

www.cope-scotland.org

Creating your own sensory relaxation space indoors and out, to help unwind & connect with nature, ourselves and other people.



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"British physician Sir Muir Gray famously said that everyone needs a 'Natural Health Service' as well as a National Health Service. The question still remains as to how we embed gardens and gardening into daily life for everyone"



Useful links to other sites where perhaps this booklet is not most helpful.

We realise that some people may experience Anosmia which is the partial loss of smell. While the tips in this wee booklet around scent may not be useful, the visual experience of seeing flowers and herbs may be of interest. For others who may not be able to experience flowers either by sight or smell, there are many plants which have a tactile quality which may be of interest.

We have also included the link to Allergy UK as we recognise some people may have allergies that require additional advice before embarking on creating a scented space.

The following booklet is for general information only and does not replace professional advice. If you have any doubts if this booklet is for you, please seek advice from your professional health caregivers.

We have also included sites that may be of interest around how in addition to the natural world being kind to us and our mental wellbeing, we can also be kind to the natural world. You may also want to visit your local library and see what materials they have available that may be of interest. Or find out where your nearest community garden is and perhaps arrange to drop in and have a chat with the members.

Gardeners are often keen on sharing with others, and it is another way to connect to new people. There may even be classes or groups in your area, e.g., Men's Sheds, where you could find out more about gardening and creating your own relaxing space.

SEE LINKS ON NEXT PAGE.

www.fifthsense.org.uk – Charity for people affected by smell and taste disorder www.rnib.org.uk – Charity for people affected by sight loss.

www.rnib.org.uk/scotland – Charity for people affected by sight loss in Scotland www.sightscotland.org.uk – Educating and supporting people with vision loss www.deafblind.org.uk – Charity for people with deaf blindness.

www.dbscotland.org.uk – Charity for people with deaf blindness in Scotland www.alliance-scotland.org.uk – The ALLIANCE, The Scottish Sensory Hub. www.allergyuk.org – Allergy Charity.

www.rhs.org.uk – Advice on gardening including how to create a sensory garden. www.rspb.org.uk – Offer ideas on eco gardening.

www.wildlifetrusts.org - Ideas on making a wildlife garden from scratch.

www.wasteless.zerowastescotland.org.uk – Upcycling Garden ideas.

www.planetnatural.com – Ideas for growing indoors.

www.cope-scotland.org - Growchapel Handbook for allotments and gardening.

www.gardendesign.com – Garden ideas and a free newsletter you can subscribe to

www.wildlifetrusts.org - Ideas on gardening which is kind to wildlife.

www.mind.org.uk – How nature benefits mental health.

www.menssheds.org.uk – Community spaces for men to connect, converse and create.

www.trellisscotland.org.uk - Network for Therapeutic gardening.

www.dementiauk.org/gardening-with-dementia – For ideas on how gardening can be helpful for people with dementia

https://www.alzscot.org/living-with-dementia/getting-support/find-supportnear-you/garden-group-rosyth – For ideas on gardening groups for people living with dementia



Remember, some plants can be toxic to people and pets and harmful if swallowed. If in doubt before planting please consult an expert. These pieces may be of interest:

www.ourhouseplants.com/guides/poisonous-houseplants

www.rhs.org.uk/prevention-protection/potentially-harmful-garden-plants



Introduction

This wee booklet has been put together to offer some ideas to create a scented space in your home or garden. Working with Growchapel, a community growing initiative in Drumchapel and Enable Thomas Fortune, Drumchapel, we worked to begin the creation of the scented sitooterie. A space where people can sit in a scented garden, relax and watch the world go by, or catch up with people they know for a chat in a safe, open space, surrounded by lovely scents and sensations.

Interest in the 'scented sitooterie' and how to create one at home prompted the publication of this book. We would like to thank Fiona for listing plants to include and Bernie for her advice on planting, and Janis and Derek from the ALLIANCE, The Scottish Sensory Hub, for their helpful ideas as critical friends also Kathleen for giving it a final proofread. We have included a bit of why using scents can be good for our wellbeing, as well as the benefits of just having a 'blether' chat! We also wanted to share some ideas on using all our senses in a sensory garden. There may be a sensory garden orsensory section in a large garden near you. That may help you decide what is suitable for your garden/home. Have a look online at what is near you. We can often be amazed to find what we have on our doorstep.

