

Heirloom Gardens Oral History Project
Interview with Martin Roseman by David Smith
Conducted on July 10th, 2023 in Georgia

[00:00:00] **LuAnna Nesbitt:** The following interview is a part of the Heirloom Gardens Oral History Project. It was conducted in Georgia by interviewer David Smith on July 10th, 2023. The narrator of this oral history is Martin Roseman.

[00:00:12] **David Smith:** So for the record, go ahead and introduce yourself and tell me something about you.

[00:00:16] **Martin Roseman:** Uh, I'm Martin Roseman, uh, owner of a cool herbal botanical elixir concept called Altered.

What really got me into plants were their psychoactive compounds. Um, I was doing, I, I guess I consider myself a social scientist first and foremost. So uh, it really amused me, the concept that plants can alter your concept of like space and time and your consciousness. And that's what really kind of wanted me to explore or prompted me to explore plants as a whole.

You know, just the fact that I could change myself with plants. Um, Both psych, just from emotional, physiological standpoints. So, altered is the culmination of a lot of different experiences where, uh, I wanted to create a concept that could alter your state but not inebriate you. Um, a lot of people drink alcohol.

Um, I used I still drink alcohol on occasion, very lightly. And I don't think there's anything wrong with it. My body, however, doesn't respond well to it all the time. Uh, and the temptation of going out with people, and wanting to kind of have a drink in your hand, prompted me to go, okay, well let me shift this concept and utilize the herbs and plants that I love to create some beverages that, you know, are healthy for me and also fun.

[00:01:50] **David Smith:** And what are the plants that you love?

[00:01:52] **Martin Roseman:** Um, well, first and foremost, my, uh, first plant ally is cannabis. That was the first plant that really, like, opened my eyes up to a lot of different wonders of the world, um, outside of kitchen and culinary herbs. But I didn't really have the concept and frame of thinking to, uh, understand the importance of culinary herbs at that time.

The cannabis was so in my face, uh, the first time that I tried it that it was like, Whoa, I've got to explore what else is out there in this herbal world. Um, Rosemary, I had the smell of it just makes my mouth water Fills my like head up with joy. And right now I've really been enjoying rhodiola. It's an adaptogen It only grows in cold places.

Um, I think it's called Siberian ginseng and it's It just makes you feel really good. It produces a little bit of an energetic effect. For me and my chemistry, I find that it just, it helps me sink into my body a little bit more.

[00:02:58] **David Smith:** Now, take me back to your roots. Where did you grow up?

[00:03:02] **Martin Roseman:** Um, I grew up in the North Metro Atlanta area, uh, in a little suburban town called Lawrenceville.

Um, in Gwinnett County. But I was born in Brooklyn, New York, and I spent a lot of years going back and forth with my mom, who lived in the South, and my dad, who lived in New York. My mother is also from the North, so the hustle and bustle of the city was kind of always ingrained in me, um, and I didn't really start getting back into plants until like my more late teens, early twenties.

[00:03:39] **David Smith:** When you say back into plants, is there a time that you started?

[00:03:43] **Martin Roseman:** Um, I grew up, I spent, I spent a lot of time moving around, uh, and my family had a home in South Carolina where I spent some early years playing outside, uh, just in the dirt, uh, picking blackberries and other types of things, you know, typical Southern stuff.

Um, but as I started to go away from, Like the, more into suburban environments and into city environments, the kind of fulfillment and or interest in plants and just going outside and to being in the dirt, in the ground, in the soil and adventuring. Kind of dissipated, started to stay inside more, play video games, do all those other things.

[00:04:30] **David Smith:** When you made a return back to appreciating plants, how did your life change?

[00:04:36] **Martin Roseman:** Oh wow. Um, you know, I spent a lot of years kind of just finding myself, um, after high school and exploring a lot of different concepts. And then eventually I started working on this biodynamic farm while I was in school for massage therapy.

Um, uh, biodynamic is it's a type of growing that we're farming on gardening that works with the moon cycles and planetary cycles and utilizing certain herbs and compounds. Um, it's, uh, you would consider it almost a step above organic gardening because there's a little bit more cosmic attention, but also, um, limiting of certain herbs and, uh, herbicides and pesticides that you can still utilize in, um, organics, and it works more with the soil, the microorganisms, and things of that nature, and just, I was on this farm with like a bunch of people who were in their like late 50s, Um, and I was, at first I went there because my girlfriend took me, and I was like, okay let's go, like she wants to go, we get free food afterwards, um, to take home.

And then it became kind of just adventurous because I was like, well I'm young, and I can do a lot of work, and it was like, very active. But the more that I started to put my hands in the soil, it just felt like something changed. Um, and my overall mental health, uh, was the first thing I noticed that it just felt kind of home.

