

The Garden Rx

Rooted in well-being



Let's grow together



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Dig into well-being

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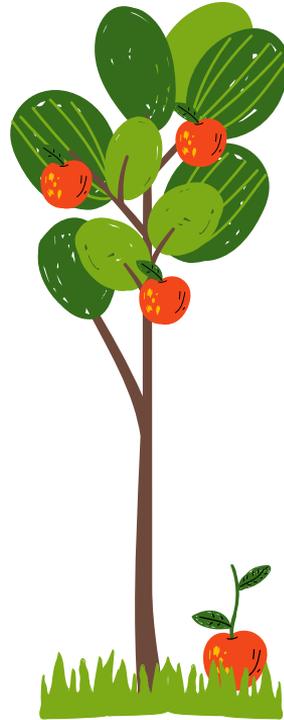
Bring the outside in

Then vs. Now

1950s: Gardening as Necessity

Victory gardens
during W W II-era

50% of U.S.
households had a
garden



2020s: Gardening as Well-being

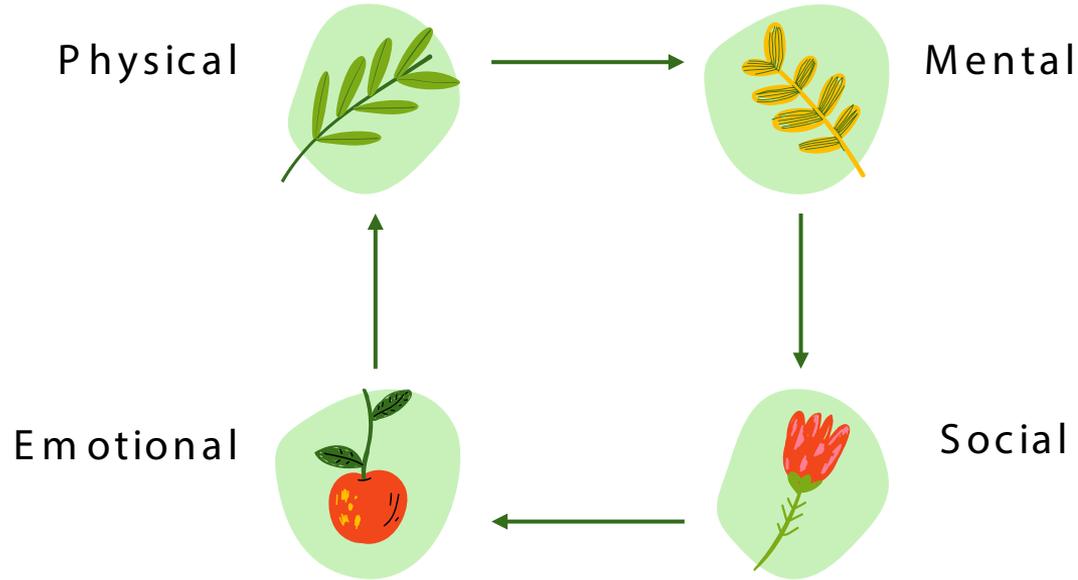
Covid prompted a
resurgence

Indoor and container
gardening on the rise

Have you ever kept a garden?

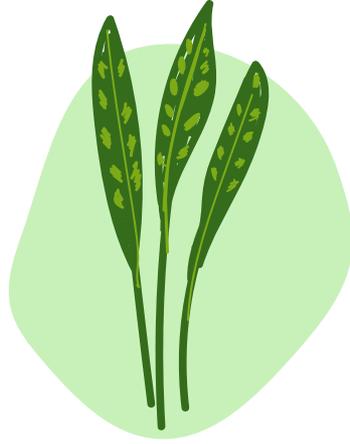


How gardening grows well-being





“Tend to yourself like
you would your
favorite plant.”



Physical

- Balance & joint mobility
- Low-to-moderate intensity exercise
- Vitamin D production
- Improved sleep quality

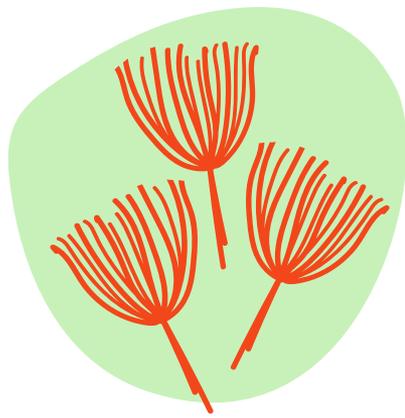
Did you know?



Gardening can burn

150-300 calories
per hour

Bonus: Lifting pots, shoveling soil, squatting and pulling weeds **builds strength!**



Mental & Emotional

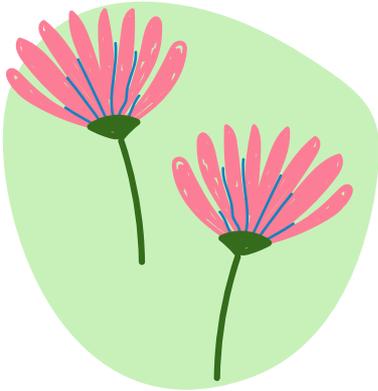
- Relaxation through repetitive motion
- Boosts dopamine and lowers cortisol
- Mental stimulation (planning a garden, remembering to water, etc.)

Did you know?