One wee booklet alone will not provide all the answers people are seeking around creating a sensory space. We hope what this offers is a starting point to explore and learn more, if this has meaning for you. The Royal Horticultural Society website offers a wealth of information. There are many other sites online you may also find helpful or of interest.



Why scent matters

Our sense of smell is really powerful and is a tool that can cause physical, mental and emotional responses, think about scents you like and dislike and how you feel about them, and you will understand what we mean. Think about the smell of cinnamon, e.g., for many people, this immediately has them thinking of Christmas, or warm, freshly baked bread, can create a feeling of happiness or wellbeing. People selling their homes are often advised to have the smells of coffee or home baking around as this can increase the chance of a sale!!

Many people love aromatic plants. When we pass a beautiful, scented flower, our behaviour clearly shows this. The fragrance is enough to stop us in our tracks, make us forget our train of thought and plunge our face into the petals to inhale the perfume. Unless we suffer from hay fever, which is why we included Allergy UK's website, check what works for you, we are all different.

When we stop to smell the flowers, we forget the cares and troubles of the day for a moment, and the world seems to be a kinder place. Gardeners love to touch and smell the herbs, aromatic plants and flowers that they grow themselves, sniffing the aromas that cling to the fingers, such as pungent rosemary or zesty peppermint, fresh lavender or tangy fennel. These scents can make us relax and breathe deeply.



Many of us may be familiar with the term essential oils. The Egyptians were the first to distil plants in order to extract their essential oils. They used them medicinally, in religious ceremonies, for beautifying skin and face, and in potions and perfumes. The Greek physician Hippocrates advocated that:

The way to achieve good health was to have an aromatic bath and scented massage every day.

Although aromatherapy is based on more than 6000 years of knowledge, the term was first used only 75 years ago. A French chemist named Gattefosse owned a perfumery business; one day, he burnt his hand, plunged it into a vat of lavender oil and found the burn healed quickly. This began a lifelong interest in studying the therapeutic properties of plant oils. You may find this book of interest "Gattefosse's Aromatherapy" by Rene Maurice Gattefosse.

Recently biochemists have isolated dozens of ingredients in essential oils that account for their amazing properties. A student of Gattefosse called Marguerite Maury in the late 1950's developed Gattefosses work by using massage together with essential oils. She also developed a more holistic approach by looking at each person's individual physical and emotional needs. You may find this book of interest "Marguerite Maury's Guide To Aromatherapy: The Secret Of Life And Youth" By Dr E A Maury.

Aromatherapy is reputed as a truly holistic therapy as it treats the whole being, not just on a physical level but an emotional level also. Using essential oils is a pleasurable experience stimulating your sense of smell, moods, behaviour, and physical and mental wellbeing. For sustainable benefits, aromatherapy should complement a healthy diet and lifestyle and can be invaluable in times of stress.

Remember, as with all things, ALL ESSENTIAL OILS ARE NOT SUITABLE FOR EVERYONE. Before making any health choices, it is always wise to consult with someone trained in this area. COPE Scotland has an information booklet on its website about essential oils. This does not replace professional advice; it is for interest only.

Using a scented hand cream can also be good for our wellbeing, as it uses our sense of touch and smell. We can perhaps even learn to make our own from things we have grown in the garden. Check out classes near you to understand more about using essential oils. There are many advertised online.







Experiencing nature with all our senses

A scented garden can appeal to all our senses and our sense of smell. Here are some examples:

A water feature can appeal to our sense of hearing as we listen to the sounds of water which can be very relaxing. It can also appeal to our understanding of touch as we let the water run over our fingers, very soothing on a warm summer's day. A water feature can also appeal visually as there are so many which are a delight to look at, or you may even enjoy making one of your own. If you search online for use both indoors and out, there are many ideas. Just be careful if you use a feature that uses electricity and consult with a qualified electrician.

