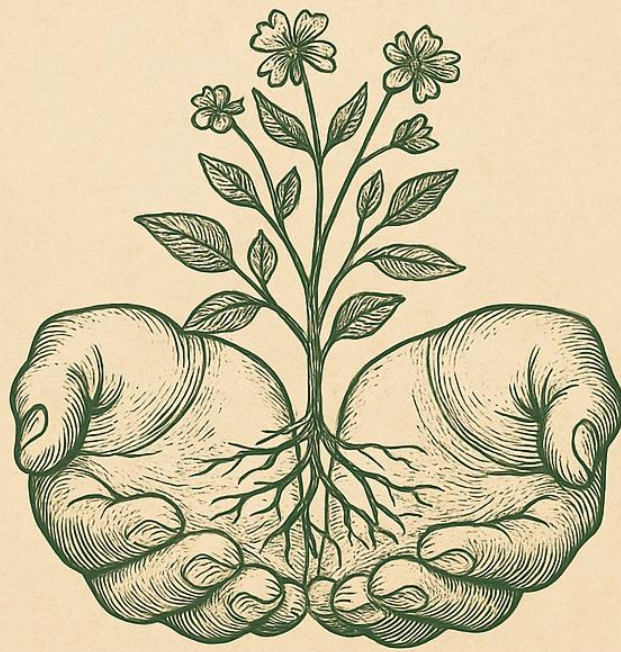


ROOTS
IN THE
HANDS



DAVILYN
ATWOOD

Barefoot in the Soil

I have always loved plants. Always. Even as a child, the outdoors called to me more than any room or classroom ever could. I was the barefoot child, hair tangled from the wind, clothes often dusty with soil, wandering between rows of grain or crouched low to study the small green lives that grew where no one else was looking.

I grew up on a farm, where life was shaped by what we could produce, gather, and create. My father was my first teacher of plants. He showed me which wild leaves were safe to eat, which flowers soothed, and which ones to leave alone. His lessons weren't written in textbooks; they were taught in the field, in the garden, in the stillness of dawn when dew clung to the grass. I didn't realize it at the time, but those were my first lessons in herbalism: practical, grounded, and rooted in respect for the living world.

To live on a farm is to understand that survival and beauty are woven together. We lived off what we grew, preserved what we harvested, and leaned on the land to sustain us. The land was not only soil and seed, it was a teacher. It whispered patience when we waited for crops, resilience when storms threatened, and gratitude when a full harvest came in.

Bare feet became my way of staying connected to this truth. I never liked shoes if I could help it. Something in me longed for the direct touch of earth against skin, even before I had words like "grounding" to describe it. Looking back now, I see that this was the beginning of my calling: the earth speaking through the soles of my feet, anchoring me to its rhythms.

Reflexology, though I didn't yet know the name, was already written into my story. I often had sore feet, and I remember wishing there was a natural way to ease the ache. I couldn't have explained it then, but I sensed that our feet carried more than weight, they carried memory, stress, and the maps of our lives. That sense would stay with me until, later in life, I found the practice that gave those feelings shape.

Herbalism came first. My earliest creation was a salve, a simple recipe I stirred together with trust and curiosity. That salve became my *Miracle Salve*, one I've now made for over thirty years. It has traveled the world in jars tucked into purses, backpacks, and suitcases. It has soothed burns, calmed rashes, healed cuts, and carried care into homes and hearts I'll never know. That little jar was my first offering back to the earth for all it had given me.

But as with all callings, the path wasn't straightforward. Raising six children meant my time and energy were often spoken for. There were seasons when I couldn't fully pursue the pull of herbs or the fascination with reflexology. Yet the call never left. Even in the busiest years, I read, studied, experimented, and learned. It was as though the plants

waited patiently for me, just as they do in winter, ready to bloom again when the season was right.

When my children grew and began their own lives, I stepped more fully into what had always tugged at my heartstrings. Herbalism deepened into clinical study. Reflexology became a practice I devoured like candy, discovering in it the missing piece I had always sensed. And writing, always a quiet love of mine, rose to meet them both.

Now, when I look back, I see clearly: herbalism and reflexology are my vocations. They are what I trained for, what I practice, what I offer to others with my hands. But they are also my calling. They are the deep pull of my life, the way I was meant to heal, create, and serve. And through them, writing has emerged as the truest thread, tying everything together.

