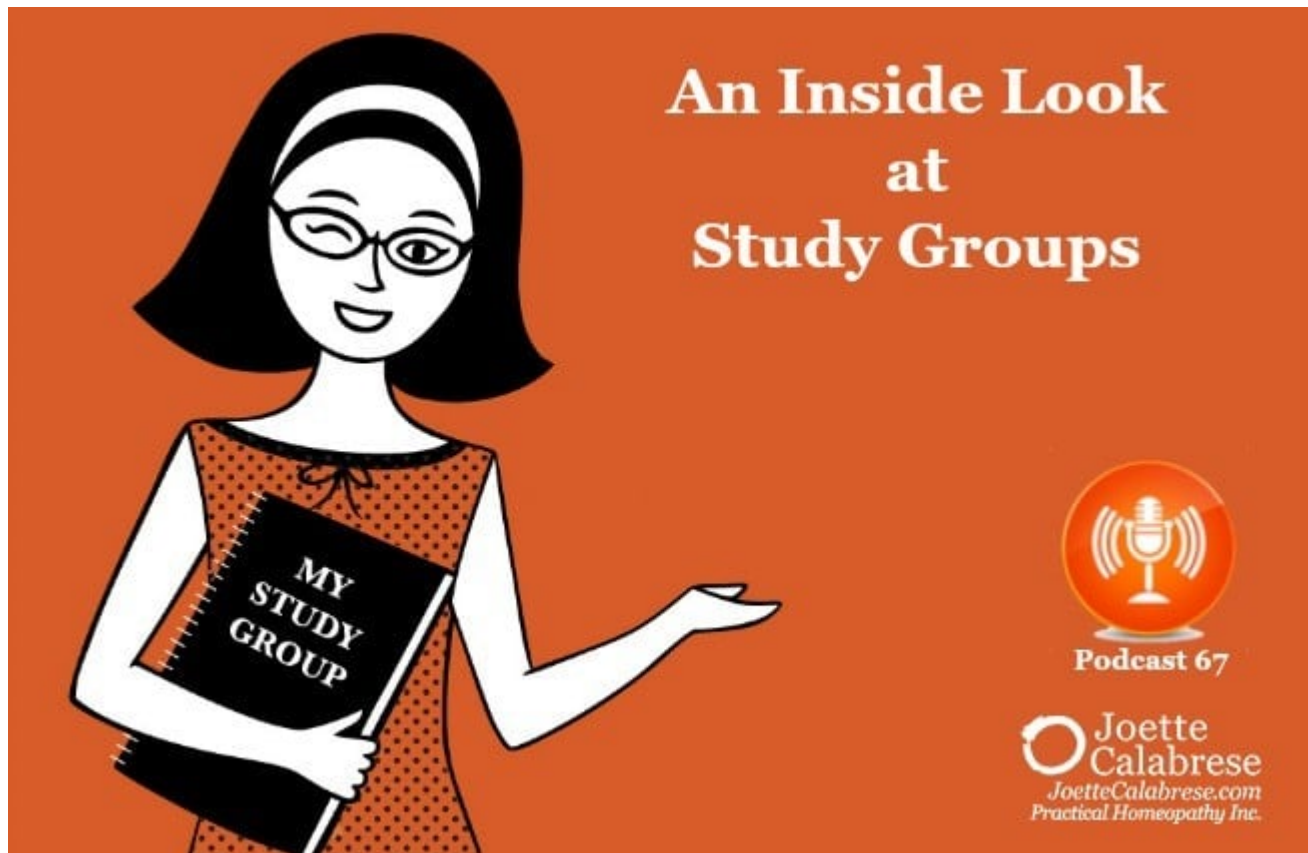


Podcast 67 – An Inside Look at Study Groups



IN THIS PODCAST, WE COVER:

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LINKS AND RESOURCES MENTIONED IN THIS PODCAST:

[Gateway to Homeopathy: A Guided Study Group Curriculum](#)

[Podcast 62 – Dads with Audacity: A “Guys Only” Study Group](#)

[Joette’s Study Group: Find your new Study Group Friends’ Facebook page](#): how to join a study group or get one started

[Students of Joette Calabrese’s Facebook page](#) (a closed group reserved for students of Joette’s to discuss homeopathy)

[Gateway to Homeopathy II](#): Only available for purchase through your resource page, after having taken the prerequisite Gateway to Homeopathy I (referenced above)

Kate: This is the Practical Homeopathy® Podcast Episode Number 67 with Joette Calabrese.

