Aztecs described heat from a chili behind their eyes, they would avoid the heat of the sun, smoke, and wind. They wore crystals around their necks and only saw black until the fever dissipated. They used herbs like *Matlalxochitl*, a blue flower, *Ocoxhitl*, a pine flower, and mixed them with mothers' milk to drop it into the eyes of the afflicted. Sometimes potions were made from *Xaltomatl*, a sand tomato root, mixed with fermented juice from the maguey fruit and the root from the achiote plant to rid them of this heat and pain.

I remember when I felt the heat behind my eyes, my mother would cut up a lemon and char it on the stove 'til it was almost black. The smell would fill the house, becoming stronger as she brought the lemons to my bedside. She would put the cut side of the lemons on the soles of my feet and tightly slide a sock over them. She would kiss my forehead goodnight and let the lemons draw the sickness away during the night.



Charred Lemons
The rewriting of *The Little Book of Medicinal Herbs* written in 1552 by Martin de la Cruz and Juan Badiano

Remedy 2.1
Charred Lemons

Charred Lemons

Remedy 2.1

pick a lemon,

from the tree, from the baskets, from hands,

cut it down the middle, see the oils spray out from its skin, see the juice start to drip off the tip of the knife,

light the fire and place a small pan with the lemons cut side down, wait for the lemon halves to begin to char, wait until the black outlines the lemons peel, pith and pulp,

while still hot, place the charred side of the lemon halves on the sole of your feet, feel the warmth radiate through your body and encapsulate it by putting socks over the lemons and over your feet,

from here, you sleep, letting the lemons care for you,

and,

as the heat leaves the lemons, the heat behind your eyes will leave too

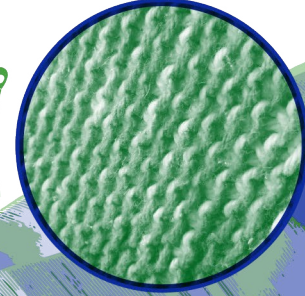
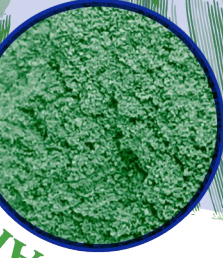
I got the knitting needles from a local yarn shop
Knit with Attitude. Try to see if your friends or family have any you can borrow.



Knitting Neeedles

Botanical colours.

I used it to create a mordant to dye the yarn, using instructions by



I then dyed the yarn blue using black beans bought from a local bulk store Harmless.

I was taught how to knit the socks by Staci Perry - following her tutorials and buying her pattern.

Alum Socks

I bought the Alum, or Fatakdil powder, from my local South Asian supermarket Madina Cash and Carry. It can be used for pickling but I

I knitted the socks using yarn from Wenning Wool "Natural Masham wool yarn from the hills of northern England" from small local farmers.



Remedy Pouch #2.1

When we get rid of the heat behind our eyes, what can we do with the heat in front of them? What do we do about coal burning, offshore mining, tar sands? What do we do about the exploitation, and violence?

We divest.



HSBC, Lloyds Bank, RBS and Barclays sold weapons to Israel. Lloyds invested almost \$3 million in nuclear weapons. RBS has shareholdings in palm oil and Santander has 21 subsidiaries in tax havens for tax avoidance. In 2017 Barclays invested \$3.642 billion in fossil fuels, and over the water, these fossil fuel companies are financing the police. The companies responsible for polluting low-income communities are the same companies brutally policing them.

Wexler Josie, "Are You Funding Fracking and Nuclear Weapon Manufacturing?" *The Ecologist*, 25 May 2018
Photo by Yannick Gingras

These sweltering armaments infringe on article six and thirteen of UNESCO'S *Declaration of Ethical Principles in relation to Climate Change* where 'Pertinent actors... who have the capacity to address climate change should act and cooperate' and 'ensure effective climate policy and action through appropriate governance measures, by promoting transparency and preventing corruption...that underpin social, environmental and societal responsibility of all pertinent actors, including corporations and business.'

Once the lemons are finished drawing heat from behind your eyes, take the steps to draw evil from your wallet. Close your account and divest. Read Sarah Youngs article *Fossil Fuel Divestment 101: A completely guide to divesting your money.*



Of the Ear

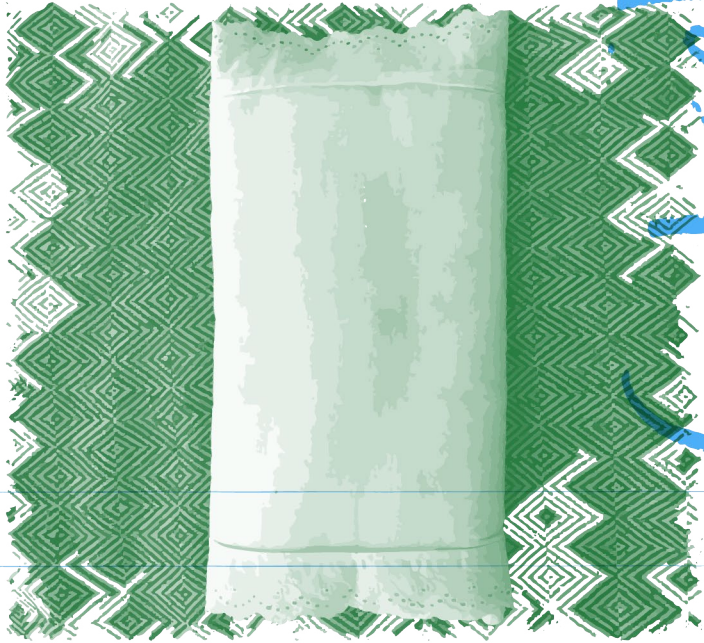
Written by Montserrat Gutiérrez Mesegué

Our Starter Culture
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Of purulence of the ears, of deafness or obstruction.