There was a silence. There was a presence that wasn't there. Uh, and I took a lot of pride and joy in the fact that just by working around that farm and doing those actions. That I was creating

food that people could eat and enjoy, that I was going to eat and enjoy, and that's just kind of where a lot of things clicked for me.

[00:06:38] **David Smith:** Do you still grow right now?

[00:06:40] **Martin Roseman:** Yeah, I have a back, um, backyard garden. Uh, I spent a lot of years kind of volunteering on different urban farms and partnering with different people and learning some new skill sets. And right now I've just been growing in my backyard, uh, just some fun stuff, like I've got this blue turmeric, I've got some, uh, indigenous tobaccos, um, from some Native American tribes, and just like a couple heirlooms, and I've always been really interested in the fact that there's just so many varieties of things out there, so when I first decided to buy seeds to start a garden, I decided to buy the most interesting, funky foods that I could find online.

[00:07:23] **David Smith:** Um, and with those heirlooms, do you let them come to seed?

[00:07:27] **Martin Roseman:** Um, I haven't yet. Um,

[00:07:30] **David Smith:** These are new then?

[00:07:31] **Martin Roseman:** These are, well they're about a year, or the seeds are probably a year old. I've been practicing for about two to three years. I haven't let them go to seed. The only thing I've let go to seed is my tobacco.

Because it's pretty easy to collect the seed. Um, I haven't mastered seed saving yet, that's kind of in the phase of where I feel like I'm at in my, like, um, journey is figuring out how to save seed, how to, um, save seed for years to come, and then trade seed, uh, and just kind of connect with that a little bit more.

[00:08:05] **David Smith:** How do you choose what goes into your garden? What's important to you?

[00:08:09] **Martin Roseman:** Oh, wow.

[00:08:09] **David Smith:** I mean, I know you said you just wanted to do the most unique things, but

[00:08:12] **Martin Roseman:** Well, at first I started with the most unique things, and then I started to realize that some unique things just don't taste good. So I started to really just find the ones that tasted the best to me, and decide that those are the ones that I'm going to want to keep in the garden, and the ones that don't taste good are not for me, because ultimately, um, and I learned this from a lot of different plant people, but, you know want to kind of like, I guess it's an experiential thing.

You spend more time in a garden when you know that there are things out there that you enjoy. And when there were certain foods that I was growing just to try growing and that I didn't

actually enjoy, I'll say, honestly, tomatoes is one of those. I'm not a huge tomato fan, but I was like, oh, I'll try growing tomatoes.

I didn't spend as much time in the garden. Right. Because I didn't actually, like I wasn't excited about eating tomatoes, so. It wasn't like I wanted to really see them grow into fruition, but when I started growing things that I was interested in eating the most, it was like, oh, I want to make sure this survives because I'm working and putting all this hard work into it so that I can eat it.

So the most important thing is to grow, for me, is to grow things that I want to eat and enjoy.

[00:09:28] **David Smith:** Do you ever think about your ancestors when you're out in the garden?

[00:09:32] **Martin Roseman:** Yeah, um, you know, I kind of, I'm definitely, I don't like using this word, uh, So I'm not gonna use, I was about to use the word victim, but I'm definitely, um, a part of the diaspora of America.

And my family, I didn't know this until recently, um, my great grandfather passed away last year and I didn't really get to spend much time with him. He was about 96. Um, but I spent a lot of time with his daughter, which is my great aunt. And she was telling me a lot about him and how I come from a family of farmers.

And I didn't actually know that. It's something, like I said, something clicked in me when I was working outside. But it wasn't until I started speaking with my family that it made more sense that I came from a family of farmers and Who owned farmland in the south unfortunately due to many situations it was taken away from us And then that's when we moved to the north and I think Philly and then New York and back to the south So it's kind of this full circle Movement where I'm rediscovering things about my family That has been kind of pushed to the side because of, uh, many different factors including just the need to grow and to find a home and places to work and things like that in the north and kind of bringing it back.

I've got my mom into gardening. I've gotten my brothers into gardening and just kind of, um, which and my mom, she grew up with my great grandfather. So she remembers some of the like gardening practices. So it's kind of getting her back into her youth and like. Like I said, coming full circle.

[00:11:20] **David Smith:** Um, and did, did your great aunt teach you or tell you anything about gardening that you hadn't heard before, or like, what was the wisdom that she shared with you?

[00:11:32] **Martin Roseman:** Well, the most important thing she shared with me was the importance of holding on to things. Um, I, because of the suffering that my family went through for a few generations, we didn't hold on to a lot of things. We let a lot of things go, like we lost our land. Um, that my great grandfather had, but also, uh, the land that I grew up on in South Carolina was lost, just, uh, poor family, uh, choices, and it, she shared with me these stories about how he worked so hard to grow things, not just in the garden, but, you know, for his family, and held onto these things as legacy, and I didn't really grow up with that, so it, Helped instill the sense into me that I wanted to recreate the legacy that we lost on.