This book is the story of how those roots grew, in soil, in study, in waiting, and in love. It is about how hands can carry vocation and calling at the same time, becoming the tools of both survival and legacy. And it is an invitation for you, dear reader, to consider your own hands, what they have carried, created, held, and healed.

Because if there's one truth I've learned, it's this: the roots are always in the hands.

The First Root

I was barefoot before I knew why.

The ground was not something beneath me; it was something that held me, steady and alive.

Every stone pressed into my soles, every blade of grass brushed my ankles, every patch of soil carried me into belonging.

My father's voice was the first map.

"This one heals."

"This one harms."

"This one feeds."

His lessons were not just knowledge, they were invitations.

Invitations to notice, to trust, to remember that the land itself is generous if we respect its offerings.

Even now, decades later, I can close my eyes and feel that child-self standing barefoot in the fields, hair in my face, heart wide open to the mystery of growing things. I didn't know then that those moments would shape my whole life. That the dirt under my nails, the soreness in my feet, and the laughter of children under the summer sun would one day weave into a calling.

The first root was not an herb or a recipe.

It was the soil itself.

And it taught me this:

We are not separate from the earth.

We are of it, shaped by it, healed by it.

Every step we take barefoot is a remembering of that truth.

Chapter 1: Beginnings in the Soil

I cannot remember a time when plants were not part of my life. Some children are drawn to books or music, others to sports or machines. I was drawn to the wild green things that grew around me, the ones most people walked past without seeing.

Growing up on the farm meant that plants were not hobbies, they were survival. We lived on what we produced. We grew our food, preserved it in jars lined neatly in the pantry, and learned to stretch each harvest through the winter months. The smell of freshly turned earth was as familiar to me as the scent of baking bread. Dirt beneath the fingernails wasn't something to be scrubbed away; it was a sign of work well done.

My father was the first to give names and meaning to the plants I loved. He taught me the difference between what could nourish and what could harm. Some plants he pointed out with quiet reverence, "this one heals." Others, he warned me to avoid. His knowledge was practical, born of necessity, not books. Yet in those early lessons, he planted more than facts. He planted in me a way of seeing the world: that creation itself was alive with meaning, and that if we paid attention, the land would show us how to live well.

As a child, I would trail behind him, watching his hands as he broke stems, rubbed leaves between his fingers, inhaled the fragrance to confirm what he already knew. To me, this was a kind of magic, the way he could tell a story with his senses, identifying each plant not by labels, but by presence.

It wasn't only the useful plants that captured me. I loved the wildflowers that sprang up at the edges of fields, the weeds that insisted on growing between rows, the vines that tangled themselves along fences. They seemed to me like reminders that life cannot be entirely tamed, that beauty insists on showing itself even where it isn't wanted.

And then there were my bare feet.

I was always barefoot if I could help it, no matter the season. My feet were always sore, tender from use, but they longed for the ground's touch. Even before I knew the word "grounding," I craved it instinctively. The coolness of morning dew on grass, the sting of gravel on a lane, the squish of mud after rain, these sensations made me feel alive, connected. Shoes felt like barriers. Bare feet felt like truth.

Now I understand that this was more than preference. It was the beginning of reflexology in my body's language. My own sore feet kept me aware that they carried more than weight. They carried the imprint of my whole being. Even then, without words for it, I sensed there was something important in the way the earth and the feet spoke to one another.

Life on the farm was not easy. There were years when harvests failed, when storms undid months of labor, when money was tight and food had to be stretched thin. But alongside the hardship, there was always beauty. The golden glow of wheat fields in the evening sun. The chorus of frogs in spring. The smell of lilacs after rain. My love for plants was not romantic in the sense of being detached from reality, it was rooted in both necessity and wonder. Plants kept us alive. And plants taught me joy.

Looking back, I can see that these early years were the soil of my calling. I did not yet know the words *herbalism* or *reflexology*. I only knew that the earth gave, and I loved it fiercely.

When I think about calling now, I often return to the image of that little girl, hair wild, feet bare, eyes wide, pockets stuffed with leaves and rocks and feathers. She didn't know she was apprenticing for a life's work. She didn't know that one day she would combine plants and feet, salves and touch, writing and story. She only knew that she belonged to the land, and the land belonged to her.

And maybe that's the deepest beginning of all: belonging.