The Aztecs would adorn themselves with earrings made of wood, leather, or precious stones. They were symbols of societal and military ranking or spiritual dedication. To keep their ears healthy and cure obstructions and infections they made a liquid of *Tlaquilin*, frilled flower, and *Xoxouquiquipahltli*, blue medicinal plant, mixed with salt and hot water to drop in the infected ears. They would then smear ground shrub leaves beneath the ears to relieve pain.

I talked with Gabriela one afternoon as she was laying beside her daughter, whose soft breath adorned our conversation during her afternoon nap. Gabriela told me about the times her mother would place warm garlic in her ear when she would suffer from infections and how those were the only times her mother would let her sleep in bed with her. Through the night her ear would hold a small sliver of garlic that had been placed on a spoon full of olive oil and held over the stove. The warm garlic would be wrapped in cotton and gently placed in her ear to cure her infection.



Remedy 3.1
Warmed Garlic

The rewriting of The Little Book of
Medicinal Herbs written in 1552 by
Martin de la Cruz and Juan Badiano

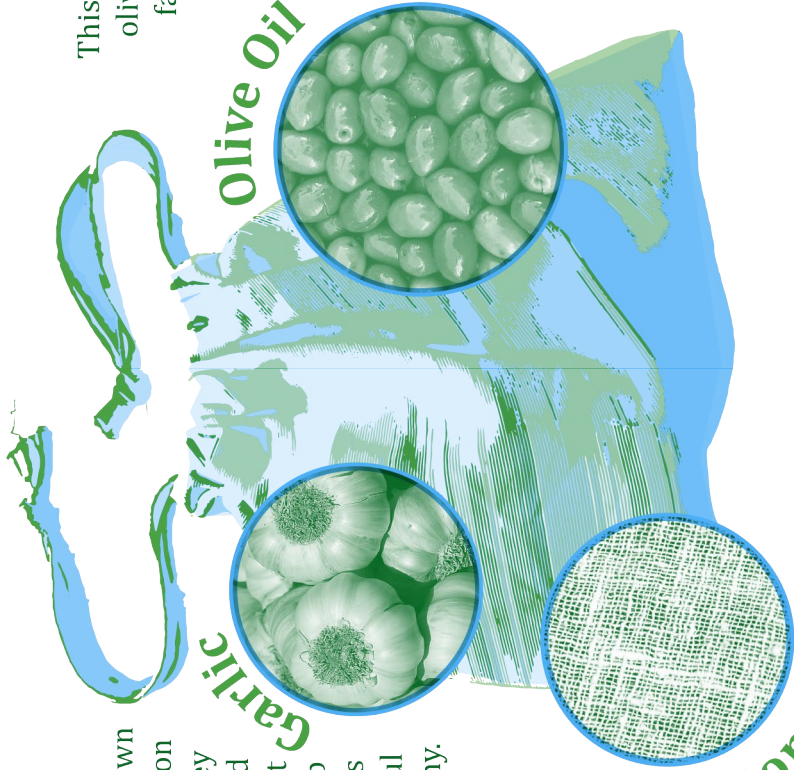
Gabriela

Warmed Garlic

Remedy 3.1

cut a small sliver of garlic from a single clove,
small enough to lay inside the entrance of your ear,
fill a spoon with olive oil and place it over a gentle fire,
slide the garlic into the spoon full of oil and wait for the fragrance to start floating towards you, then take it off the flame,
let the garlic cool slightly and wrap it in just enough cotton for it to firmly sit inside your ear, gently push the cotton inside, feeling the warm glow of the garlic,
then lay your head on the pillow of a loved one's bed,
start to feel the pressure dissipate, relax your shoulders,
and let yourself be cared for by another

Remedy Pouch #3.1



The garlic was grown by The Garlic Farm on the Isle of Wight. They are the irregular kind that normally do not make it to the shop floor but are as healthy and flavourful as any.

Garlic

Olive Oil

Cotton Muslin

The fabric was bought from my local fabric store Ray Stitch. You can wrap the garlic in this fabric and wash it to use another time.

This is Zaytoun, Palestinian olive oil made by small-scale farmers in the West Bank, this is the world's first olive oil to be awarded Fairtrade certification in 2009.

The bottle was bought from my local health food shop Earth Natural Foods. However, you can just use olive oil that you already have in your home!

If you want to learn more, visit ourstarterculture.tumblr.com or @ourstarterculture

What happens when the person that said they were going to take care of you doesn't? What happens when you think the obstruction is gone but it was actually just placed on the shoulders of another?



Photo by Pasi Mäenpää/Pixabay

'The UK exports large quantities of plastics to other countries, including Turkey, Egypt and Malaysia, as China stopped importing waste in January 2018...Most plastics Turkey promises to recycle are actually burned or dumped. Turkey's recycling capacity in 2019 was claimed to be 850,000 tonnes whereas almost 600,000 tonnes were imported from EU countries. Compare this to the 650,000 tonnes that the UK alone exported and something does not add up.'

Frei, Regina, and Diego Vazquez-Brust, "What Happens to the Plastic You Recycle? Researchers Lift the Lid," The Conversation, 2 Sept. 2020

This dishonest cure of waste infringes on article two and five of UNESCO's Declaration of Ethical Principles in Relation to Climate Change where pertinent actors should 'anticipate, avoid or minimize harm, wherever it might emerge...from climate mitigation and adaptation policies and actions' and they need to 'promote the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs, especially by adopting sustainable patterns of... waste management...'

Once you are clear of obstructions, go to pollybarks.com, buy her a coffee and use her letter template to ask companies to reduce their packaging. Then hold DEFRA accountable on their *EU's circular economy package pledge* of reusing and recycling 65% of municipal waste by 2035.



Cleansing of the Teeth

Written by Monserrat Gutiérrez Mesgué

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Of sparkling of the teeth, cure of swollen gums, pain and decay of teeth, severe heat, suppuration of the throat, that which removes noisome and fetid breath’.

The Aztecs took great care of their teeth, making sure to pick any food from them with thorns from cacti and polish their teeth with honey and ash after every meal. When there was a need to pull teeth to rid the mouth of pain they would use *teonochtli*, divine cactus, with precious stones, flour and salt, which was to be placed on a cloth and pressed against the teeth to sooth the gums before pulling.