The profusion of colour can delight our sense of sight. The plants and flowers can be colourful, as can planters if you choose to use them, and again, we can have fun upcycling things to use as planters in the garden and home. Again there are many ideas online.

An indoor or outdoor garden space can also stimulate our sense of touch. Not only from touching those plants, which we can, e.g., rub mint between our fingers before inhaling the scent, but also from rocks, pieces of driftwood, or the benches we choose to sit on. We can also add other garden features like sculptures that offer a sensory visual, and tactile experience.

We can also add wind chimes to the garden, taking many forms. Their subtle sounds can produce feelings of relaxation, and visually watch them as they sway gently on a summer breeze. Again have a look online for ideas to create your chimes, which, as well as being appealing to the ears, can also be visually appealing.

Maybe we decide to grow some of our own fruit, vegetables or herbs, which we can enjoy eating and stimulate our sense of taste. Growing our own strawberries can be great fun and rewarding.

Our sense of taste is often underrated. One of the exercises in an 8-week Mindfulness course is to eat a raisin usingall our senses. Amazing the number of people who at the beginning perhaps think they don't like raisins but by the time they have experienced it with all their senses, and taste it, the taste is different from what they expected, and they enjoy it.

Mindful eating is a form of meditation and can also be helpful for anyone perhaps wanting to improve their relationship with food for their wellbeing. Often, we eat on autopilot without truly being aware of the full flavours of what we are eating. Being in the moment, savouring every bit or sip can help bring us into the now and have a very pleasurable taste sensation. This website may be of interest if you are interested in finding out more about mindful eating www. thecenterformindfuleating.org

Enjoying the taste of food or non-alcoholic cocktails is another way to use our sense of taste in our sensory garden. This mock cocktail recipe may be of interest www. bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/summer-cup-mocktail This can be even more rewarding when you include perhaps some ingredients you grew in your own garden/indoor space.

There are many recipes for soups, salads, jams, desserts and more you can create from things grown in your own garden. For ideas, maybe check out www.gardendesign.com/recipes/









Having a rocking chair or swing seat in our scented area can also add to our sense of relaxation. The gentle movements help produce feelings of calm and being in the moment as we enjoy the many wonders of the little piece of nature we have created around us.

Encouraging wildlife into our garden can also be a delight for all our senses as we listen to their birdsong, watch them enjoy feeding on a sunflower when it's in full bloom, or simply delight in being aware there are many forms of companionship that we can enjoy as we create a kind space to nature, including plants that are kind to bees and butterflies to making our own wee insect hotel, areas for hedgehogs toads, and so much more.

Kind to us, kind to the planet

Indoor gardening or using your balcony or veranda

Spending time in nature is good for our wellbeing. Creating our own little scented garden, be it indoors or out, is one way to bring us closer to the natural world. While indoor gardening may not offer the same range of options as gardening outdoors, we can still find ways to make it an interesting hobby. There can be more ways to garden indoors than we may realise, especially if we can have access to a balcony or veranda.

As with all gardening activities, make sure and risk assess any plans you have, especially if you are gardening at a height on a balcony. There are many sources of information online around risk assessment in the garden. This is just one example **schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/resources/info-sheet/ health-safety-in-the-garden** This site also offers ideas for gardening indoors **www. planetnatural.com** You may also enjoy visiting your local library and finding out what they have to offer.

As well as creating a little area of calm, with perhaps a water feature, just ensure all health and safety is followed when using electricity. Also, please make sure that any area you create is safe for people and pets.

We can also add features that create feelings of calm like sculptures, mobiles, even some shells and pebbles can create that feeling of calm when we use our sense of touch. Perhaps create your own wee bowl of pebbles and crystals, which you enjoy looking at and holding.





Maybe find a couple of favourite chairs where you and another can enjoy the space together and each other's companionship.