Listening to the Earth

The earth speaks a language most of us have forgotten.
It speaks through the crunch of frost underfoot,
through the smell of crushed leaves,
through the ache in your feet after a long day of walking barefoot on gravel lanes.

As a child, I did not think of it as language, I thought of it as life.
My father translated for me:
“This one heals. This one harms. This one feeds.”
But in truth, the earth had already been speaking long before the words.

When I stood barefoot in the soil, I could feel it hum beneath me.
Not with sound, but with presence.
The ground carried stories, of rain, of roots, of generations who had walked there before
me.
Every step was a remembering.

The earth taught me patience. Crops do not ripen overnight.
The earth taught me humility. Weeds always return, no matter how many times you pull
them.
The earth taught me resilience. Even after storms, something always sprouts again.

And so, before I ever became an herbalist, before I ever pressed my hands into the
soles of another, I was learning the first truth of healing:

That we are not separate from the soil.
We are born from it.
We are healed by it.
We return to it.

If we listen, the earth still speaks.
The question is: are we willing to hear it?

Chapter 2: The First Creation

The first remedy I ever made was a salve.

It wasn't anything complicated, not at first. Just a handful of herbs, some oil, a little beeswax, and the hope that it would help. I stirred it together at my kitchen table, the air carrying the scent of plants releasing their essence into oil, the beeswax melting into gold. There was something holy about that moment, the way simple ingredients could become medicine with nothing more than patience and care.

That salve became my *Miracle Salve*. For more than thirty years now, I've been making it. It has soothed burns, healed rashes, softened scars, and comforted skin of all ages. It has traveled across the world in jars tucked into purses and carry-ons, shared between friends, gifted to strangers, passed from hand to hand until its reach has gone farther than I will ever travel myself.

I didn't know, in those first batches, that I was beginning a lineage. That a jar of ointment would become one of my life's signatures. But in hindsight, it makes sense. It was the simplest expression of what I loved most: plants transformed into care.

Herbalism was my first deep study. It began with curiosity and necessity but quickly became devotion. I spent years reading, experimenting, failing, and trying again. My early notebooks are filled with recipes that worked beautifully and others that didn't work at all. Herbs were forgiving teachers, always patient, always offering another chance to learn.

For a long time, I studied alone, cobbling together wisdom from books and observation. Later, I found teachers and courses and eventually pursued my clinical herbalist training online. Each stage deepened my respect for the plants. The more I learned, the more I realized how much there was still to know. That humility never left me. Herbalism is not a field you ever "finish." The plants are living, breathing teachers, and no lifetime is long enough to master them all.

What I loved most was the sense of continuity. I was not inventing something new; I was joining something ancient. Every salve I stirred, every tincture I bottled, felt like a conversation with the generations who came before me; grandmothers, healers, medicine makers, whose hands had worked in much the same way. I was simply adding my voice to theirs.

It was only later that reflexology entered my life, but when it did, it felt like a homecoming.

I discovered it through study, diving into online courses and reading everything I could get my hands on. I devoured it like candy, hungry for its wisdom. Reflexology spoke to something I had always known but never named, that our feet and hands carry maps of the body, and that through them, healing can reach places words cannot.

The first time I practiced reflexology, it felt strangely familiar, as though I had been preparing for it all along. The barefoot child who longed for the earth's touch now had a way to make sense of why the feet mattered so much. Pressing into reflex points, feeling the body respond, watching the tension release, it was as if the ground itself was speaking again, this time through human skin.

Herbalism and reflexology became twin loves. One worked from the inside out; the other from the outside in. Together, they formed a circle of care that felt complete.

Even as these practices grew, writing was always there in the background, waiting its turn. I filled journals with notes, observations, stories, and recipes. I wrote down what I learned not only to remember it, but because words themselves felt like part of the medicine. Writing became the bridge between what I practiced with my hands and what I carried in my heart.

In time, I began to see that herbalism and reflexology were my vocations, the work I trained for and offered. But writing was my calling's deeper current, weaving them together into a whole. The words gave shape to what my hands already knew.

Looking back now, I realize how much that first salve shaped me. It taught me that healing can begin in the simplest places, a kitchen table, a jar, a willingness to try. It taught me that you don't have to wait for permission to begin. You simply start with what you have and let the practice grow with you.

That truth has guided me through every stage since; when I wasn't sure I was ready, when I didn't know enough, when life felt too full to pursue what tugged at my soul. The calling doesn't demand perfection. It only asks that you begin.