So that was the most important piece of wisdom that I gained from like her, having her conversations was the importance of legacy and the importance of saving things and passing them on to the next generation. Um, and I think that's something that as a whole African Americans, um, sometimes forget, uh, and, or sometimes don't have the space to remember.

That we're not just doing things for ourselves, we're doing these things for our children and their children and the importance of saving things, including seeds, including these memorabilia, precious metals and gems and passing them forward so that our descendants have something to look back to.

[00:13:14] **David Smith:** Now, thinking about food, did your family cook?

[00:13:19] **Martin Roseman:** Yeah.

[00:13:20] **David Smith:** What did they cook?

[00:13:21] **Martin Roseman:** Oh, wow. Um, typical Southern food. Um, like collard greens, black eyed peas, sweet potatoes. Um, now, we did cook a lot of like, what I would say just like classic African Southern food. Um, but also Caribbean food, I'm part Puerto Rican, so we did a lot of

Spanish rice. Um, and a lot of spices, but honestly, I feel like the style of food And cooking that they enjoyed the most was just decadent , like really like soul food.

Mm-Hmm. .

[00:13:59] **David Smith:** And, and the next generation back. You know, your grandparents or your great aunt, did you ever have any food from them? Did they cook? Were they in your life?

[00:14:07] **Martin Roseman:** Yeah, they cooked and it was still southern food, but it was like more the, it was more the healthy things that I didn't quite enjoy or understand, like honestly.

A lot of people in the South love okra, and it's taken me a long time to stomach the texture of okra. But they cooked a lot of dishes involving okra and pork.

[00:14:28] **David Smith:** Yeah, I remember my grandma used to make the boiled okra, and it was the slimiest thing ever. Then somebody made me some good okra, and it fixed my brain.

[00:14:35] **Martin Roseman:** Yeah, the sliminess really just, like, makes me kind of, like, squirm.

[00:14:40] **David Smith:** But do you, do you feel like you, you take your roots? Into your growing practices today or your business practices today?

[00:14:47] **Martin Roseman:** I do. I think that, um, a lot of the lessons I learned from my youth, I take into how I handle and approach many different things in terms of my business and in terms of just my creative process.

Um, and that's something that I've spent the last year kind of like redefining and rediscovering was like, okay, what. What did I grow up doing? Cause I think sometimes we get so far away from that beginning point that we forget. And I'm turning 28 this year. So I've taken a lot of time to like reflect and go, okay, what did I used to enjoy doing?

What used to spark a passion in me? How can I find that same spark and passion and incorporate into what I do now? Because I am interested in what I do now as well. So a lot of the ideas and concepts that I come up with are kind of like. Takeaways from my childhood, and then bringing them with a little, uh, revitalizing them with some fresh air.

[00:15:50] **David Smith:** Um, now, clearly you're aware of, like, the healing power of plants, but for someone who is a complete novice, what would you tell them? How are plants healing?

[00:16:04] **Martin Roseman:** The way that it clicks for me, uh, which is kind of like, I guess a natural design, uh, we are perhaps, One of the greatest pieces of consciousness and machinery that this planet has produced.

And we evolved side by side with the plants and fungi and other animals, uh, insects that exist on this planet. So we all have this symbiotic relationship. And when it comes to plants and fungi, fruits and vegetables, things that we consume. They're like USB drives that go directly into our system, you know, you can't, you can't put a CD and a USB drive, you can't put a USB drive into a CD, you know, you have to put the right, um, input into these systems.

So I look at fruits and vegetables and herbs as these, uh, pieces of information that our body can digest and understand. So when it comes to vitamins, nutrients, minerals, and all these things, the most natural form that they come in is plants and fungi and fruits and vegetables. So, on the most simple level, that to me is how herbs can be healing.

They provide us with the necessary information and energy and other compounds necessary for us to develop, to grow, to advance. Um, and that can look like a lot of different ways, depending upon the plant, and it can get, there's a lot of nuances to it, but that, to me, is just the most simple way to kind of understand it.

[00:17:56] **David Smith:** And now that you've started to share your tinctures and your plant medicine, I would really love to hear a story about, you know, one of the first times you realized that your product was, you know, making a difference for someone else.

[00:18:13] **Martin Roseman:** When I first started, when I first started the business, My grandma was sick. My aunt was sick. I was sick. And among me, like, some of my friends had anti inflammatory, uh, not anti inflammatory, um, autoimmune disorders. And I started making these products and just kind of playing around with them. What I thought would be interesting. Mm-Hmm . And people started sending me feedback.

My family started telling me how their skin was doing better, how their pain was decreasing, how their skin was lightening in different ways. And I started to notice how my stress levels were

decreasing. And that's when I started to really. Find even more like that's where the experiential aspect of it came in.