Nerea shared her remedy for polishing and pulling her belongings to rid herself of fog. She pulls everything out and lays it before her, just like she used to do as a child with her toys. She riffles through and finds her most favourite thing and sets it in perfectly. She looks at what is left, with all the memories they hold, but realizes that it keeps her back from being grateful for today. She becomes selective and only puts back the things that make her who she is. She closes the closet doors and waits, til next morning where she opens them and receives her gift of gratitude.



Remedy 5.1 Polishing Gratitude

The rewriting of *The Little Book of Medicinal Herbs* written in 1552 by Martin de la Cruz and Juan Badiano



Polishing Gratitude

Remedy 5.1

wake up and open the doors to your possessions, to your presence, to your gratitude, take every item and lay it out before you, pick out the thing that will stay with you forever, hang it back gently on the pillowed hanger and place it before all,

pick out the things that have been passed down to you and place them back neatly and safely for your future self,

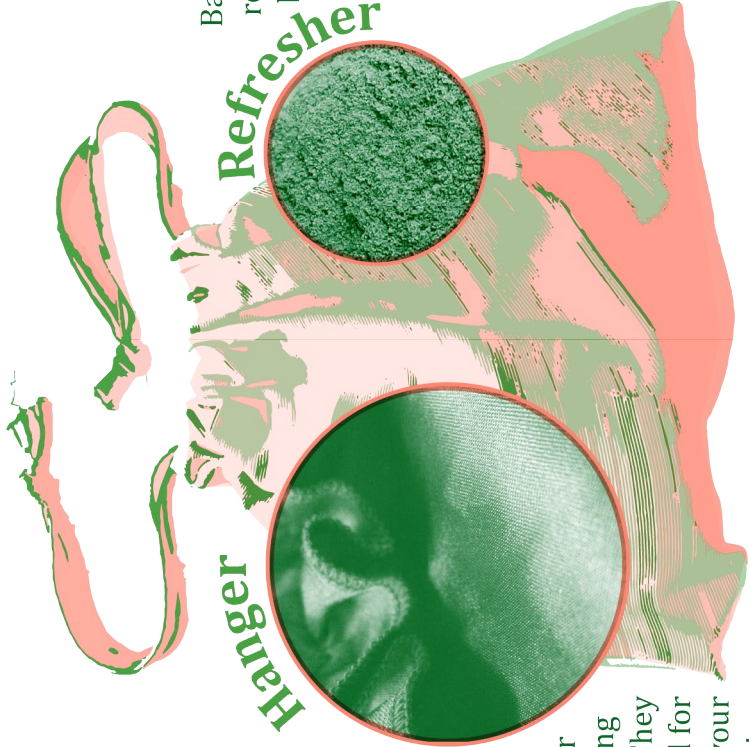
look deeply at what is left,

is it you? Is it genuine? Is it honest?

then pack away the things that only say yes, and trade the rest,

close the doors as if to wrap up presence and gratitude,

for this is what will keep you humble the next day and the day after that



Hanger

The hanger was bought from my local **Crisis** charity shop. The padding acts as a protector of your clothes, preventing creases or tearing. They are normally used for valuable pieces, for your most favourite thing.

Refresher

Baking soda is used to refresh your closet. The baking soda was bought from my local **Bulk** shop and placed in a repurposed glass jar. It is also mixed with some lavender from **Hitchin Lavander** in Hertfordshire, which I picked myself.

If you want to learn more, visit ourstarterculture.tumblr.com or [@ourstarterculture](https://twitter.com/ourstarterculture)

Remedy Pouch #5.1

We need to gift gratitude daily, not just with our belongings but with the Earth. Indigenous people have been thanking the Earth and taking care of her for tens of thousands of years, making sure to polish enough to never cause decay.



Dakota Access Pipeline. Photo by Lars Plougmann

Today, indigenous people make up 4% of the population and care for 80% of the Earth's biodiversity, yet they fight to be included in the conversation to mitigate climate change and are still suffering the effects of colonialism. We can see colonialism as imposition, as the silencing of local knowledges, and erasure of the other. Colonialism as a triple violence: cultural violence through negation; economic violence through exploitation; and political violence through oppression.

Voskobyovnik, Daniel Macmillen, "To Fix the Climate Crisis, We Must Face up to Our Imperial Past", *OpenDemocracy*, 8 Oct. 2018. Photo by Leslie Peterson

Once you have gifted yourself gratitude, gift it to the people that have taken care of the earth by acknowledging indigenous land. Read the *USDAC's Honor Native Land: A Guide and Call to Acknowledgement*.



If you want to learn more, visit
ourstarterculture.tumblr.com or
@ourstarterculture

The rose petals were
home dried from my
garden and grew this
past spring. You can
also do this remedy
with any locally
grown flowers that
bring happiness to you.



The Agarbatti
(incense sticks) and
an incense holder was
bought from my local
family owned carpet
shop called The Rug.

Remedy Pouch #6.1

We need to clear the weeds
and dirt off our neighbours,
we need to take care of our
past but most importantly
we need to care of our
present and future
generations. The Earth needs
the removal of weeds and the
showering of rose petals.



Youth climate strike. Photo by Lorie Shaull



Hag, Gary, et al. "Older People and Climate Change: the Case for Better Engagement," SEI, 2010.
Photo from Grandparents for a Safe Earth

Once we have thanked our
mothers and fathers by pulling the
weeds around them, it is time to
ask for their help by joining
networks like the *Raging
Grannies* and *Grandparents for a
Safe Earth* and fight for future
generations.

The overlooking of weeds infringe on
article six and eleven of UNESCO's
*Declaration of Ethical Principles in
relation to Climate Change* where
'...those who have the capacity to
address climate change should act and
cooperate by taking into account: the
well-being, livelihoods and survival of
future generations which depend on
our current use of resources' and to
'advance curricula so that they build
awareness and knowledge about
humankind's relation to the Earth... as
well as about present generations'
responsibilities to future generations'.