And sometimes, a beginning is as simple as a salve.

The Patient Teacher

The plants have never hurried me.
They waited while I raised children,
waited while I stumbled through study,
waited while I doubted myself.

They know about waiting.
Seeds sit in the dark for months,
sometimes years,
before they dare to break open.

I once thought I was late to my calling.
But the plants taught me otherwise.
They showed me that timing is its own kind of medicine.
That roots sink deep before branches rise.
That patience is not delay, but preparation.

Herbalism is not something you conquer.
It is something you apprentice yourself to,
over and over,
lifetime after lifetime.

Each salve, each cup of tea, each tincture
is another lesson.
The plants do not demand mastery.
They ask only for respect,
for presence,
for willingness to return.

The patient teacher is always there.
The question is not whether the plants will speak.
The question is whether we will listen long enough to hear.

Chapter 3: Vocation vs. Calling

There is a difference between a vocation and a calling.

A vocation is the work you train for, the craft you study, the skill you practice until it becomes second nature. A vocation can earn you a living, shape your days, and mark your identity in the world. Herbalism is my vocation. Reflexology is my vocation. They are both paths I have chosen, invested in, and devoted years of study and practice to.

But a calling, a calling is something deeper.

A calling is that inner pull that will not leave you alone, the deep sense that you were made for this, whether or not it earns a paycheck or comes with a title. A calling is not something you decide; it is something you answer.

For me, that calling has always been the plants, the healing touch, and the words. Even when I didn't have names for them, they lived inside me like a quiet current. They pull at my soul every day, to heal more, to write more, to help others find their own way to healing. And when I look back now, I can see that the vocation and the calling were always entwined.

I think, in some ways, I always knew this was my life's work. Even as a child, I was drawn to plants, to nature, to being barefoot in the soil. I loved rubbing little feet, my own children's, when they were babies, instinctively pressing and soothing. Writing, too, was always with me. It came naturally, filling notebooks and journals with words I wasn't even sure mattered, but which I couldn't stop myself from recording.

The pieces were all there from the beginning, waiting for me to put them together.

Yet callings don't always unfold in the timing we expect. There were years when I could not pursue herbalism and reflexology as fully as I wanted. Raising six children meant my energy belonged to them first. Life was busy, messy, beautiful, and overwhelming all at once.

There were times I felt frustrated, knowing what tugged at my heartstrings, but unable to follow it fully. And yet, even then, I knew my time would come. The calling never left me. In the meantime, I studied in the cracks of the day, practiced in small ways, and learned to trust that nothing was wasted. Just as plants wait through the winter, I waited too.

When my children grew and left home, I stepped more fully into what I had always known. The calling that had been humming quietly all those years rose into full song.

My hands have always been part of my identity. I am an extremely hard worker, always busy, and my hands are rarely still. They have kneaded dough, planted gardens, comforted children, tended herbs, pressed into reflex points, stirred salves, and written words.

These hands are where vocation and calling meet. They are the tools that allow me to live out what my soul feels drawn to. They create, they serve, they heal, they write. And though they are sometimes tired, they are also grateful, for they carry the imprint of all that I have given, and all that has been given to me.

One of the greatest lessons of my journey has been this: it is never too late to answer your calling.

So many people think they have missed their chance, that passion belongs to the young, that discovery is for earlier seasons. But I am living proof that calling has no expiration date. It waited for me through the years of motherhood, through the busyness of survival, through the seasons when my hands were too full with other work. And when the time was right, it bloomed.

To step into your calling is not about being the first, the fastest, or the most accomplished. It is about being faithful. It is about listening to that hum in your bones and saying yes, even if the yes comes later than you expected.

The Hum Beneath Everything

There is a sound beneath the noise of life.
Not a sound you hear with ears,
but one you feel in your chest,
in your gut,
in your hands when they cannot be still.

I call it the hum.

The hum is what never leaves.
It waits while you raise children.
It waits while you work other jobs.
It waits while you talk yourself out of dreams.
It waits while you tend to everyone else first.

The hum is patient, but persistent.
It does not grow quiet when ignored;
it grows steady, like a low vibration through your days.
And when the time comes,
it rises like a song you realize you've known all along.

My hum has always been the same:
plants, touch, words.
They are the trinity of my calling.
Herbalism, reflexology, writing.
Three strands braided together, humming in unison.