Joette: This is Joette Calabrese, and I’d like to welcome you to the Practical Homeopathy Podcast. Women and men worldwide are taking back control of their families’ health and learning how to heal their bodies naturally, safely and effectively. So, if you’re hungry to learn more, you’ve come to the right place. Stay tuned as we give you the tools – and the inspiration you need – as I share my decades of experience and knowledge using this powerful medicine we call homeopathy.

Joette: Hi folks! Joette here, and we’re going to switch the tables a bit. Instead of Kate interviewing me, I’m going to interview Kate!

There's a really good reason for it, not only because I like her, but also because she's been a student of homeopathy for some time and is now a teacher. She runs study groups. And I thought it would be interesting for us to talk to her about how she came to starting study groups, and how she gathers up the members for the classes, et cetera. So, I like to really delve in and get to know Kate and see how she goes about doing this.

"Da-da-dan-dan-dan-da-dan-dan-dan-dan-dan-dan."

Kate: That's the intro music.

Joette: I know.

Kate: Dancing girls!

Joette: Yeah, yeah.

Kate: Thank you for having me. It's weird being on this side of the interview. But yeah, I'm excited to talk about it because I love doing the study groups. I don't even know how many I've done now. Maybe, oh, I don't know, eight, nine, ten? Something like that.

Joette: Wow! Kate, I had no idea! So, we're talking about

Gateway I, [Gateway to Homeopathy](#), which is my curriculum. We use that as a springboard for lots of folks who are interested in learning, not just about homeopathy and how to use it practically, but the protocols that I use. It introduces just enough so that folks can get up and running and start using the blog and using my books and my other courses – if they choose to go that route. So, it's a good um ... it's a good "gateway."

Kate: Right. Appropriately named, "Gateway."

Joette: Yeah. And we'll have all of the information on [how to join a Gateway or get one started](#), et cetera, down below [see above in "Links and Resources"].

Gateway to Homeopathy

Kate: Well, Joette, one of the things that I think is very interesting is a lot of people think the *Gateway to Homeopathy I* ... that it's just for people who are very new to homeopathy. That's really not true. What I find is there are many people who have studied homeopathy for years, or who have used it with their family for years, or who are professionals in the medical field, or have taken many of your courses, and they go back and they take the *Gateway to Homeopathy* study groups because they want to learn with a group of women, a group of men, whoever they may be and really build that community and learn together. So, it's surprising how many people who have a lot of experience actually join these study groups.

Joette: But it wasn't always like that with the groups that you have organized, or has it been that way?

Kate: I think yes and no. There are a lot of people who have never studied homeopathy, who this is brand new to them. For instance, in the study group that I'm leading right now, I have some people in there whose mom said, "Hey, I want you to take this study group." And she paid for a bunch of her daughters and her daughters-in-law to join the study group. She's babysitting their children. They're starting at ground zero. Then we also have someone in this group who has been practicing homeopathy for 20 years as a classical homeopath.

Joette: Isn't that great?

Kate: So, these people are learning together. They're helping one another. They're teaching one another. They're supporting one another, and it's beautiful to watch. So, while we're doing the study group, there's actually a chat box, and these women are communicating with each other. They're saying, "Hey now, what was that remedy? What was the name of that? How do you spell it?" And the ones who have the experience, they're helping the new people. And they're helping them learn the remedy names. They're giving them tips. So, there's sort of almost this side-study group going on as we're going through the Gateway lessons.

Joette: Well, the best way to learn is to teach. There's no doubt about it. When I first began teaching homeopathy, I found that I'd better be boned-up on my history. I'd better

really know how to explain things simply to be able to get the complex and be able to give it to people in a way that they can use it readily. So, it does force you – as you're teaching this as the instructor, also, for those who have been using this for a while who are helping others – it forces you to really fine-tune your understanding and be able to explain very succinctly in a very short couple of sentences exactly what it is homeopathy is.

Kate: Right. But I don't want to let that scare people because with the way the curriculum is laid out, you really can do this without having any experience. If you read the chapter, if you look at the questions and the videos ahead of time, you *can* do it. So, don't let it intimidate you just because you're new to homeopathy.

Joette: Well, and those neophyte questions I would imagine, they've come forth from people who are brand-new. Again, they help solidify the thought process of those who have been doing it for a while. I think it's all great. It's intended to be that way. We never come into the world with an equal playing field. We're supposed to be all at different levels with different experiences. So, I love this. I love that you're doing it like this.