It's like, okay, I know these things are healing I've heard other people talk about them But now I'm experiencing it and other people around me are experiencing it directly after taking these products mm hmm, and that was like a big aha moment for me

[00:19:13] **David Smith:** And, um, what's your relationship to the ingredients that you use? Do you, talk to your plants, do you talk to your ingredients?

[00:19:21] **Martin Roseman:** Yeah, I think it's important to develop personal relationship with all things that you engage with and interact with. Um, and that kind of deepens the, that deepens the overall output that you get. You know, a lot of chefs talk about how love is the secret ingredient in a lot of their meals.

You know, we may not exactly know how to observe with the technology we have right now, but we know that it makes a difference. So, I talk to my plants on occasion, I sing to them, and I share my problems and my worries, and they share theirs with me in return. And, I think it's important, the more personal we get with these.

Uh, with these compounds and with these plants, the more we can, the more effect we can have. And they talk about it in this like cool book called The Secret Life of Plants, how plants can like feel us and understand us and uh, reading that book opened me to a lot of different perceptions to, or perspectives to how to engage with my plants.

[00:20:30] **David Smith:** Now in a more literal sense, what, what is your process when you're going to make a tincture or elixir or what have you? Um, I don't know how to do that. So without revealing any, you know, personal secrets, no secret recipes, you know, tell me about your process.

[00:20:48] **Martin Roseman:** Um, you know, I've been thinking about this cause I've started remembering that the thing that one of the things that got me most into like herbs was food and so I was cooking a lot as a kid So there's a design process to cooking where it's like, you know flavor pairing and there's a story that you're telling. So I think about the stories and I'm telling with the products that I make with the experiences that I make with the elixirs, everything, so if they're if I'm telling a story has a you know, beginning middle end What is the beginning to my story?

What is the initial problem that is coming, uh, out about this? And then the middle being, like, the meat and potatoes, like, What am I fulfilling and or how am I answering this problem? And then the end is, like, the outcome of it. So when I'm designing, create the story, for instance, we started off as an, uh, an eco friendly or sustainable brand.

And so the story behind that is, you know, we all know that the planet is going through some shifts and changes. So the story I was telling was that through purchasing our product, through

the practices that we went and did, and the brands that we partnered with. You would be directly affecting the planet through these actions.

So I find a problem, whether it be a medical problem or whether it be an emotional problem, and I designed a story around that. What do people, what do people like about your products and how is your relationship with customers? Um, I would say people I really love, the one and first thing that I always get graduated on has been our packaging.

Um, just the overall aesthetic and the energy that, uh, comes off from our aesthetic and the message that we're trying to put out just from that on its own. And then when people try the product, uh, in particular with our tinctures, which is our number one, um, product right now, um, that we utilize in the elixirs. The flavor. Uh, because we don't, we use, uh, non alcoholic tinctures. So the flavor is always really surprising to people. They expect it to kind of taste gross and like yucky. You know, they've had a lot of tinctures that burn, that bite. And then they try ours and they're like, whoa, hold on. This tastes like candy, you know, um, and then they feel how effective it is. So it's kind of like this compounding effect. It's like, wow, this looks pretty. Wow. This tastes great. Wow. This works. That's good.

[00:23:35] **David Smith:** And do you use any of this stuff from your garden and your products?

[00:23:38] **Martin Roseman:** Um, no, not yet. Um, I don't produce enough to utilize, uh, in our products, but, um, I'll host dinner parties. Um, and I'll like, you know, Make, uh, drinks utilizing the tinctures, but, uh, revolve the drinks around food from the garden.

So that's kind of how I incorporate the two right now. Um, I haven't, I've been growing some herbs, mostly food. Um, and the herbs that I've been growing, like, I usually just turn into teas right now, and or syrups.

[00:24:12] **David Smith:** What do you cook?

[00:24:14] **Martin Roseman:** Oh, wow. Um, last night I had, uh, a pretty bangin dinner. Um, I took some, uh, noodle beans, which are like these big, long beans from my garden.

I took some basil. I bought some ingredients from the farmer's market, like chanterelles and onions. And I made a rutabaga. I made this rutabaga with a blueberry balsamic. Um, Reduction. Blueberries from my backyard. Um, Then I made a green bean, no, red bean, my bad. A red bean, onion, um, and chanterelle medley.

And a salmon with a basil, oil, and citrus kind of marinade.

[00:25:05] **David Smith:** I mean, that sounds really advanced. It's cooking really important to you?

[00:25:08] **Martin Roseman:** Um, flavor, experience, things like that are really important to me. Um, just fun, art, design. So I got, you know, I get bored, um, with food sometimes. Um, and I don't cook all the time.

Uh, but when I get bored, I'm like, okay, I want to do something really creative. I want to try flavoring things that I've never tried before. Um, just expanding because You know, there are hundreds of thousands of compounds that we can eat and or that are just in like one plant alone. And together, both the volatile aromatic compounds, medicinal compounds, they create this nice flavor.