This is what a calling is.
It is not always loud.
It is not always convenient.
But it is always true.

And when you finally answer it,
you realize the hum has been guiding you all along.

Chapter 4: The Practices

Natural healing has always been with us, but now it is finding its way back into the mainstream. More and more people are beginning to recognize what many of us have always known: that true health cannot be reduced to a single pill, a single test, a single diagnosis. Healing is layered. It is body, mind, and soul together.

What I love most about herbalism and reflexology is that they offer options. They remind us that we are not limited to one path of care. A cup of calming tea, a tincture tailored to the nervous system, a hand pressed into a reflex point, each one offers a different doorway into the same house of healing.

Herbalism and reflexology play their parts in very different ways, but they weave together beautifully. Herbs are taken in, absorbed, digested, metabolized, carried through the blood. Reflexology is applied from without, pressing points, awakening pathways, releasing what is stuck. One works internally, one externally. Together, they form a circle of support.

Science confirms what many of us have witnessed: these practices work. Clinical studies are beginning to catch up to what herbalists and reflexologists have long seen with their own eyes. Anxiety eased. Digestion improved. Sleep restored. Pain lessened. But beyond the science, there is something more: a sense of peace that people discover when they engage with these modalities.

Energetically and spiritually, people are seeking. They may not even know what they are looking for, but when they find these gentle supports, something in them exhales. They realize they have been holding their breath for too long.

Over the years, I have developed my own way of working, what I call my signature sessions. These are not rigid protocols, but flowing rhythms designed around the unique needs of each client.

I begin by listening, truly listening. What is the body saying? Where is the stress held? What is the person not yet able to put into words? From there, I draw upon a blend of herbal support, reflexology, head massage, and even subtle energy work through intention.

Each session is tailored: one person may come in exhausted, another struggling with anxiety, another with digestive distress. Some come carrying grief they cannot name, others with bodies locked tight from years of stress. My sessions are not about offering a quick fix. They are about creating space for the body to remember balance.

When a session flows well, there is a rhythm, like music, like breath. The body releases, the herbs support, the nervous system calms. Sometimes the person speaks; often they rest in silence. Always, something shifts.

If there is one universal truth I have found, it is that no one is without stress. Not once has a client come to me and said, *I have no stress in my life*. Everyone carries it. We simply carry it differently.

For some, stress sits in the gut, knotted in the stomach, showing itself in digestion. For others, it climbs the chest, tightness in breath, tension in the heart. Still others carry it in the head, migraines, insomnia, racing thoughts.

In reflexology, I return again and again to the stress-related points. They are the anchors of my practice. Depending on where stress is held, I will work those reflexes more deeply, allowing the body to release what it has been gripping for too long.

Herbs, too, have their anchors. Ashwagandha is often my first choice, a grounding adaptogen that seems to meet almost everyone where they are. Chamomile and lemon balm are gentler allies, but no less powerful, teaching the art of softening, of calming, of remembering that not everything must be carried so tightly. These herbs return in my practice, in my writing, in my teaching, because they have never failed me. They are, in many ways, old friends.

For me, practice is not just about what I do with my hands or the remedies I prepare. Practice is presence. It is showing up fully with another human being, holding space for their body and soul to do what they were designed to do, heal.

Herbalism, reflexology, massage, energy, these are tools. But the real practice is attention. The real practice is listening. That, more than anything, is what I believe people feel when they leave my care: that they have been heard, seen, and given permission to rest.

The Body Knows Where It Holds

Every person carries stress, but the body never hides where it lives.

It shows itself in the stomach that churns.

In the shoulders that refuse to drop.

In the jaw clenched so tight it forgets how to release.

In the tender reflex point that makes someone gasp when I press it.

The body tells its truth.

It remembers every sleepless night,

every burden carried,

every grief tucked away in silence.

It speaks through tension, through pain, through exhaustion.

And when someone finally listens, the body sighs in relief.

Herbs listen too.

Ashwagandha steadies the soil beneath us.

Chamomile softens the edges of our worry.

Lemon balm teaches us to breathe again.

These are not just remedies, they are companions in the art of carrying life more gently.

When I place my hands on tired feet,

I am not only working points on a chart.

I am listening to the stories the body has been waiting to tell.

And when those stories are honored,

healing begins.

