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Freedom Learning Project



# What is Freedom Learning?

Freedom Learning has many other names:- Unschooling, Free Range Learning, Autonomous Learning, but all adhere to the educational philosophy that human beings learn best from the world around them.

As well as a practising artist, I am a parent of two children. We have been a home educating family for thirteen years using a Freedom Learning approach. With the encouragement and support of Zoe Li of Somerset Art Works, I have created this booklet of invitations for families to create and learn through the natural world. I use the word *Invitations* rather than *Tasks* or *Activities* as these two words often fill us with dread and can make learning feel like a chore for children.



Calendula flower heads after petals removed.

Through daily walks and explorations into the landscape around you, I invite you and your family to deepen your connection with the Flora and Fauna in ways that may be unfamiliar. I also invite you to experience the healing and relaxing elements of working with Plants. To understand the power and creativity of Plant Medicine as a path to learning and healing.

Bright Blessings, Luminara



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# Invitation 1

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## Plant Infused Oil

Most herbalists prefer to use plant infused oil rather than essential oil due to its more diluted and gentle nature.

Plant infused oils are simple to make although you do need a degree of patience as the oil takes around 4 -8 weeks to infuse. I always use Organic Sunflower oil as it rarely causes any allergic reactions.

For ages 5+

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# Method

You can use many herbs and flowers to create infused oil. For this Invitation we are going to use Dandelion flowers.

**Health Benefits:** soothing

- sore achy muscles
- arthritic joints rough
- chapped skin

Dandelions are found in gardens, grasslands and hedgerows. Please make sure not to pick flower heads that come from an area that may have been sprayed with herbicides.





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## You will need:

- A jar with an air tight lid
- Enough flower heads to fill the jar half way
- Sunflower oil to fill the whole jar

Once you have picked flower heads, they will need to be spread out onto a paper towel and left to dry for a couple of days. This removes the moisture from the petals so that the oil lasts longer.

Alternatively, you can use undried flower heads if you plan to use the oil with one month.



Once flower heads are ready, fill a clean and dry jar half way with the flower heads and cover with sunflower oil right to the top of the jar. Avoid an air pocket between the oil and the lid. Placing a piece of grease proof paper on top of the jar before closing the lid can help to seal the jar tight.

The oil and flowers now need to stand in a dark, warm space for 4-6 weeks (undried flower heads) 6-8 weeks (dried flower heads). You can put the jar inside a paper bag or wrap it in a dark cloth and leave on a sunny window sill.

Once the oil is infused, pour the oil through a sieve and discard the flower heads.



# Foot Massage

Our feet work hard, carrying us around all day. Dandelion oil is perfect to sooth achy and tired feet. Children can give their parent or carer this simple but relaxing foot massage.

- Fill a bowel with warm water and add some flower petals - rose petals are nice to use.
- Ask your parent or carer to soak their feet in the water for 5 mins.
- After 5 mins, dry each foot with a towel gently.
- Then massage a tea spoon of the dandelion oil into each foot.
- Finally, put warm, soft socks on each foot. Ask your parent or carer to put their feet up and relax for at least 15 minutes. Maybe you could make them a cup of tea while they relax.



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# Myth and Magic

In some magical traditions, the goddess Aphrodite is often connected with dandelions due to her association with bees. Whereas, the root of this plant is said to be connected to the goddess Hecate a deity of the underworld and of witchcraft.

Our ancestors used Dandelion as a tool for divination. Blowing the seed head and counting the seeds remaining was believed to determine the number of children you would have.

In Victorian Flower language, the Dandelion symbolised Love, Faith, the Sun, Welcome and Wishes coming true.