Remedy 6.1 Weeds, Roses and Incense

The rewriting of *The Little Book of
Medicinal Herbs* written in 1552 by
Martin de la Cruz and Juan Badiano



Weeds, Roses and Incense
Remedy 6.1
*pack your incense and your roses and make your
way,*

*get close to the gravestone and look around at
its neighbours, spot the imperfections in the
ground, the weeds, the dust, the rubble,*

*remove all faults and walk closer to the weeds
kneel and reach, begin to dig around the base of
them with the tips of your fingers, feel its roots
and wrap your hands around them, then pull,
pull hard, pull boldly,*

*once the ground and your mind are clear, dust of
your hands and sit beside the gravestone,
shower it with rose petals and strike the match
to light the incense,
breathe deeply, think intensely, let the world
fade,
and begin your conversation*

Of cooling the heat of swelling cheeks, of
healing one who cannot open their mouth
for pain, weakness of the hands'.

Rimal told me about the times she visits
her father at his grave. She makes sure to
clean it and its neighbouring headstones
by pulling weeds with her bare hands,
focusing her emotions, regaining control
as social rules forbid her from showing
them outwardly. She then places rose
petals and lights incense and talks to her
father at his grave. She remembers how
when she would visit loved ones at their
grave sites with her father, he would do
the same remedy for them.

The Aztecs cured these ailments by using
plants like *yztauhyatl*, white sagebush,
and *talmizquitl*, a blue flower plant. They
made gums to place along lips and waters
to soak sore hands. Remedies essential for
mothers and fathers, whose role was tied
to their hands and their home. They would
grind maize to make tortillas, tamales,
atole. They would weave cloths that
dressed their families and soldiers. They
would hunt, fish, farm and travel far to
trade and provide for their families
success and fortune.

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**Weakness of
the Hands**
Written by Monserrat Gutiérrez Mesagüé

Of Oppression
of the Chest

Written by Monserrat Gutiérrez Mesegué

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Clay and Coffee

Remedy 7.1

wait for the morning after rain,
place coffee grounds on a filter, pour hot water
and let it bloom, then brew your mug of coffee,
allowing the smell to slowly seep into your home,
step outside and find a spot where small rays of
sun decorate the floor,
place a bowl filled with small pieces of pottery
that have been smoothed and frosted by
tumbling waves, fill the bowl with water and
place it under the morning light,
bend your neck down and place your nose above
the bowl, slowly inhale the earthy smell that
wafts out from the little relics,
sit up and take a sip from your coffee and hold
the mug in the little nook by middle of your
chest, feel the warmth from the mug begin to
radiate through you, reaching the rays of light
that adorn your body,
look up and smell once more

The loss and heartache of disappearing
islands infringe on article ten of
UNESCO's *Declaration of Ethical
Principles in relation to Climate
Change* where pertinent actors should
'give priority in responding to climate
change to the needs of vulnerable
groups that include... displaced persons
and migrants, indigenous peoples and
local communities [and] persons with
disabilities...'

In 2020 the U.N. ruled for the right
to claim refuge because of climate
change but Teitiota was still
denied refuge and islands are still
disappearing.

Once you have allowed the smell
to calm you, hold countries
responsible for climate change
accountable and support climate
refugees and organizations like
Choose Love.

LOCK UP
FORESTS
NOT ASYLUM
SEEKERS

REFUGEE
COLLECTIVE

Look for the smell of wet clay
in forests, on the seaside, in
your home, but understand
that there are places where
the only smell left is the
smell of wet rubble of what
once was. Where salty water
brings down homes in waves
and pain in the heart is
irreversible.

Kiribati is one of the most climate vulnerable islands
on the planet due to rising sea levels. Photo by NASA.

Loane Teitiota from Kiribati was the first
person to apply for refugee status on the
grounds of climate change, but in 2015
'climate refugee' was not recognized in
the UN 1951 Refugee Convention. He
was denied the right to stay in New
Zealand, who claimed that by the time
Kiribati becomes uninhabitable in 10-15
years it 'could allow for intervening acts
by the republic of Kiribati, with the
assistance of the international
community, to take affirmational
measures to protect and, where
necessary, relocate its population.'

Godin, Mélissa, "Climate Refugees Cannot Be Sent Home: U.N.
Rules", Time, Time, 20 Jan. 2020. Photo by Traixer

REFUGEE
COLLECTIVE

Of oppression of the chest, pain and heat
in the heart, pain in the side, coldness'.
For the Aztecs, the heart is the home of
our emotions and true character. To
protect it, they would create tonics of
herbs like *Tetlahuitl*, red ochre flower, and
Teoyztaquililtl, sacred white plant, mixed
with stones and earth. They would create
ointments out of Ayauhtli, water goddess
pine, and cones of the cypress tree. The
ointments were rubbed on the chest along
with hot plasters to relieve pain from the
heart. They would burn the skin of lions,
believing that the lions' courage and
strength would be imparted onto them.

Renata told me about the mornings where
she steps out with her coffee and is
greeted by freshness from the rain the
night before. She sits on a chair that rests
on bare clay tiles. She holds her coffee
between both hands and presses it firmly
on her chest allowing the heat to radiate.
As she takes a sip, she looks up at the
morning sun shining through the leaves of
the palms. She smells the wet clay and
coffee and she watches as the rays of sun
light the tiles, lighting her up too.

Renata

Remedy 7.1
Clay and Coffee
The rewriting of *The Little Book of
Medicinal Herbs* written in 1552 by
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The coffee Planalto was
grown by Sergio &
Mariza Mantovaninni
in Minas Gerias,
Brazil. They work
and trade directly
with Pact coffee
where they are paid on
average 55% above
fair-trade rates. They
create long term
relationships with Pact
so they can continue to
distribute their coffee
and grow their farm.

Coffee

Remedy Pouch #7.1

This is small pieces of smoothed
down pottery normally from the
runoff of factories, construction
and pollution that find
themselves washing up on shore.
The pottery was bought from
OCEANBLUEBay and SewlSea on
Etsy, who spend their free
time collecting
ceramic fragments
from the beaches
on the East and
West coast of
Scotland.