Chapter 5: Storytelling Through Experience

Healing is never just theory. It lives in stories, in the moments when a plant or a touch changes something real for someone. These stories are not mine alone; they belong to the people who trusted me enough to let me walk with them. But they have become part of me, too, shaping the way I understand the gifts of herbalism and reflexology.

I have seen herbs do things that astonish me, even after decades of practice.

I've seen a baby's raw, painful rash calmed overnight with a simple herbal salve, the angry red fading into soft, soothed skin. I've watched a woman who had battled relentless anxiety begin to sleep again after adding a gentle nervine tea to her evenings, lemon balm, chamomile, and passionflower working quietly where nothing else had reached.

I've seen digestion restored, migraines softened, even the strength of a troubled heart steadied by plants chosen with care. Each time, I am reminded that herbs are one of God's greatest creations, placed alongside humanity as partners in the work of healing.

At first, using them may feel like study, measurements, formulas, practice. But soon, that study becomes something more. It becomes a gift. You stop feeling like you are making remedies and start realizing you are part of something much larger.

There was a woman who came to me worn down by years of unspoken grief. She moved stiffly, her body heavy with the weight she carried. When she lay down for reflexology, it was as though she was laying down her whole life.

As I began working her feet, she winced, reflex points tender, resistant, almost refusing to be touched. But she asked me to continue. Slowly, tears began to rise. She told me she hadn't cried in a long time, not since losing someone dear to her. She had learned to hold everything in, to be strong for everyone else. But as I pressed into her feet, something inside her let go. The tears came freely, decades of grief washing out in a river she hadn't allowed herself to release.

When the session ended, she sat quietly for a moment, her face softened, her breath slower. She said, "I feel lighter." Not cured. Not "fixed." But lighter. As if her body had finally been given permission to let go of what it had carried too long.

That day, I was reminded that reflexology is not only about pressure points. It is about listening to what the body is ready to release and honoring it when it does.

Early in my herbal journey, I had a client whose needs seemed clear. I studied their case, read through my notes, and confidently chose a blend of herbs that I believed would be perfect. Yet, nothing happened. Weeks passed, and the herbs I had been so sure of made no difference.

Frustrated, I went back to the drawing board. This time, I listened more carefully, not to my books, but to the person. Their story led me to a much simpler herb; one I had nearly dismissed for being “too mild.” But that herb made all the difference.

The lesson was humbling. Plants are not tools to be commanded. They are teachers with wisdom beyond our categories. They choose when and how to work, and our task is not to control them, but to listen. From that day on, I have approached every remedy with humility.

Working with people’s deepest needs is never something I take lightly. When someone comes to me, I know they are carrying both trust and vulnerability. My promise is always to give them 100% of myself in that session, to listen, to take their pain seriously, and to offer what I can with honesty and care.

Healing is not about me; it is about creating a space where someone feels safe enough to heal. That responsibility is sacred. I hold it with reverence.

The Weight of a Life in Your Hands

When someone lies on the table, it is never just their body.
It is their story.
Every scar, every sleepless night, every hidden sorrow.
Every hope they still carry quietly in the corners of their heart.

The feet may look ordinary, but they tell everything.
The tender reflex point, the sudden gasp, the sigh of release,
these are the words of a body that has been waiting to be heard.

The plants tell stories too.
A single leaf holds centuries of wisdom.
A root carries the memory of seasons past.
They do not always answer as we expect,
but always as we need.

I am humbled each time I realize what trust is placed in me.
To hold another's pain.
To touch what has not been touched in years.
To offer remedies that connect them back to creation itself.

This is not light work.
It is heavy, with the weight of lives in your hands.
But it is holy, too.

And perhaps the truest healing comes not from me,
but from the listening,
to the body, to the plants, to the soul that dares to hope again.

Chapter 6: Philosophy & Worldview

When I am asked what healing means, my answer is never simple. For many, healing is thought of as fixing a problem: a rash cleared, a headache gone, a symptom removed. But in my years of practice, I've learned that true healing is far more than symptom relief. Healing is remembering wholeness.

A body can be free of pain but still feel fractured. A person can look "well" from the outside and yet carry turmoil within. Healing is not just about what disappears; it is about what returns. Peace. Balance. Presence. Hope. These are the quiet signs of healing that no test or scan can measure, but which matter most.