We can even explore drying our own flowers and herbs and using them for crafting. An environmentally friendly way is simply air drying by hanging upside down or pressing in a book of flower press and making your own cards from the recycled card you have at home or having fun making pictures with pressed flowers with the children or grandchildren. Even when we don't have a garden, its finding ways to bring nature indoors is also good for our wellbeing.



Gardening and Health

There are many benefits to our wellbeing by taking an interest in gardening, this includes if you or a loved one are facing a health challenge. As with any health challenge you or a loved one may face yourself, please seek advice from your/their, health care provider, around what is most helpful for you/them, to become involved in.

Dementia UK have an interesting piece around the benefits of gardening for someone with dementia. www.dementiauk.org/gardening-with-dementia/

While gardening alone may not help someone into recovery affected by drug, alcohol, or gambling disorder. This may also require specialist counselling. Taking part in a gardening project or using the garden as a place to be active as well as unwind can also be very beneficial. This piece may be of interest www. gardeningknowhow.com/garden-how-to/info/how-gardening-helps-in-recovery. htm

A sensory garden can be a wonderful place for an autistic person to experience the world using all their senses in a safe, calm place which can be created with the person. This piece may be of interest diygardening.co.uk/create-sensory-garden/

These are only a few examples. There is also work being done around garden spaces in hospitals as a place for people to look out at and enjoy. This piece may be of interest www.bmj.com/content/359/bmj.j5627. Entitled Hospital gardens are making a comeback



Benefits to our wellbeing of gardening include:

Exercise and being active, though care should be taken especially when digging not to overdo it and risk injury.

Gardening or sitting outdoors can give you more fresh air.

Meet people perhaps by joining a community garden or allotment association or simply chatting to others as they pass by your garden.

Develop a new hobby or interest and give you a sense of purpose if you find that you have more time on your hands through retirement or other reasons, or life is feeling challenging.

Gardening can be helpful when we need a distraction. However, this does not mean we avoid dealing with the challenge, seeking help where needed, just sometimes when life is sore, it's good to immerse ourselves in something which supports our wellbeing and distracts us from our pain even for a short while. However, when we need to talk, we need to talk. Check out the hope postcard and useful numbers at the end of the booklet for some ideas of services available if there is something which you need support to work through.

Save money as you grow your own fruit, vegetables and herbs, maybe sharing any excess with friends, neighbours and the local foodbank.

It offers opportunities to learn and share learning.

Gardening can be an activity for all the family and across all generations and there can be adaptions made in the garden e.g., raised beds so everyone can take part in a way works best for them.

It offers a sense of achievement.

It can offer links to other social activities like Men's sheds, Crafting, Cooking, Volunteering and more.













There are many benefits to the planet's wellbeing:

Our gardens can create habitats for nature, including birds, bees, hedgehogs, butterflies and more. Remembering, we rely on nature's pollinators for our food supplies, so providing homes for nature also provides benefits to us.

Gardens help decrease carbon monoxide and increase oxygen levels.

Our food has its own carbon footprint. Growing our own fruit, vegetables and herbs can help reduce our carbon footprint for these products.

If you can have a rooftop garden, this can be helpful in the summer to reduce citywide ambient temperatures.

Some plants roots can help stabilise the soil and help avoid soil erosion. Gardening also helps replenish and protects the soil.

We can also use rain gardens to capture water and possibly reduce flooding risks. There are many ideas online on how to do this, including visiting the RHS website listed earlier.

Upcycling items as planters or other ideas for the garden can help reduce things going to landfill.

Gardens can help reduce noise pollution www. forestresearch.gov.uk. Planting trees and shrubs, which are suitable for the planet, is also good for us as noise pollution can also negatively impact our well-being.

Be mindful of using pesticides and slug repellents in the garden. There are many ideas on environmentally friendly gardening which may be of interest, e.g. www. wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-make-your-gardenchemical-free-zone

These are only some of the many benefits to nature when we work with it in the natural world through our garden and green spaces. Excessive noise seriously harms human health and interferes with people's daily activities at school, at work, at home and during leisure time. It can disturb sleep, cause cardiovascular and psychophysiological effects, reduce performance and provoke annoyance responses and changes in social behaviour.