Sea Pottery

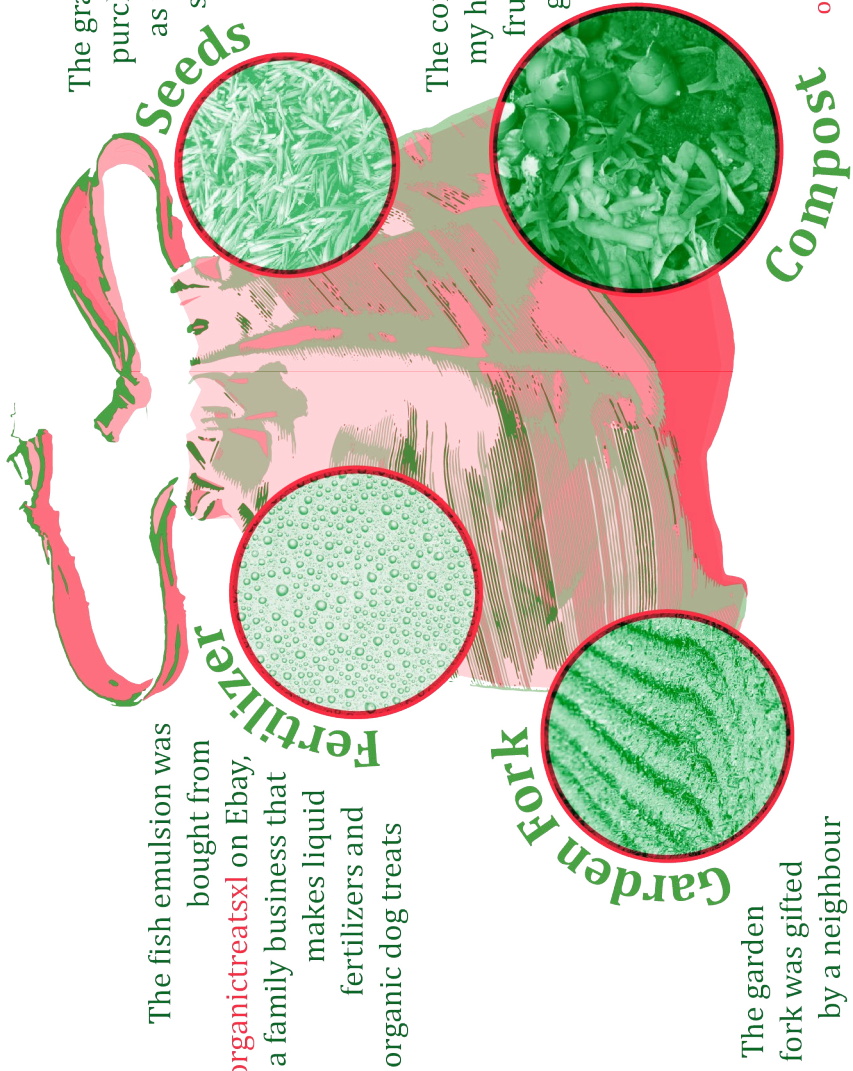
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Sea Pottery

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@ourstarterculture

Remedy Pouch #8.1



If you want to learn more, visit ourstarterculture.tumblr.com or [@ourstarterculture](https://www.instagram.com/ourstarterculture)

The grass seeds were purchased on clearance as they had gone unsold since 2012, but they are as good as any

The compost was made by my household from our fruit, vegetable, and garden waste in our council-subsidised compost bin

The fish emulsion was bought from organic.treats.co.uk on Ebay, a family business that makes liquid fertilizers and organic dog treats

The garden fork was gifted by a neighbour

Stepping on Wet Grass

Remedy 8.1

as the sun starts to set, slide your shoes off of your feet, grab a watering can and step outside, pour a light trickle over your patch of grass, feel the water pass from your hand to the ground, soaking into your skin and into the ground, lift one foot up and gently place it over the wet grass, feel the soft shoots tickling the sole of your feet feel the cold gentle touch of the droplets of water, lift your other foot and feel your weight shift, and slowly bring yourself to centre as your feet come together on the wet ground, your feet are now grounded, you are now grounded, let the water bring clarity

Of cure of pain in the knee, remedy for what makes cracks in the sole of the feet, injury of the feet, for fatigue, trees and flowers for the lassitude of those administering the government and those holding public office, for opo'ou'.

Anibal shared his own remedy while sitting in his palapa, overlooking the garden. He says that he finds solace in his feet meeting the droplets of water on the blades of grass while watering his garden. When the water goes through the hose, it greets his thumb and forms a light mist. The feeling at the soles of his feet and the light that makes the mist glisten is what reminds him of his childhood, when he was always outside and barefoot, always touching the land.

The Aztecs travelled exclusively on foot for as far as 1,000km. They would use plants like *coyoxiuitl*, a rose coloured plant, and *tzotzotlani*, a glistening plant, to cure cracks and pain in their feet. They created balms, rubs and masks with the plants that they would rub on their feet. They then submerged their feet in water and threw incense onto an open flame to dispel any odours and bring clarity.

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Of the Feet

Written by Monserrat Gutiérrez Mesegué

These cracks, pains and odours from factory farming infringe on article four of UNESCO's *Declaration of Ethical Principles in relation to Climate Change* where 'justice in relation to climate change requires fair treatment of all people' and that 'it is important to take measures to safeguard and protect Earth's terrestrial and marine ecosystems, for present and future generations'.

When your feet meet the droplets of water on the blades of grass, take a moment, prepare yourself and support Harriet A. Washington by reading *A Terrible Thing to Waste: Environmental Racism and Its Assault on the American Mind*.

If you can't make your own compost, see if a neighbour or friend has some. If you can't sow your own grass, then take some water to a park or an open field. If you can't do either, it may be because of this...

Whitetail Hog Facility in Missouri. 20 million gallon manure lagoons. Each site houses 8,832 hogs. Photo by Socially Responsible Agricultural Project

"This is environmental racism, this is my family land. And I'm sure race played a part when they decided they wanted to develop this area. We've been asked many times, 'Why don't you just move?' Move and go where? I don't want to move. I never knew my grandfather, but I know he walked on this ground. And his family.