Plants have been my greatest teachers. They are steady, generous, and endlessly patient. Each plant has its own story: the resilience of yarrow, standing tall in the fields; the softness of chamomile, offering calm in the smallest blossom; the deep endurance of roots that weather harsh winters underground only to rise again in spring.

The plants teach patience. They cannot be rushed; they bloom when the season is right. They teach humility. Even the smallest weed underfoot can carry profound medicine. They teach generosity. They give of themselves freely, without demand for recognition.

To sit with plants is to sit with wisdom greater than our own. They remind us that healing is not linear, that rest is as necessary as growth, and that everything is connected.

The body, too, is a teacher if we are willing to listen. Through reflexology, I have learned how the feet carry the whole map of a life. A tender point on the sole may reveal a burden the person hasn't yet spoken. A release in the hands may bring a flood of emotion that words could never have touched.

The body never lies. It carries memory, not just in the mind, but in muscle, in tension, in breath. By listening through touch, we can discover where stress hides, where grief lives, where energy longs to flow again.

The body teaches awareness. It says, "Pay attention." It reminds us that what we ignore does not go away, it simply waits to be acknowledged. Reflexology is not just pressure points; it is listening to the stories the body has held silently for years.

For me, there is no separation between physical, emotional, and spiritual healing. They weave together, just as the roots of plants weave unseen beneath the soil. A physical symptom may hold an emotional root. An emotional wound may show itself through physical pain. And spiritual longing often hides beneath both, unrecognized but deeply felt.

In my practice, I honor all three. Herbs nourish the body, reflexology eases the nervous system and emotions, and presence allows the soul to rest. Sometimes the healing comes through the plants, sometimes through the bodywork, sometimes through the silence we share. Always, it is the weaving of these layers that restores a person to wholeness.

This worldview is not something I learned from books alone. It is something the plants and the people have taught me again and again. Healing is not about perfection. It is about presence.

The Quiet Language of Healing

Healing does not always arrive with a grand gesture.
It does not always cure or erase.
More often, it whispers.

It comes in the loosened breath after chamomile tea.
In the warmth that spreads through tired feet when a reflex point finally releases.
In the soft tears that fall unbidden, surprising even the one who sheds them.

The plants speak this quiet language.
They wait in the soil, patient, until we are ready to receive their gift.
They bend in storms but do not break.
They bloom in their season, not ours.

The body speaks this language too.
It remembers what we have forgotten.
It holds stories we did not tell.
It whispers through tension, through pain, through silence.

Healing is not the end of struggle,
but the remembering of wholeness.
It is when body, mind, and spirit begin to hum in harmony again.
Not perfect. Not flawless.
But whole.

And if you listen closely,
you will hear it.
The quiet language of healing,
always waiting to be heard.

Chapter 7: Legacy & Guidance

Legacy is not always about what you build in stone or publish in books. For me, legacy is quieter. It is about what lingers in someone's memory after they have left my care. The way their body feels lighter. The way they sleep better that night. The way they reach for chamomile tea the next time their spirit feels heavy, because they remember how it soothed them before.

If I could pass on one message to every student, every reader, every client, it would be this: **healing is within reach**. It is not distant, reserved for experts, or locked away in complicated systems. Healing is woven into the fabric of everyday life. It is in the plants growing outside your door. It is in the simple act of listening to your body. It is in the willingness to rest, to breathe, to receive.

I want people to feel seen. Truly seen. Not just as a list of symptoms or struggles, but as whole human beings carrying stories worth honoring. I want them to feel cared for, to know that someone took their pain seriously and gave them full presence. And I want them to feel empowered, leaving with the sense that they can continue their healing journey themselves, with simple tools and gentle supports.

More than anything, I want them to feel hope. The world can be heavy. Systems fail us. Stress wears us down. But there are always ways back to health, back to peace, back to ourselves. Herbs and reflexology are not just remedies; they are reminders of hope.

When I began writing this book, I knew it would not fit neatly into one category. It is part memoir, because my story is interwoven with the practices I carry. It is part teaching guide, because I cannot speak of herbs or reflexology without sharing what they've taught me. But it is also something else, an offering. A weaving together of story and wisdom, meant to guide and encourage anyone who feels the pull toward healing.

This book is not just about me. It is about the roots we all carry in our hands, waiting to be remembered.