World Health Organisation



Why does a blether (chat) matter?

In the main, people are social creatures. We enjoy the company of others even if only now and then, and many of us enjoy a good blether (chat)! There can be many reasons why people talk to each other:

To share information or gather information, the information shared or gathered varies for each of us depending on the situation and what matters to us at that time. Chatting is usually more informal than perhaps presenting information at a meeting. When we chat, it's usually a way to relax, catch up with people we maybe haven't seen for a while, or, to share our day with those close to us.

Sometimes we chat as we know someone, we care about needs cheered up, so we may compliment them or invite them to tell us how they are feeling.

Having a chat can help relieve stress as well as being kind to someone else can also help relieve stress.

We may have a chat with others as we need a hand with something or we know they are going to do something we are offering them a hand with.

Chatting is a way we form relationships with others. When we chat with other people, we get a sense of who they are. It also offers us a chance to become aware of how others view ourselves. It's rare everyone gets on with everyone in the same way. We can have different attitudes, interests, experiences. However, chatting is a way we can form bonds and hear viewpoints different from our own, which can also help us learn.

Chatting can be as simple as saying hello and sharing a view of the weather!

People may communicate in different ways. There is a tip on the art of communication on the COPE Scotland website which you may find of interest.

Some people may enjoy a walk and talk; however, others may prefer to sit, or need a space which is wider for someone who uses a wheelchair, or so someone can walk side by side with another, perhaps even a therapist or support worker as we look for new safe spaces to meet and connect outdoors, following the COVID-19 pandemic.



How gardening supports a blether

Some people are great at starting conversations. They can find something to talk about in any situation. Others may find it harder and dread the questions of 'what do you do?', 'what have you been up to recently?' etc. etc.! One of the benefits of gardening is that it offers so many things to talk about, from your latest upcycled planter, to what you did with your strawberry crop to the new species of birds you have noticed in the garden. This can help us in terms of ideas for conversation and build our confidence in talking to other people if this has meaning for us.

Creating a safe space in your garden or home can be a place where you can discuss your fears or anxieties with loved ones as well as share your hopes and dreams. Recognising that sometimes we do need more than informal support to address our anxieties. Still, sometimes, a compassionate conversation with someone we care about can help make the world a less scary place.

Having a couple of chairs, a wee table, a barbecue area if you have space can all add to the garden being another room for you to use to cook, chat, craft, and just relax and watch the world go by. If you find you are working from home, perhaps, if possible, take some time to work at a table outdoors as it also helps you get some fresh air.

It may not be possible to do everything indoors, we may do in a garden; however, we can still think about the space we use in our home and how we use it and are there some ideas we can introduce which help people connect more or offer us other options to try out new hobbies or ideas, like learning how to make soaps and creams using products grown in our indoor or outdoor spaces. Check online for eco-friendly soap making kits, or see if there is a class near you to learn more.







We can also grow lavender and then make them into little lavender bags. There are loads of instruction videos on youtube. To dry the lavender, we cut the bunches when they are in bloom, tie the stems with a rubber band and leave them to dry. Hanging them upside down also offers a lovely visual display. When dry, we take the flower buds off the stems with our fingers. For ideas on making a lavender bag, this video may be of interest www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_CtwwG1kak there are many more ideas online. Find one which appeals to you. These can be used yourself and sharing with friends as a special gift made with love.