And that to me is just kind of I've always been a very magical and serene, um, aspect to the human experience in that we can taste these things, whether it be chocolate, lettuce, kale, like just they, we can taste them and experience them, and experience nature

[00:26:16] **David Smith:** What do you think is the number one misconception that people have about plants, using plants?

[00:26:24] **Martin Roseman:** Uh, I think the number one conception is that plants are a pharmaceuticals, you know, the There is always a catch 22 and everything, uh, and with pharmaceuticals, you know, although they can be really effective, they can also be detrimental because they're not natural compounds. Our body doesn't completely know how to understand them, but we also need them at certain points, you know, when We're suffering from something pretty severe, you know, going out into the garden and getting some tea just won't be effective, you know, you're going to need something.

Like if you have a pretty serious virus. You might need, you know, antivirals from a pharmacy, not just antivirals from your garden. Um, so I think a lot of people, uh, automatically assume that when they see or hear facts about plants being effective for this, they think they're going to be effective like a pharmaceutical.

Uh, where they're not, you know, plants are part of a regimen, you know, of wellness. And if you take it daily, monthly, weekly, It'll be, it'll prevent you from having to deal with the virus, most likely. And, or if you're healthy enough, and when you take it, and at the beginning of the symptoms, you might be able to decrease the length of how long you might have something.

But, they're not cure all. They're not just going to take a plant, and it's immediately going to cure everything that you have, because it's not a pharmaceutical. So, I think when people Uh, when people think about plants, if they could take, or just the healing qualities of plants, if they could take that out of their mind and realize that they're healing you by fixing the, fixing your overall body and allowing for your body to heal itself, not just by You know, getting rid of the problem immediately and taking it out like a pharmaceutical.

[00:28:24] **David Smith:** Now, uh, share with me some of the healing properties of like the plants that go into your products.

[00:28:33] **Martin Roseman:** Yeah, I've really taken a liking to adaptogens. Um, I've dealt with a lot of stress my whole life. Um, a lot of anger issues, um, just like overactive adrenals, um, traumas, just not really knowing how to feel safe. And that's something that I think especially in the African American community that goes Um, really untalked about is the silent killer of stress.

You know, we talk about the silent killer, I guess, to things like oil, fat, heart issues that are being more talked about in our community, but not so much about stress. Our bodies have been conditioned to feel unsafe in this country from many different ways that we are not even always aware of. So, adaptogens are just wonderful class of herbs to help with these complications and to help us, you know, just calm down and stress, and stress leads to inflammation, which is one of the primary issues with a lot of disorders and diseases.

So the less we stress, the more blessed we actually are. So I do things like ashwagandha, that's a pretty, one of the most common ones. And that one's come from India. It's a root said to give you the power of a horse and just help with your overall stress, gives you energy. Like I said, I do rhodiola, and that comes from, um, Russia.

Um, chamomile, which is usually for calming effects, can also be used for bitters, can help with digestion, things of that nature. Um, Like I always look at the problems that I had first, and first and foremost, it's like I said, stress problems with my digestion. Mm-Hmm. . Um, and I love using things like rose, which are just good for, it has a lot of vitamin C in it.

Um, but it also just good from a metaphysical level for like healing your heart, um, set to have a lot of high vibrational qualities. Um, here's a funky one that I started to to use recently. It's called Gymnema and it's, um. An Asian herb and what it does is it prevents you from tasting sweet things. It, um, it'll block your sweet receptors for about an hour and that can help you through your blood sugar levels.

Um, but a lot of people have used it to help 'em, like with sugar cravings by essentially when they want have something sweet and they take this and then they have something sweet it. Uh, we'll kind of trick them because they can't taste the sweetness like, Oh, well, this isn't enjoyable. I don't want this anymore.

[00:31:14] **David Smith:** I've never heard of that. That's crazy.

[00:31:16] **Martin Roseman:** So that one's a really funky one that I play around with on occasion.

[00:31:18] **David Smith:** I mean, so you're, you're looking globally to find plants that like, mesh well with human biology.

[00:31:26] **Martin Roseman:** Yeah, you know, we've become a very international and global species. Um, and a lot of us are kind of from here, from there, from everywhere, so I think it's important to, you know, study who we are, where we come from, and also to explore, um, herbs that aren't necessarily from where we are that could have some, uh, benefit.

I do think there is something to, um, working with our DNA in the best way possible to things that our ancestors ate. Um, but like I said, a lot of us have kind of blended from a lot of different ways. in places. So there's a lot to explore on and what feels good for us. And this next level and phase of human society is really going to take individual health care to another level where we're going to be able to find out.