It's my land! - Elsie Herring

Hellerstein, Erica, and Ken Fine. "A Million Tons of Feces and an Unbearable Stench: Life near Industrial Pig Farms." The Guardian. Guardian News and Media, 20 Sept. 2017. Photo by Michael Fleischman

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The loose black tea was bought from my local bulk shop **Fair-Well**. You can also find it in your local South Asian supermarket

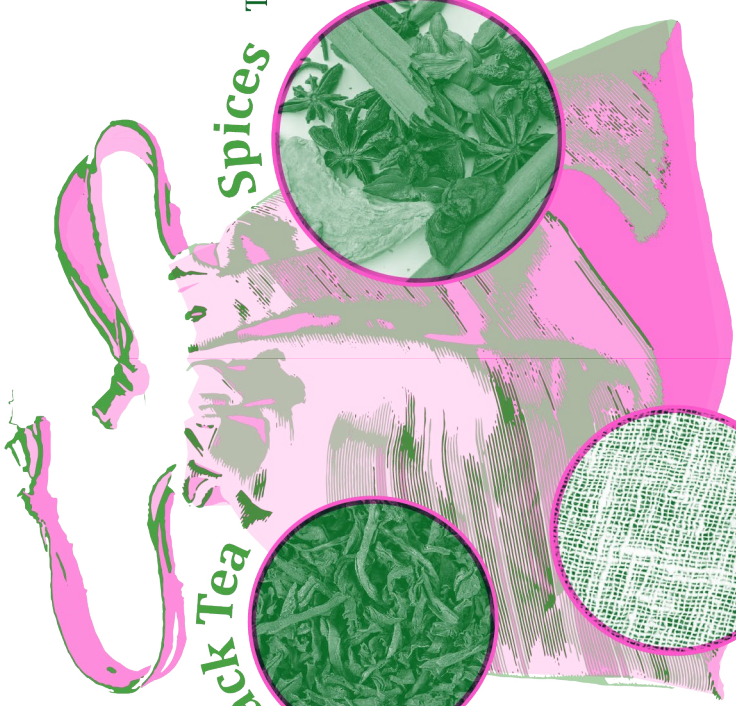
The fabric was bought from my local haberdashery store **Ray Stitch**, to make reusable tea bags. You can find reusable handmade bags from Etsy or simply use a strainer.

Spices

The spices were bought from my local spice shop **Plentiful Foods** to make cha, a healing tea dating back 5,000 years. This is Moonira’s families recipe but you can change the proportions as you like, as cha recipes differ in each household.

Muslin

Black Tea



Remedy Pouch #9.1

Take your time to steep the tea, notice the mounting smells, watch the water boil, watch the colour change. When pouring the tea into your cup, make sure to take only what you need and rest. Rest as if it were an act of protest.

We are consuming 1.3 Earths' worth of resources

On the 24th of August 2020 we used all our allotted resources for the year: one month later than last year. But why did it take the loss of life for us to decelerate? Why did it take a global pandemic for us to understand the needs of people with families, disabilities, and chronic illnesses? 'Humanity will come into balance with the Earth [but] we don't want it to be through disaster. We want it to be through intentional, designed efforts to make sure it doesn't come at such a high and terrible human cost.'

Station closures from Tuesday 24 March until further notice

Stay at home

Do not travel unless it is essential

Use public transport, walking, cycling or your own car

Keep a safe distance

Wash your hands regularly

Wear a face mask

Visit: tfl.gov.uk

The lack of steeping before the sweeping unrest infringes on article eight of UNESCO's *Declaration of Ethical Principles in relation to Climate Change* where pertinent actors need to 'encourage the development of scientific knowledge* that helps transform patterns of production, management and consumption to make them more compatible with environmental sustainability'.
*Important to note that the knowledge of people with disabilities and chronic illnesses is not explicitly mentioned as key input in mitigating climate change. This practice believes this to be a grave oversight.

Once your tea has been sipped and you feel yourself returning to your divinity, allow yourself to rest and read *A Burst of Light* by Audre Lorde from your local bookstore, library or borrow from a friend.

The rewriting of *The Little Book of Medicinal Herbs* written in 1552 by Martin de la Cruz and Juan Badiano



Remedy 9.1 Cha

Cha

Remedy 9.1

warm up two cups of water on the stove and watch as the small bubbles rise up to the surface,

cup your hand and make a small mound of loose tea leaves in the centre of your palm, as you peer over the top, drop the leaves into the simmering water and feel the vapour gently warm your cheeks,

add your aromatic pouch full of cinnamon, star anise, cardamom and ginger and allow them to steep until ever waft of air is filled with their fragrance,

add sweetened milk until the tea resembles a soft caramel,

then carefully pass the tea through a fine sieve into your cups and watch as every drained leaf removes itself from the infusion,

finally take a sip and as the smells and taste envelope you, feel the warm embrace of your family brew and rest

Of the remedy for black blood, fever, injured body, wounds received, burned body, cut veins, one struck by lightning.

For the Aztecs, black blood symbolized melancholia, a feeling of deep pensive sadness. They would grind leaves and roots of the *Quauhtla Huitzquililtl*, wild spiny plant, and *Tlatlanquaye*, peppers' jointed stem. These would be cooked in water with pearls, wolf liver and wine made from the magney fruit. They would drink waters made from good smelling flowers, walk in shady places and drink wine as if it were medicine. The stricken would partake in '*cheerful pursuits*' like dancing, singing, and beating the tympan.

Moonira told me about the times her family would gather in times of unprecedented news. How they would make their cha, black tea infused with spices, when news was too hard to accept and food was too hard to get down. How the infusion of spices which strengthen the flavour was the way her family came together in strength. And when she could not be with her family, she would take her time to steep the spices and allow for the smell of family to infuse into her.