Starting a study group

So, I think it's really interesting that you told me earlier before we began recording that you have someone in the class who is from Finland. We have people coming in from South Africa and England and Ireland, et cetera, South America, to

these groups. What's fascinating about it is that when you have this chat groups available, then they're six hours ahead, 12 hours ahead depending on where they live. Questions can be answered for others in the middle of the night perhaps, when everyone else might be sound asleep in your area of the U.S. for example.

Kate: Right. So, what you're talking about, Joette, just for clarification to those listening is that a lot of times what people do with these study groups is they will start a Facebook group for their study groups. And then everyone in the study group can join in and communicate as you said at any time of the day.

Joette: So, that's what you've done, right? Now, do you have a Facebook group for each and every one of these separate groups that you've taught? Or do you have one big group, and everyone melds together?

Kate: Yes, one big Facebook group, and everyone who's ever taking a Gateway study Group with me, they all join into that one Facebook page.

Joette: Is the reason that you're able to do this is because you've been using homeopathy for quite a while, Kate, or do you think that even someone who's a neophyte can start a study group?

Kate: Yes, as I mentioned before, I think anybody can do this because of the way that the curriculum is laid out.

It's very easy to follow. All the answers are provided. So, I don't want anyone to be afraid of starting a study group.

In fact, part of the instructions of the study group curriculum is that if you are new, you can each take a turn leading a certain lesson and share the responsibility so that each of you can study certain parts of it. You can all help each other out.

Joette: That's the way we did it when we formed a study group when I first started to learn about homeopathy back in the early 80s. That's exactly what we would do. We would take turns. We would assign to each other, "Okay, you study this particular remedy and then report to us. Then someone else is going to study this particular condition and come back and report to us on how we use this or that medicine."

So, I love that idea. But what I was wondering is I thought you were talking about how easy it is for someone who is new to this to join. But you're saying also, even if you're new to homeopathy, you could actually *start* a study group without any background in it as well, right?

Kate: Right. You're going to learn as you go. You're going to learn as you do it, as you read the chapters. That will force you to do some research, and you can help each other.

Joette: Well, in the land of the blind, you know, the one-eyed man is king. So, I don't know. In the land of the blind, the one-eyed homeopath is queen.

Kate: There are some other things that you can do to make it easier as well. You can actually assign people to read different things that are supposed to be read aloud. You can assign people to answer certain questions so that it's all laid out ahead of time. I actually ask the questions of the study group and let people take turns answering. So, you don't have to know everything.

Joette: What kind of people – I mean we touched on it for a moment – but what kind of people are generally joining? I'm sure that you have a whole slew of the whole demographic but give me an idea of who joins these kinds of groups.

Kate: Right. Moms that are new to homeopathy and have babies at home. We have nurses. We have doctors, people with medical degrees. We have naturopaths. We have classical homeopaths. We have students of yours, Joette, that have taken many of your courses. I have many people who have taken these study groups who have taken all of your courses, Joette. So now they're going, and they're taking the study groups together because they want that camaraderie. They want to take everything that you've written or taught, and they want to learn it all.

Joette: Oh, that's exciting! That's really exciting. Then, of course, there's the father's group ...

Kate: Oh, my gosh!

Joette: ...that you interviewed a few months ago that was so great. It's just dads. For those of you who haven't listened to that, you got to [make sure you listen to that podcast](#) because it's just young fathers who live up ... I think they live in Oregon. They happened to live close to each other. But that's another part of this picture is that these people can live anywhere, right? You can do it all virtually, or you can just get a group and meet in your church basement or in your living room – and some of them are in your living room, and some of them are in another part of the country. I mean this can be a whole mixture of locales. Is that right?

Kate: Right! I have people from all over the world joining in – East Coast, West Coast. So, I try to choose times that will allow for people on either coast to join into the study group, and it's not too inconvenient. It's a little difficult to get the whole gamut of all the time zones in there. But that's one suggestion that I would have is choose a time that is accessible to people from all over. It's impossible to, of course, please everyone but think about that. Keep that in mind as you plan your study groups.

The other thing, Joette, as you hinted at is you can have study groups that are all online. You can have study groups that are in your home. But what I love the most is having a combination of both. So, I love the feel of women sitting around a table and chatting. And then we have the computer screen, and we have a whole another 20-30 women that are joining via conferencing software. So, we have a melding of both usually. I find that very energizing.

Joette: Yeah and gives it depth too. Last night, I taught one of the classes, and I think four or five of the women

were in Southern California. Another woman was ... I think, pretty sure ... she was in Mississippi. So, it gives a completely different flavor. The backgrounds of the people are different. Their experiences are different. I think it's just fascinating.