More about ourselves, not just the generalized information we get when we go to like, um, most doctors and places. Uh, we're going to be, because some people metabolize things differently. You know, I know people that, uh, NSAIDs is a class of drugs that, um, helps with pain. Um, but there are some people who, if they were to have an NSAID, they would immediately die.

Or if they were to have an NSAID, um, it actually wouldn't help with their pain, and that's just because they metabolize it differently. We're at this point, uh, in human history where we can start figuring that out, and as we go through that journey, we're gonna start being able to get custom blends just for us when we go to, like, an herbalist or a pharmacist or wherever we choose to get our medicine from.

[00:33:01] **David Smith:** Is there anyone who sticks out to you as throughout your process of getting back into gardening, of starting your business? Is there anyone who sticks out to you as a mentor?

[00:33:11] **Martin Roseman:** Yeah, I would say my ex, actually. Yeah, um, we're still really good friends, but I would say she was like a mentor to me because, uh, and still is in many ways, because I was kind of everywhere, a little bit of here, a little bit over there, having a lot of the ideas and not really knowing where to put them and, um, wanting to do a lot of things.

And she kind of helped put me in a little bit more alignment. You know, she. Gave me the inspiration to move with certain projects. Taught me how to do certain procedures and things within a kitchen and within a lab setting that was beneficial to my overall career. So I would say that of most of the people in my life, she really helped educate me and push me towards who I am today.

[00:34:11] **David Smith:** Are there any elders who served as mentors for you?

[00:34:15] **Martin Roseman:** Well, I would say not throughout my whole journey. I've been a traveler and I've picked up a lot of stories from just going out and travel places. Sometimes just from random people, honestly, because I've gone to a lot of festivals, artist music, plant festivals and fairs and just in those experiences, you end up in a conversation with a group of people and they'll start telling you about their history and um, their knowledge from, uh, plants and fungi and from there, you'll just start collecting data. So I don't always know the names of the people that I've learned from, but, um, the communities in which I've learned from what, um, usually, uh, like you can go to like the Georgia Mushroom Fair. Um, I've been to this one mushroom festival called MycoFest.

I would say that's probably been my most influential, um, agricultural based, um, festival and experience that I've been to. The people who, it's mostly mushroom based, but I would say, um, it kind of covers the symbiosis between plants and fungi. Um, and the people and educators there are just, They're like, they live, eat, and breathe for these types of things, and just being around their energy and their information and taking notes from their lectures has been really influential to how I can go back to my people and share that wisdom.

[00:35:47] **David Smith:** I would love to hear one of the stories that sticks out to you that you think about, you know, over and over again as you continue to garden and make medicine.

[00:35:57] **Martin Roseman:** Um, the thing that sticks out to me most is that the health of the soil is the health of the people. Um, Um, I don't know exactly where I heard that from, but that sticks out to me in many different ways because, you know, on a broader scale, you know, we're dealing with pesticides and all types of poisons being put into our water and our earth, uh, and then all of those get sucked up into the soil and then sucked up into the food that we eat and then we just put it back into our bodies. Um, and I think about that when I'm gardening, when I'm outside in the soil, when I'm making these plants because by putting in the best energy and putting in the best products and the cleanest products, that we're, we're creating, uh, we're creating things that improve people's bodies, not just deteriorates their bodies.

And then inevitably, when people feel healthy, you know, we care more about things. We care more about the soil when we have the space to care about things like that. It's hard to care about the soil if you have to care about where your bills are coming and like how to pay those. And so by, you know, creating healthy soil and then creating healthy people, we create this nice, uh, negative feedback loop where, you know, we're just uplifting humanity as a whole.

So that's the most important story that I tell myself is like, when I'm out in the garden, I put my hands in the soil, by healing the soil, I'm healing myself, and I'm going to heal people that, uh, engage with these food and herbs that come out of the soil.

[00:37:40] **David Smith:** Is there something that you've learned along your return to growing or throughout growing your business that has surprised you or that might surprise others?

[00:37:53] **Martin Roseman:** That one's a little bit hard 'cause I feel like so much about growing is surprising. You know, like there are a lot of things that I, um, there's just so many nuances to things. There were, I thought that I knew a lot about the world. Like most young people.

I thought that I knew a lot about myself and, um, the subjects that I was interested in. But the more that I got into it, the more nuances that I opened up to me. Uh, the more I really, I realized I knew nothing at all, uh, and to kind of keep an open mind. But I think the most surprising thing to me was to remember that statistics and facts can be bent in so many different ways.

Knowing that a plant can be healing, but then when paired with another plant, it counteracts its effects or, um, inhibits its effects. Or has a completely different effect. Um, those type of things really, uh, open me up to, uh, reliable resources on plants and information. Because you, you see it now a lot with, um, TikTok and other media sources.