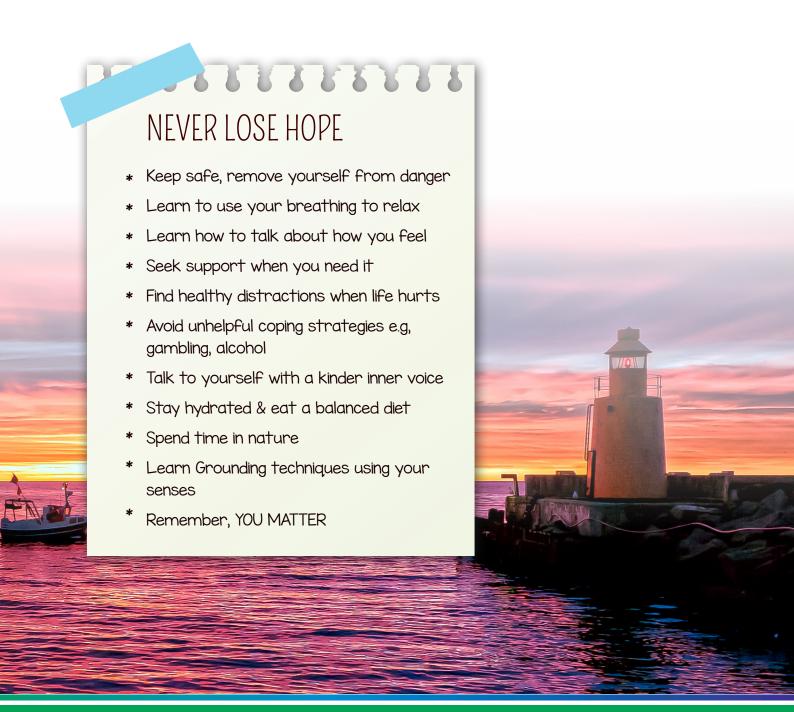
If you wanted, you could have a story telling chair in your garden, where you get together with people you know and each take turns as suits them, to sit on the chair and tell a story. Since days of old, people have connected through the power of stories, and we all have a story to share. Stories help us understand each other better, inspire us when life is challenging, can touch us in ways which motivate us to make a change in the world and perhaps most powerful of all, to laugh and have hope and not give up even when it all seems to be a bit too much.

Many of us have become caught up in the stories streamed into our homes, and the author of this booklet admits to enjoying many a box set! However, as well as the TV, think how much fun could be had having community story telling nights, or even nights with the family and friends, enjoying perhaps some of the fruits of your labours from the garden perhaps even some home-made lemonade! as you sit together in the natural world and enjoy each other's company. Remembering, not everyone communicates by speech so enjoying ways to connect to each other, so everyone feels included. There is a piece you may find interesting on the COPE Scotland website around the art of communication.





We mentioned that sometimes people turn to gardening as they face a challenge in their lives. It is great to have a hobby and interest when we feel overwhelmed by life. It is also good to know who to turn to. The following wee card offers some ideas of services and supports and things we can do to maintain hope when life proves difficult. This is another reason why having our own wee sanctuary indoors or out matters. A place we can go to where we feel nurtured, safe, connected and where if we want, we can chat with someone we know about how we are feeling.



USEFUL CONTACT AND WEBSITES FOR WELLBEING

Alcoholics anonymous 0800 9177 650

Anxiety UK 03444 775 774

Autism helpline www.autism.org.uk

Blue cross. Support on the death of a pet 0800 096 6606

Breathing Space 0800 83 85 87

Brothers in arms App www.brothersinarmsscotland.co.uk

Carers Scotland 0808 1111

Childline 0800 1111

Citizen's advice Scotland 0800 028 1456

Dementia Helpline **0800 888 6678**

Endometriosis UK helpline 0808 808 2227

Get support | Endometriosis UK (endometriosis-uk.org)

Families affected by imprisonment 0800 254 0088

Gambling with Lives. Families affected by gambling

related suicide info@gamblingwithlives.org

Gambling helpline 0808 8020 133

Gamblers anonymous 0370 050 8881

McMillan support line 0808 808 0000

Men Matter Scotland www.menmatterscotland.org

Mobile App to manage Gambling addiction www.recovermeapp.co.uk

NAPAC (the National Association for

People Abused in Childhood) 0808 801 0331

Narcotics anonymous 0300 999 1212

National domestic abuse helpline 0808 2000 247

One parent families Scotland 0808 801 0323

Pain association Scotland 0800 783 6059

ParentLine 08000 28 22 33

Perennial - helping people in horticulture 0800 093 8543

Samaritans **116 123**

Silver line 0800 4 70 80 90

For services local to you check out www.aliss.org

For resources to support wellbeing www.cope-scotland.org

Stroke helpline 0303 3033 100

(Please note, if you are concerned you may be having a stroke dial 999 and ask for an ambulance)

NHS 24 111 (NHS Language line. When you phone 111)

Tell the call handler that you need an interpreter.