One of the things that really struck me one time was when another group – and I don't think it was your group – there were a large number of people in this group. It was all women. I want to say there were 99 people in this group. That number stands out for me. Across my screen, as I was coming in at the 8th class (because that's what we do ... we could talk about that in a moment), there were 99 little squares across my screen with all these people from all over the world.

One woman was on her cellphone. While we were looking at her, while she was aiming it at herself, you could see behind her was her llama. She was pulling her llama, honest to goodness, across a mountain field! She was in Bolivia. It was hysterical. I said, "Oh my gosh! That llama is going to get homeopathy. It's so great. The next time he starts spitting, she could calm him down and get his temper tantrums down to a purr instead of a full-fledged spit."

Kate: Oh, my goodness! That is hilarious!

Joette: I know. It is hilarious. It is.

We've had mothers nursing, and I've seen that many times.

I've also seen lots of kids in the background running around. I loved one time, there was a woman who was in her bedroom. This mom was wondering, "I wonder what remedy would be best for my child?" As we were watching her, behind her – she was in her bedroom – behind her, there was a child running from the wall up to the bed, jumping on the bed (bounce, bounce, bounce, bounce), jump off the bed, hit the wall, BANG! Turn around. Run back to the bed (bounce, bounce, bounce, bounce), jump off the bed to the other wall, BANG! For a solid 15 minutes.

We all wondered, "Could this be a child who has hyperactivity?" You can't help but notice that kind of thing.

Many times, I'm getting off on a little tangent but many times, we as mothers don't see what our children need so readily because we're so close to it, and all the kids are like that. Maybe the mother is like that, too, and not realizing that that *is* hyperactivity. If a child can do that for 20 minutes straight – or even 30 minutes or even five minutes, for that matter – then that means there's an aspect of hyperactivity. That's helpful because you have to be able to step outside of your perspective. Others seeing that can make all the difference in the world in giving you the right perspective.

Kate: Yeah, so, these women, these men, they help each other.

Joette: Yes, it's great. It's great. That's what this is

all about.

Promoting study groups

So, Kate, how do people find out about this? You advertise this somewhere when you're going to start a group?

Kate: Well, first, I think about what's a good time to start a study group. Right? I don't want to start it right before Christmas or, you know. There are certain times where people are more apt to join study groups. All you have to do is put a notice on [Joette's Study Group: Find your new Study Group Friends' Facebook page](#). So again, that's Joette's Study Group: Find your new Study Group Friends. So, that's one place to advertise that you're starting a new study group.

Another place is on your [Students of Joette's Facebook page](#). For those who are on that page, once a week, there is a post that Natalie puts up, and anyone who is starting a new study group can reply to that post or comment on that post.

Some of the other things that I've done, Joette, is advertise in our local health food store, on our forum for our homeschoolers in the area. So, those are the main ways that I let people know that I'm doing a study group. Oh, one more way. On my personal Facebook page, I have had people that said, "I didn't even know you did this," or "What is homeopathy?" It's kind of funny because a lot of people, as

you know, think that homeopathy is an umbrella term for natural medicine. So, that's a great way to open up the conversation and tell them, "No, homeopathy is something a bit different. Let me tell you what it is."

Joette: So, Kate, have you ever had anyone join your study group, and when they finish it, they join another study group, and then another? They're starting over and over, but now with new people, to meet new people, to make sure they've really got the material down to a science. Do you ever see anything like that?

Kate: Yes, I do. I see people all the time go through the study groups with different leaders. Or they go through a study group, and then they start a study group on their own. I just want to encourage everyone out there to start a study group. Find people in your area. Find people online that want to learn about this. This is a great opportunity to tell people there is an amazing way to heal your body without allopathic drugs.

And also, Joette, I have people who take the study group over and over again. So, I always advertise when I'm doing a new study group on my Facebook page for the people who have already taken my study group. I let them know I'm going to be doing another Gateway group. If you want to join in, it's no cost. Just jump in, and I give them all the information. So, I love it that ...

Joette: No cost. I love that part: no cost.

Kate: Yeah. So, the people who have joined in before, let's all come together again, and we get to continue to build those relationships. Then they help the new people, and it's just beautiful.

Joette: Kate, do you find that there are folks who bring in their skeptical relatives or friends, or are people who join these groups already committed to homeopathy? What do you see is the most prevalent kind of person who joins in?