Although they can't have a lot of great information. Um, they sometimes brush over, uh, facts in a very quick manner to where you don't really, you know. It's like, oh, this is good for your plants. This is good for your health. Blah, blah, blah. But. How much of it do you need to have an effect? Um, will it have an effect if I'm doing this?

Will it have an effect if I take this? If I'm taking beta blockers? Or if I'm taking high blood pressure medication, how does it affect? So, when I first got into the business, and I was like, Oh, like, this herb helps with this, this herb helps with this. And then I started to realize, Oh wow, like there is so many nuances to this.

There's so many ways that what I thought was beneficial, It's only beneficial in this way or isn't as beneficial and, um, I think it's important that, uh, we take the time to learn these type of things before even sharing that something is beneficial, which I didn't realize at first. That's what happened.

[00:40:10] **David Smith:** You mentioned before that at the beginning when you first started making your products that you were just kind of going with what felt right, going with what seemed good, what seemed interesting. You just told me that you developed this kind of way of knowing the nuances about growing and the healing power of plants.

How do you select what goes into your products now, like, in light of that? Like, what, what resources do you use to balance out your products? Or do you just do trial and error?

[00:40:42] **Martin Roseman:** Um, a bit of trial and error and a little bit of online resources. I can't recall. Their exact names, uh, right now, I have them hyperlinked on my, on my Google Drive, um, but there are, uh, websites out there that have like plant, uh, monographs, there are Herbal associations out there, um, I think like the AHA, which is the American Herbal Association.

Um, and they'll have, you can sign up for these resources and they'll have, um, excerpts about plants and their primary constituents, um, perhaps even like, um, some subtle information about like the primary constituents and, um, like their boiling points and like what to pair them with, um, things to not prepare them with.

Uh, then you have things like PubMed, which you can, um, find a lot of different articles based on, uh, You can find a lot of articles about different herbs and compounds, um, and fungals out there, um, in scientific papers that you can kind of cross reference. Uh, because you also want to know, like, again, statistics.

How did they perform this study? You know, not just what they had discovered, but how they discovered it. Um, And then after kind of having some of the science, um, and behind it, I'll start making formulations to try on myself. Um, I like to always try everything on myself before giving it to other people.

Uh, and throughout my own experience, uh, I'll determine whether or not it's good enough to start sharing with my family, my community. Um, and I'll get their feedback. So it's kind of this slow process of finding the science. Um, And through a couple different resources, doing some ethnobotany, so looking at the history of it, I kind of like to just like, I'll find an herb, and I'll go, okay, well let me just research this as much as possible, from all the angles as possible, and then let me buy it, just, and then let me try it, and that's like, that's my process, and then from there, I'll I'll start looking at how to pair it with other herbs, but it's always best to try one herb by itself and to see how you feel with that one herb before pairing it with others and so forth.

[00:43:03] **David Smith:** Have you ever had a bad experience trying something yourself?

[00:43:06] **Martin Roseman:** Yeah, the first time that I ever tried the Gymnema, the like sugar one, I didn't, I like saw that it helped with sugar cravings, but I didn't read up enough on it to know that it did it by itself. Taking out the sugar, um, your sugar receptors, so, I like, try this, um, Tincture one day after making it, just to try it, see if it's gonna help with my sugar cravings.

I have a pretty mean sweet tooth. And then, I eat a sweet potato, a Japanese sweet potato, specifically. And as I'm taking a bite of the sweet potato, I'm just like, it tastes like paper. And I'm just, just distraught about this. And I'm like, holy shit, what's going on? And then I take time to like look more into the herb and read more into it and I'm like, okay, so my taste receptors are going to be blocked for about an hour and a half and so I just kind of have to tolerate it and deal with it.

Um, but that was probably one of the worst experiences that I have had, um, outside of like, um, certain, uh, herbs have definitely affected my pH, um, in terms of like, um, my urine and things like that. Um, which can be. Typically be mitigated, but hasn't been major, but I've definitely see I'm pretty in touch with my body So like I'll feel if something's off even by a little bit But nothing too detrimental to where I've been like, oh my god, this is it.

[00:44:36] **David Smith:** What was the most positive stand out one that you try to immediately was like this is I have to get this out

[00:44:45] **Martin Roseman:** Uh, right now that's Rhodiola.

Rhodiola, yeah, that. Yeah, that one, um, I have been playing around with a couple different herbs over the last six months. But that one, it was the most effective in boosting my overall mood, uh, on its own. And then when I started to pair it with other herbs, um, I noticed like just immediate euphoria, um, and energy.

So that one is probably been of my recent formulations and recent testing. That one's probably been my favorite.

[00:45:22] **David Smith:** Is rhodiola, like, well known for that effect among herbalists?