Tell the call handler the name of your preferred language.

Scotland's National British Sign Language User relay service https://contactscotland-bsl.org/

If you are deaf & experiencing a crisis text deaf to 85258

The Living Life service offers guided self-help and cognitive behavioural therapy. For more information call **0800 328 9655 (Monday - Friday: 1pm - 9om)**

Ideas of things to plant to create a scented space

This wee booklet, we hope, encourages curiosity to find out more and to consider creating your own wee scented space to enjoy and connect with yourself and others in new ways. On the COPE Scotland website, there is a more detailed book on gardening and allotments, which can be found in the document section on kind to the planet and the many websites we listed at the beginning of this piece and the many more which can be found online.



This is only a wee taste of the amazing opportunities the natural world can offer us. Again, thanks to Fiona for offering the ideas for some things to plant and Bernie for her expertise in how to grow them. We hope you enjoy building new connections with the natural world and have fun.

Glossary of some Gardening Terms

Annual – A plant that completes its entire life cycle (Growth, reproduction, death) In one season.

Bareroot – These plants have been field grown and are supplied in a

dormant state with the soil removed.

Biennial – A plant that completes its entire life cycle in 2 years, growing In the first year and reproducing and dying in the second year.

Perennial – A Plant that lived for more than 2 years.

Code

Garden – G Tub – T Indoor – I Seed – S Bulb – B Plant – F



Ideas of plants and flowers to grow



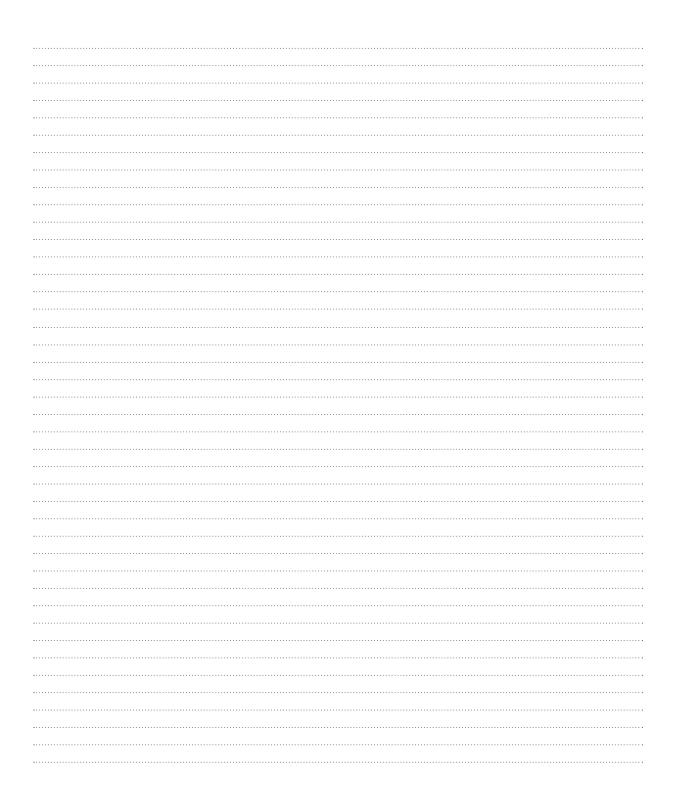
Reflections

We hope you have enjoyed this wee booklet. This space can be used to capture your thoughts and reflections on anything which has come to mind to you while reading. It may even be you decide to start your own gardening journal. Be it indoors or out. We can all find ways to bring more of the natural world into our lives, good for us as well as the planet.

Life begins the day you start a garden. – Chinese proverb



Reflections



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