Kate: There is no "most prevalent" kind of person. It is every kind of person. There are people who, I think, are not sure about homeopathy. In fact – oh, this is a funny story – I have a dear friend of mine (and I know she'll listen to this podcast), she joined the study group, and the whole time, every time we met, she would ask these super in-depth, difficult questions. And I love her dearly, but it was a challenge for me in a way because she didn't believe in homeopathy when she started taking this.

So, it was funny. But by the end, I think she started to see that there is something to this. Then we joke around because her husband was asking her, "What are you doing? What are all these things coming in the mail?" And now, we call her our supplier because in our town, she has the biggest supply of homeopathy.

Joette: So, if you come with an inquiring mind, and it becomes satisfied, that's when you can move on and really fly with this. There's no doubt.

Kate: This woman is very intelligent, and she had great questions – valid questions. So, we just worked through all of those together. She heard you on the Q&A that we do on the last week. So, it was just really neat to see how she came to understand and learn about homeopathy. She's taking your courses now and moving on, and she knows a ton.

Joette: So, do you think that part of what encouraged her to move along was because it was more than just you telling her this as a friend? And that now that she was part of a group, that made a difference?

Kate: Oh, 100%. I think she heard from all of these other people about how homeopathy worked for them in their lives. She also heard from you, Joette, and then she started *using* the homeopathy. I think that was the clincher actually ... is that she had enough knowledge that she could now start to use these remedies, and she saw them make drastic changes in her family's life. She's still working through some things, but she saw them affect many people in a positive way. I think all of those things combined made her a believer in homeopathy.

Joette: So, during these meetings – I realize you're following the workbook, going page by page – but I would imagine that folks are reporting their successes. So, you're hearing, "Oh my gosh! I cured my child's ear infection. I had no idea it was going to be that easy." Or someone else talks about a mistake that they made, and how they corrected it. That gives everyone in the group an opportunity to hear the pros and the cons. Is that right? I would imagine that must happen.

Kate: I'm so glad that you brought that up because I feel like *that* is what gives these groups the flavor. That's what gives the people the encouragement is that we're all sharing about how homeopathy has worked in our lives.

In fact, I make a PowerPoint that I use for each of the weeks of the study guide. You don't have to do this. It's just something that I find helpful for my online study groups. I have a PowerPoint that goes right along with the book. In the PowerPoint notes, I have inserted little things like, "Tell the story of Lucas on his bike." So, that reminds me to talk about when Lucas needed *Aconite* – or different scenarios when I've used it and seen major results from these different remedies that we talk about as we go through the weeks.

And then I ask other people, too, "If you have any stories that you want to share, I'd love to hear that as well." So then, people jump in, and they talk about just like you said, how it's helped them in their lives.

Joette: So, do you meet weekly, or do you meet monthly? How do you generally run this group?

Kate: Well, we meet once a week. I know different study groups do it different ways. One of the things that I found helpful is to have two study groups, and they meet at different times of the week. So, they're running at the same time. So, people can join in on a Monday night, or if they can't make it that Monday, they join the Wednesday.

Joette: Oh, that's great! That is great.

Kate: So, each week, they can come in on both sessions. It's the same.

Joette: Immersion. Immersion, people, immersion!

Kate: Or, if they can't make it that night, they come in on the morning class.

Joette: Oh, that's really, that's really very smart putting it together on a calendar in that fashion. That's great.

Kate: So, we follow just along with the weekly progression. And then the last week, we have a Q&A with you, Joette. I make sure to remind them in the very beginning, "We need to get this Q&A scheduled with Joette. So, please let me know if you want to do that Q&A," because I know your schedule is super tight.

So, if you're interested in doing a study group, really think about your dates and call Joette's office and get that booked right away.

Joette: Well, I'm interested in knowing the logistics of this, too. So, do you stay in touch with these folks during

the week, or do you give them a calendar, or do you have a place where you post information or changes, say if a holiday comes up or something?

Kate: Everyone does this a little different. But what I do is I have an email group, and I add everyone to that group who's doing the Gateway together. So, I just have to click on one little link and send an email out each week reminding people that we have a meeting coming up and letting them know what the homework is. As many reminders as you can give people, it's helpful – because as you know, we all forget.

Joette: Right, that's right. So, you have homework. People actually follow up with the homework? I mean, I know that's the way we set this up is for folks to be able to study something during the week before the next meeting. But do you find that people get to it? I mean, most mothers have very busy lives – and grandmothers.