If my hands could leave an imprint on the next generation, I hope it would be gentleness. In a world that rushes and demands, gentleness is revolutionary. I want my hands to remind others that healing does not need to be rushed or forced. It can be tender, slow, and deeply human.

I hope my imprint is also one of listening. That those who learn from me, or read my words, will carry forward the art of listening deeply, to plants, to bodies, to stories.

If the next generation can inherit anything from me, let it be this: **hands carry presence**. Hands that remind others they are safe. Hands that communicate wholeness without needing words. Hands that know healing is always possible, even in small ways.

This, to me, would be enough.

The Imprint of Hands

Hands tell stories.
They carry lines of work and care.
They grow calluses from labor,
wrinkles from time,
softness from love.

My hands have stirred salves,
pressed into reflex points,
wiped children's tears,
and written words that will outlive me.
They have been tired,
but they have never been idle.

If my hands could leave an imprint,
it would not be of force or pressure.
It would be gentleness.
It would whisper:
You are safe. You are whole. You are not alone.

Legacy is not a monument.
It is continuity.
It is the passing of wisdom from hand to hand,
story to story,
generation to generation.

One day, perhaps, someone will pour hot water over chamomile because they once heard me speak of its calm.
Or they will press a reflex point on their child's foot, remembering that healing can be simple.
Or they will write their own story of calling,
because they once saw me write mine.

That is legacy enough.
Hands leaving imprints that ripple outward,
softly, quietly,
but with lasting strength.

Epilogue: Roots That Continue

When I look back on my journey, the barefoot child in the fields, the young mother stirring salves at her kitchen table, the student bent over books late at night, the practitioner holding another's feet in her hands, I see not a straight path, but a weaving.

The plants, the body, the writing, each thread took its turn, sometimes waiting in silence, sometimes rising to the forefront. And now, I can see that they were never separate at all. They were always meant to meet here, in my hands.

Herbalism gave me the language of plants. Reflexology gave me the language of the body. Writing gave me the language of the soul. Together, they have become my vocation and my calling.

But vocation and calling are never meant to end with us. They are meant to be shared, carried forward, woven into the lives of others. That is what I hope this book has done for you, offered both story and guidance, both memory and possibility.

I am proof that it is never too late to answer your calling. That the things tugging at your heartstrings in childhood may still be waiting for you, even decades later. That roots do not vanish when ignored; they only grow deeper, waiting for the season when you are ready.

Your story, too, has roots. They live in your hands, in your body, in the ways you already create, serve, care, and heal. Perhaps your roots are still waiting to be uncovered. Perhaps they are already flourishing. Either way, they are yours.

If I could leave you with anything, it is this: begin. Wherever you are, with whatever you have. A salve stirred at a kitchen table. A foot held with tenderness. A word written in the quiet of the night. Healing begins in the smallest acts, and those acts ripple farther than you may ever know.

The roots continue, in me, in you, in all of us. And they are always found in the hands.

Roots in the Hands

Our hands are where calling and vocation meet.
They are where work becomes service,
and service becomes love.

Hands stir the herbs.
Hands press the reflex points.
Hands write the words that will outlive us.
Hands carry the memory of all we have given
and all we have received.

The roots are not somewhere far away.
They are here.
In the dirt under our nails.
In the softness of a child's foot.
In the pen held between tired fingers.
In every act of care,
every moment of presence,
every gift we give with our hands.

And so, this is my blessing for you:
May your hands remember their roots.
May they heal what they touch.
May they carry gentleness into a world that so often forgets it.
May they hold your own story with the same tenderness you offer others.

Because the truth is simple, but powerful:
The roots are always in the hands.
And through your hands, they will continue.

Dear Reader,

Thank you for walking these pages with me. Every book I write is not just words on a page, but a kind of ledger; a place where story, memory, and healing meet. By reading, you've become part of that ledger, carrying its threads into your own life in ways only you can.

I hope you found something here that stayed with you: a phrase that lingered, a reflection that stirred, or a reminder that your own story matters deeply. May this book offer you not only knowledge or escape, but also a sense of companionship, like a cup of tea shared in quiet company.

If you'd like to continue the journey, you'll find more stories and companions in my growing shelves: fiction, reflections, short stories, and guides. Each one is written to stand alone, but together they form a woven atlas of healing and gentle living.

You can explore more of my work here: [eLibrary](#)
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From my heart to yours, thank you for reading.
With gratitude always,

Davilyn Atwood

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