[00:45:25] **Martin Roseman:** Um, I feel like it is well known, but not necessarily well versed or well utilized. A lot of people go with things like, um, I feel like a lot of people go with ashwagandha, Yeah. Or some of the more, um, notable or Uh, mainstream herbs. And I think Rhodiola is just on the cusp of being there. Um, it may be there within the next year or two. We may start seeing on the shelves everywhere. And in the products everywhere. Um, but I do think that Herbalist could make it a point to feature it more in formulas.

Um, I think it is a little bit hard to come by. It's a little bit more expensive. Um, so I think sometimes people just try not to, like, utilize it. And when, especially when you're a small business and things of that nature.

[00:46:23] **David Smith:** Um, are you close with, is there an herbalist community in Atlanta?

[00:46:28] **Martin Roseman:** Um, there are a lot of different, um, like, plant communities, uh, within Atlanta.

And there's a little herbal, um, kind of guild that, um, is in just the kind of baby phases of starting. I think. It started maybe last year or so, and there's maybe been like three or four gatherings, um, that is, but it's like a little herbal guild, Atlanta Herbal Guild, um, that's starting up, and I think that that may be one of the most promising ones, um, publicly that I know about, um, there are a lot of different small micro communities that kind of, um, do a lot, similar to like the place we're at right now, the ocean, um, Um, they're really cool, truly living well.

Um, but there's not like a huge unity, um, among these people. There is a guy in, uh, uh, Lawrence Seals, uh, Seals Family Farm in the south. Um, and he has been doing, um, some larger grow gatherings with, um, gardeners. herbalist, um, soap makers, just kind of all different types of people in different industries that center upon agriculture, uh, and gathering them on his farm.

Um, you know, I think he's done two or three events and that one's probably the most, uh, unified community.

[00:48:04] **David Smith:** Does it excite you? Do you think that more people should learn and know about herbs?

[00:48:09] **Martin Roseman:** Yeah, I think that it's Um, it is detrimental to the soul of humanity to be away from the soil, um, to not know and acknowledge, um, the benefits of all the beauty around us.

And the closer that we get to connecting with these, um, plants and fungi, the closer we get to, you know, Not only rediscovering parts of ourself, but also, um, taking our health a little bit more into our own hands. You know, being able to go into our backyard when we need, um, a certain vitamin or we feel like we're a mineral and pick a leafy green and then saute that and put it on your plate immediately is kind of, uh, it's in its way, it's almost like a social right.

Um, and is inherently part of the human experience is to be able to. have access to these plants on our own accord without having to go to a grocery store or to pay for them even. Um, so I think the more that we connect back with these, the more we connect overall back to ourselves in this other way of living that's a little bit more sustainable, not just in the greenwashed word of it, but just, just sustainable in terms of like, regenerating ourselves and the world around us.

[00:49:46] **David Smith:** How do you plan on sharing your knowledge, sharing your history, your life history, your family's history, and your knowledge about plants with, you know, future generations, whether that's your children or anybody else?

[00:50:00] **Martin Roseman:** I'm not really sure.

[00:50:02] **David Smith:** Well, that's a big question. I guess I should ask, is that important to you?

[00:50:06] **Martin Roseman:** It is important to me. And I say I'm not sure because I just don't know. What information is going to look like in the next 10 years, you know, like, is it going to be written information? Is it going to be oral? Is it going to be a video? Like what? Source is going to be the more primary way people engage with, um, because that would definitely, uh, whatever one is going to reach the, have the most effect would probably be the manner in which I go about it.

Um, one of my first artistic loves was film, so I could definitely see myself, um, recording, uh, my journey and my history with the film. That's something that's really been interested to me. interesting to me. Um, but however it looks when it comes out, I do plan on telling the story because I do think that in this moment in time, especially where we are, it's a pivotal moment for human history.

Uh, taking the old and mixing it with a new into something that's never been seen before. Mm-Hmm. . Uh, so I think it's important to tell the story of now and tell the, a story of these plants, uh, before we forget. There's a lot of wisdom, there's a lot of information, um, that has been passed down through many different people's families and stories that are.

You know considered anecdotal information, but this anecdotal information holds a lot of weight and Also a lot of questions on things that we can search for with science

[00:51:37] **David Smith:** is there any last bit of wisdom that you'd like to be, you know, held in fortuity?

[00:51:42] **Martin Roseman:** Um, um, I think that one of the things that people should realize is that a lot of the times the cure Or quote unquote cure, not in the most literal sense, um, is often in your backyard.

Things grow in these symbiotic relationships, so sometimes, um, we might have something that we're experiencing, and if only we knew what was in our backyard, you know? Like, uh, plantain, a very common weed, is extremely beneficial in a poultice for bug bites. And that's in most people's back end or front yard.

You know, so a lot of times it's whatever, sometimes what you're seeking is just out in your backyard. So the more we learn to identify just what's in our backyard and stop seeing blades as grass as the same blade as grass and realize that there are these important symbiotic relationships on the ground, the more we can just take care of ourselves.