Kate: I feel that most people do get to the homework. They're usually pretty good about it. It's helpful to read those blogs or listen to the podcast, and it's not that hard. It's not very long. The homework doesn't take that much time. You can listen to a podcast while you're doing the dishes or driving in the car. So, I don't think it's a burden to have the homework, but it does enhance what you're learning. So, I would encourage you to do the homework.

Joette: Yes, it's great.

Kate, do you have any groups that continue on forever? I mean, if you started one five years ago – I guess it wasn't five; it was probably two and a half to three years ago when we started these. Do you have any that keep going or they stayed together and now they're lifelong friends? Or have you seen anything like that occur?

Kate: Yes. I have as a matter of fact. A number of the people who started one of the original study groups that I did, they've melded into one Facebook group. They all encourage one another.

Joette: Oh excellent! Excellent, love it.

Kate: So, they continue to study together different things. So, yeah, it's really good.

Joette: Yeah, that is good. The group that I joined back in the 80s that I was referring to earlier, we met every Thursday night for four years. We became very close friends. One of the members of that group is also a homeopath, a professional homeopath as I am. Another one went on to become a midwife who uses homeopathy nearly exclusively. Then the others just use it for their families. So, I love that we see people springboard from these kinds of meetings and these kinds of groups to find their way, whatever it is that they're looking for in their lives.

Cost

Well, Kate, I'm very encouraged by what you're telling me tonight. I know what's going on, and I have a basic understanding because it is connected to me very keenly. But I want folks to know about the cost because that is a factor, especially for those people who are new to homeopathy. They don't even know whether or not they want to invest in anything yet. So, can you talk a little bit about that?

Kate: Yes. I think that's one of the reasons why people start off with these Gateway groups is because the cost is relatively inexpensive to get the curriculum. Then that's it.

Some of the study group leaders will charge an additional fee because to be quite honest, it's time-consuming to put these groups together. You have to pay money for a video conferencing software. So, it's not that we're trying to make money. It's that this does take time. Some groups don't charge anything. So, you have a choice of who you want to be in a group with, and what you want to invest.

But the cost is low. So, I would say for those people just starting out – you're right, Joette – this is a great place for them to start without making a huge investment. And the bonus is that after they complete all the lessons for this *Gateway to Homeopathy* study group, they get a discount to purchase remedies from OHM Pharmacy in Texas. So, that's also a huge savings. I love OHM, and I order from there

about once every month or two. So, that right there is worth its weight in gold.

One of the other huge benefits to joining the study group is that after you complete the eight lessons, which some groups do in six weeks or eight weeks, it just depends. Every group is a little different. But there are eight lessons. So, once you complete that and you've gotten the certificate that you've completed the *Gateway to Homeopathy* study group, then you are eligible to participate in a group buy of your courses. So, people love that. There are people getting together all the time participating in these group buys but you have to have taken the *Gateway to Homeopathy* study group to participate in it.

Joette: Kate, talk a little bit about [Gateway II because that has been formulated because folks finished Gateway I](#), and they said, "Okay, now what?" They weren't ready to start in full-fledged courses. So, talk about Gateway II if you don't mind.

Kate: Sure. So, Gateway II ... how you developed it, Joette, I know was you were thinking about what do people want next? What are the questions that they're left with after the Gateway I? What's their next step?

So, Gateway II just sort of takes you to the next level of understanding in a deeper way about homeopathy, learning more of the protocols. So, most people go on, and they do Gateway II together either as that same group, or they join different groups. So, that's a great stepping stone.

Joette: When I was a little girl, my mother spoke just enough Italian to me for me to understand here or there. She used to say, "Arrangiati," which means "arrange yourself." It was a way of saying, "Get yourself together. Stop acting the way you're acting and get it together."

So, what I want to tell folks is this is a new year. This is it: 2019. This is the year, folks. Arrangiati. Organize your life. Arrange your life. Look for what it is you want out of life, what you want to get out of this year and put it to action. If this turns you on, by all means, join in. They can join your group for just about, well, I don't know. Can they join your group any time, Kate?

Kate: Yes. I usually do a group about three or four times a year, so sure.

Joette: Beautiful, beautiful. So, with that, I say start your year off right. God bless everyone. Thanks, Kate, for this wonderful interview.

Kate: Yes. Go and start your study group.

Kate: You just listened to a podcast from PracticalHomeopathy.com where nationally certified homeopath, public speaker, and author, Joette Calabrese shares her passion for helping families stay strong through homeopathy. Joette's podcasts are available on iTunes,

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