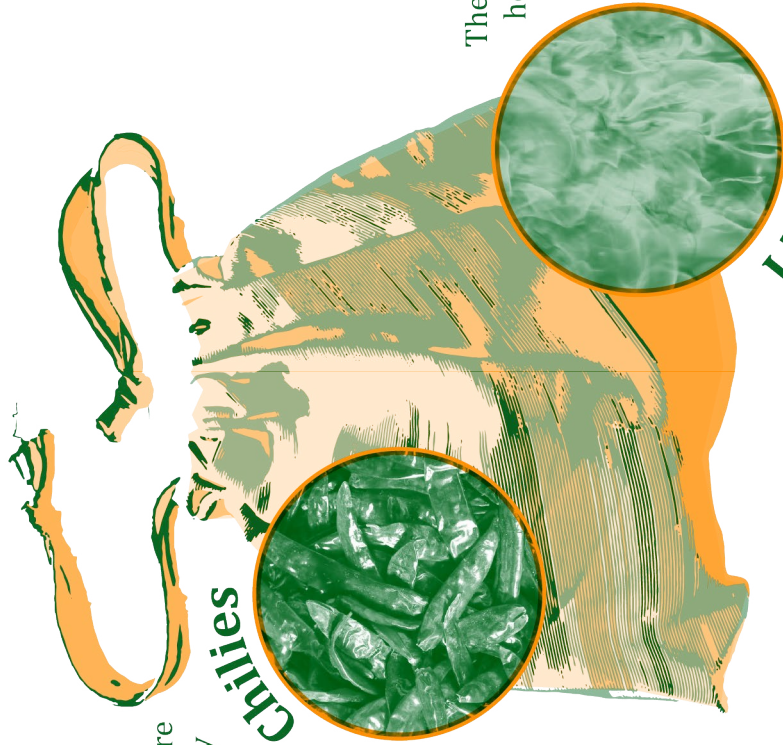
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Of Black Blood
Written by Montserrat Gutiérrez Mesegué

If you want to learn more, visit
ourstarterculture.tumblr.com or
@ourstarterculture

Lighter

The lighter was from my home, a lighter that I have filled and reused multiple times.



The dried chilis were purchased from my local Asian supermarket **An Apple a Day**. Look out for locally grown chilis in your area.

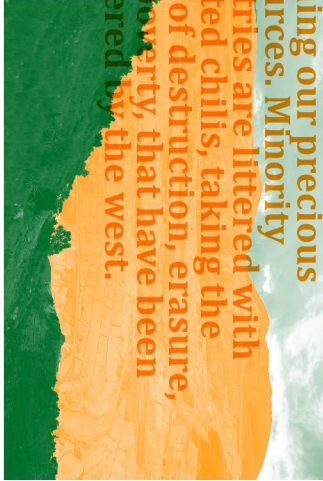
Chilies

Remedy Pouch #10.1

The throwing away of the chilis onto minority countries infringes on article two and five of UNESCO's *Declaration of Ethical Principles in relation to Climate Change* where 'States and all actors should take... measures... to seek and promote transnational cooperation before deploying new technologies that may have negative transnational impacts' and 'work to ensure that each person benefits from the opportunities of development, especially those who are vulnerable'.

As we begin to drain our body of this evil, we can focus our attention on the evil draining our precious resources. Minority countries are littered with infested chilis, taking the form of destruction, erasure, and poverty, that have been scattered by the west.

Yanaocha Mine in Cajamarca, Peru by Gelda Fuentes



After cleansing ourselves, we need to support the work of those fighting to cleanse the Earth. Visit ejatlas.org and read *PACHA: Defending the Land* by Grisul to further understand the impact on extractivism and what you can do to help.



Villarreal, María, and Enara Echart Muñoz. "Extractivism and Resistance in Latin America and the Caribbean." *OpenDemocracy*, 6 Feb. 2020. Photo: Movimiento Ambientalista Colombiano NGO by ElisShariffAlia

Nazar

Remedy 10.1



The rewriting of *The Little Book of Medicinal Herbs* written in 1552 by Martin de la Cruz and Juan Badiano

Mahnoor told me about something similar in her family called Nazar. She told me about the time of her brothers' wedding where she woke up and her body felt weak and her head hung heavy. Her mother and aunts knew that someone had given her Nazar; someone had shown jealousy and wished this on her. Her mother dispelled the evil eye by circling seven red chilis around her head seven times. She then placed them on a fire and cooked them until they started to smoke, the signal of captured evil. They then threw the chilis and evil out of the home, and Mahnoor awoke restored.

The Aztecs believed that whirlwinds caused illness and evil. They boiled branches of pine and laurel with *Quauhquayauatl*, wild twinning climber, for the tormented to drink. They would anoint themselves with ground herbs like *Tlatlanquaye*, capsicum, and stones, and incense, like a charm to ward off evil.

Of the falling or committal sickness, remedy for fear or faint-heartedness, mental stupor, for one afflicted by a whirlwind or bad wind, one crossing a river or lake, a traveller'.

