

## The Herbalism and Off-Grid Medicine (HOME) - Course Overview

**Contact Hours: 120+ hours**

### **Course Description:**

The Herbalism and Off-Grid Medicine (HOME) is a program that combines the best of the worlds of orthodox medicine with botanical medicine (aka herbalism) in an austere, remote or post-disaster environment. This course provides an immersive environment for students to train in the skills needed for remote clinic setup, medical infrastructure as well as triage and treatment of trauma, acute and chronic conditions. This hands-on intensive takes place in a scenario-based, (fictional) post-disaster environment where prolonged field care is a medical necessity. All of the curriculum assumes there is no higher definitive medical care available for days, weeks or even months and integrates orthodox western medicine with western medical herbalism as well as a small amount of Chinese medicine (TCM). The HOME focuses primarily on community-based clinical (and sustainable) medicine that can be improvised when there is a lack of medical resources.

### **Scenario-Based:**

The HOME is focused on learning and practicing medical and plant-medicine skills under the pressure of real-world stressors that present themselves in a grid-down, post-disaster and remote settings. To that end, the course is an end-to-end course and it is not possible to jump into the middle of it, even if some portions of the course have been taken at our school (or elsewhere) in the past.

### **The HOME is divided into five phases:**

**Phase 1 (creating clinical and team infrastructure, Days 1 - 3):** After arrival at base camp on Day 1, students will receive an in-briefing outlining the course structure, the physical boundaries of the course, emergency plans (real life emergencies), student and teacher introductions. Students will then begin the work of creating clinical infrastructure (e.g., clinic and resources) to be able to host a clinic in a post-disaster and/or off-grid environment. During this process, food, water, cooking, physical structures, hygiene and sanitation, team medical support, area scouting (land navigation), security and communication will be presented in class and hands-on structure.

Classes are broken up into short segments (always less than an hour, sometimes less than 30 minutes) and cover the necessary elements to allow students to gain maximum hands-on experience. For those who have taken our on-site courses in the past, this course mirrors some of the major aspects of the Core Basic and the Scout courses, although more medically focused.

*Phase 1 Online Course Prerequisite(s): Students must pass the Medical Advance Party and the Austere Medical Infrastructure Online course*

**Phase 2 (wilderness first responder, Days 3 - 6):** Starting afternoon of day 3, students will be briefed on the WFR subjects that will be reviewed, taught and tested up through the morning of day 6. By this point, most of the medical and team field infrastructure will be in place, allowing students to focus primarily on medical and herbalism subjects. Students will learn, practice and test WFR skills in order to obtain WFR (and CPR) certification. Scenarios that are pertinent to the post-disaster environment this course is set in,

will be an active part of the training and testing. After testing is finished, students will have downtime for the rest of day 6 until austere trauma begins on day 7.

*Phase 2 Online Course Prerequisite(s): Students must pass the Online Wilderness First Responder course*

**Phase 3 (Austere Trauma Care, Days 7 - 9):** Starting early morning of day 7, we begin the austere trauma care portion of the course. This picks up where WFR leaves off. Trauma and prolonged field care for gunshot wounds, broken bones and joint dislocations, thorax and abdominal injuries and more are taught and practiced. Hands-on skills include suturing, wound debridement, sterile fields, shock treatment, post-surgical care, introduction to herbalism concepts that relate to pain management, wound and infection management and advanced medicine making concepts. Scenario-based trauma also includes infrastructure issues revisited and the trauma portion wraps up by the morning of day 9.

*Phase 3 Online Course Prerequisite(s): Students must pass the Online Austere Trauma Care course*

**Phase 4 (Austere Acute Care, Days 9-12):** Starting afternoon of day 9, the austere acute care portion moves students from trauma and post-trauma care into acute care concepts. Physical exams from head to toe, review of systems, western acute-care herbalism (to include flareups of chronic conditions) and even an introduction into some Chinese medicine concepts adapted for field use are all taught and practiced. Medicine making, apothecary management and the running of an acute-care herbal clinic are emphasized as well. Classes are wrapped up and the scenario is brought to a conclusion by late morning of day 12. Students pack up their gear, break down the base camp and are transported to an overnight location close to the community clinic day 13.

*Phase 4 Online Course Prerequisite(s): Students must pass the Online Austere Acute Care course*

**Phase 5 (live community herbal clinic and graduation, Day 13):** Students prepare and run a free herbal, community clinic. Clinic will run for 3-4 hours during which time students will run intake, prepare SOAP notes, work in the clinical apothecary and more, as part of a free herbal clinic to the community.

**Wrap up, final briefing and graduation, Day 13:** After the clinic is finished and broken down, the students will receive a final briefing and Q & A for the full course. Upon graduation, students receive WFR and CPR cards and a certificate for completion of the entire HOME that show the amount of contact hours of the full course as well as each component.

## HOME COURSE SYLLABUS - SKILLS

### Phase 1 – Austere Medical Infrastructure

- Site Location
- Area reconnaissance
- Basic land navigation
- Radio communications
- Camp and camping skills
  - Knots and ropes
  - Individual shelters
  - Packing and securing gear
  - Personal hygiene, water purification & meal planning
  - Basic camp tools (knife, saw, hatchet, etc.)
  - Fires & camp cooking (individual)
- Meal planning and camp cooking (group)
- Hygiene and sanitation (group/clinic)
- Water purification (group/clinic)
- Basic shelter building (group/clinic)
- Security & awareness
- Backup plans, egress & rally points

### Phase 2 – Wilderness First Responder Hands-On Training and Testing

- Bandaging and Splinting
- CPR
- Primary Survey
- Secondary Survey
- Search and Rescue introduction
- Environmental Injuries
- Medical emergencies & evacuations
- Team Medic
- Mass casualty event

### Phase 3 – Austere Trauma (Orthodox and Herbal – “O” and “H”)

- Trauma clinic setup (O)
- Suturing (O)
- Wound debridement (O)
- Chest tubes (O)
- Shock (O)
- Pain management (O)
- Wound management (H)
- Pain management (H)
- Shock (H)

- Field apothecary I

#### Phase 4 – Austere Acute (Orthodox and Herbal – “O” and “H”)

- General physical exam (O)
- Most useful musculoskeletal tests
- HEENT (otoscope, ophthalmoscope) (O)
- Respiratory, cardiovascular (Stethoscope) (O)
- Common tests – urine dipstick, blood glucose (O)
- SOAP Notes (O & H)
- Acute pain management (H)
- Inflammation and injury (H)
- Herbal poulticing, plasters, prepared bandages (H)
- Preparation and logistics of medicine making for austere herbal medicine (H)
- Respiratory formulas – acute care (H)
- Gastrointestinal formulas – acute care (H)
- Urinary tract formulas – acute care (H)
- Acute infectious disease of eyes, ears, nose, sinus, throat, mouth (H)
- Advanced herbal medicine making and administration techniques (H)
- Plant walks & wildcrafting medicine for the austere clinic (H)

#### Phase 5 – Setting up and running a free herbal clinic – practical exercise