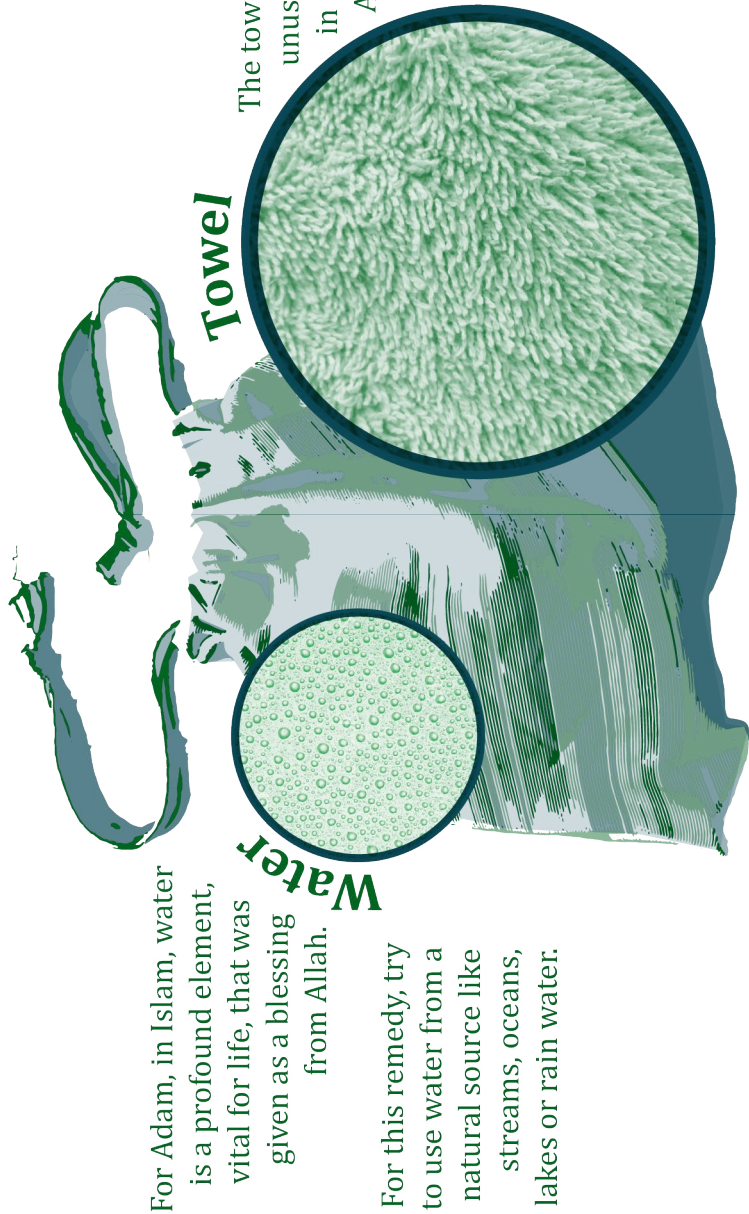
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Of Whirlwind & Band Wind
Written by Montserrat Gutiérrez Mesegué

Nazar
Remedy 10.1
sit up from resting your weakened body, let your mother, aunty, nurturing friend care for you, they will wrap their fingers around seven dried red chilis, and slowly begin to circle your pulsing head, making the rounds for seven revolutions total, feel the wind as she brushes past you, and with each revolution she removes envy, wickedness, and resentment, replacing it with humility and care, she will light the fire and place the chilies on the pan, and with the smoke, evil takes its shape and leaves your body, throw the chilis out of your home and rest, for the wickedness has left

Remedy Pouch #13.1



For Adam, in Islam, water is a profound element, vital for life, that was given as a blessing from Allah.

For this remedy, try to use water from a natural source like streams, oceans, lakes or rain water.

The towel was an unused towel I had in my home. Always use what you already have.

If you want to learn more, visit ourstarterculture.tumblr.com or [@ourstarterculture](https://ourstarterculture)



Remedy 13.1 Ablution

The rewriting of *The Little Book of Medicinal Herbs* written in 1552 by Martín de la Cruz and Juan Badiano

Of certain signs of one who is going to die’.

The Aztecs believed in the need for death and sacrifice for new life. But if the eyes have not turned black and still retain their sparkle, they could drop in the dying persons eyes a mixture of *Tlahcalhuatzin*, pearl, and *Extetl*, whitish earth, and water. They believed in placing herbs, bones, moss and animals over the body and drinking potions of precious stones to hold life. But like all, ‘when the fatal necessity is close’, we meet our mortality. For the Aztecs, afterlife meant traversing, either to lush green paradises, the underworld or following the sun as a humming bird.

Adam shared a remedy he does daily that helps him transition from a wordly existence to a spiritual one; ablution, the act of cleaning oneself before prayer. ‘The time before breaking fast, we would all form an unspoken queue to perform ablution, when done you would offer the space to the next person. It felt as though the person before you was helping you through the transition, as if they were your facilitator. And once I was done, the job of the facilitator was passed on to me, as if it was something that always existed within.’

Some transitions are chosen, but other transitions are forced. Where people are made to denounce their faith and their beliefs, or risk losing the sparkle in their eyes. Where excessive water is used for torture or used to grow cotton but prohibited from being used in faith.



Cotton Fields. Photo by Kimberly Vardeman

‘Satellite images, witness testimonies, and data published by Chinese companies and by the CCP...reveal that prison and detainee labour feeds into cotton farms, processing plants, and textile and garment factories. Even brands with rigorous corporate social-responsibility standards may be promoting conditions of forced labour and cultural erasure.’



China, Jasmin Malik. “Those Shoes Were Made by a Uighur Detainee.” *The Nation*, 6 Mar. 2020
Photo by Ozan Kose

Cotton being marketed as a sustainable resource has caused negative social impacts. Growing cotton with forced labour in re-education camps infringes on article eleven and thirteen of UNESCO’s *Declaration of Ethical Principles in relation to Climate Chang* where ‘recognition of cultural, social, and gender diversity is valuable’ and ‘promoting transparency and preventing corruption; and strengthening... [the]assessment mechanism that underpin social, environmental and societal responsibility of all pertinent actors, including corporations and businesses’.

Once you have washed away hardship and felt clarity, prepare to learn about these violations of human rights and visit the *Uyghur Human Rights Project* founded in 2014 and led by Omer Kanat at uhrp.org/

Ablution

Remedy 13.1

position yourself in front of running water, and repeat every action three times on each side, raise your hands from your side, place them under the running water, use one hand to clean the other making sure to reach every fold, bend and crevice, create a pool of water between your hands, place your lips on the surface of the water and draw the water in, cleaning your mouth, cup your hands once more and collect water again, place your nose in your hands and gently inhale the water to clear the path where air enters, wet your hands and press them against your warm cheeks, move your hands from the outside in, moving up to your forehead and then down to the tip of your nose, place one arm under the water, starting from your elbow then moving to your wrist, watch the water trickle down, run your wet fingers through your hair, removing tangles from your mind, clean each ear, from the outside in, both at once, place one foot under the water, using your hands clean each foot, between each toe and wrinkle, stand again with your feet firmly on the ground

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Of Death & Transition

Written by
Montserrat Gutiérrez Mesquité