A study of 2,800 adults over 16 years found a

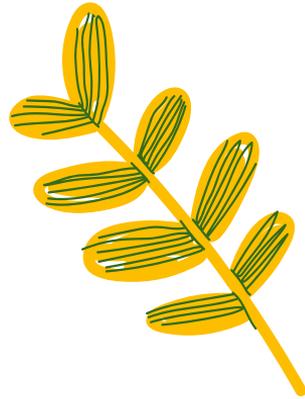
35% reduced risk
of dementia

in those who gardened daily

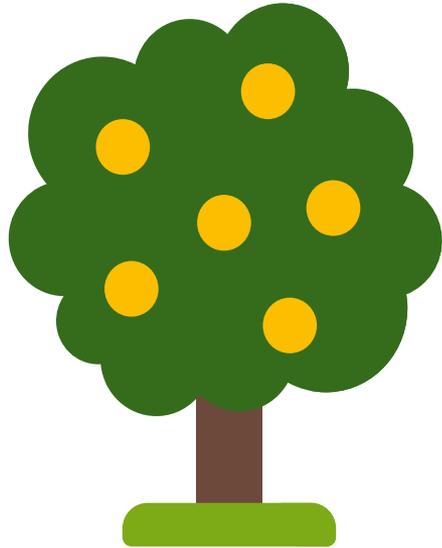




**How did this sound make
you feel?**



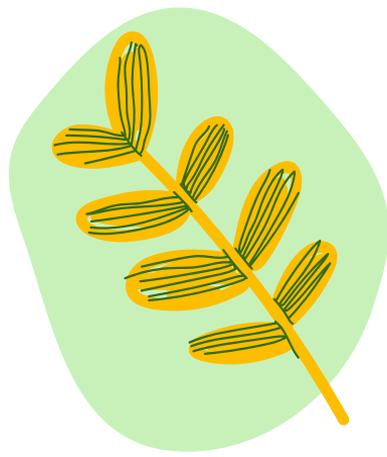
Did you know?



Exposure to birdsong

reduces anxiety and
boosts cognitive
function

in as little as six minutes

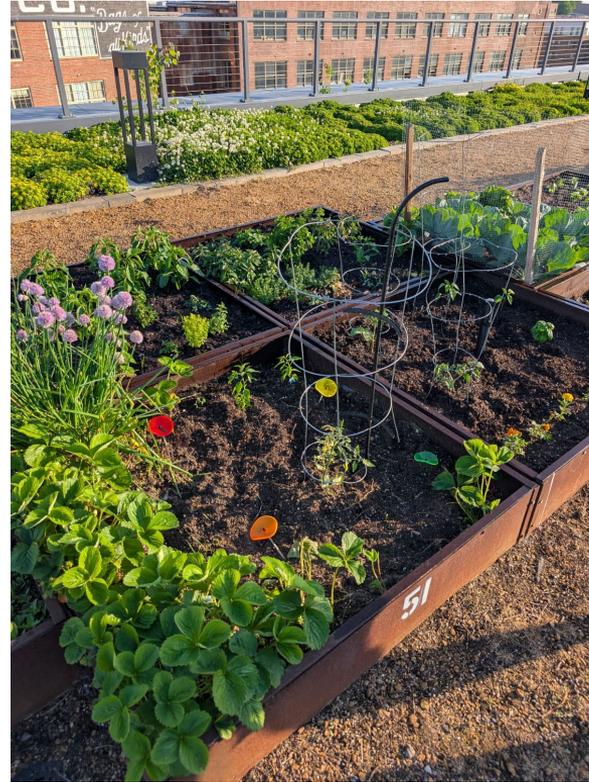


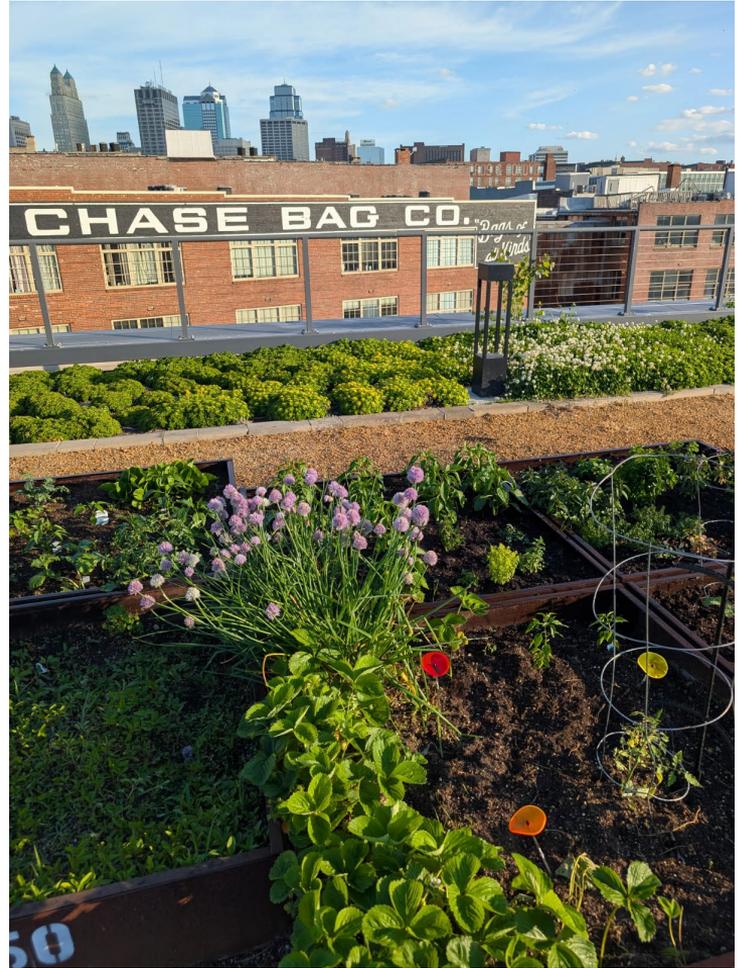
Social

- Community gardening—find your **soil mate** !
- Natural conversation starter – “What are you growing?”
- Opportunity to share or trade what you produce

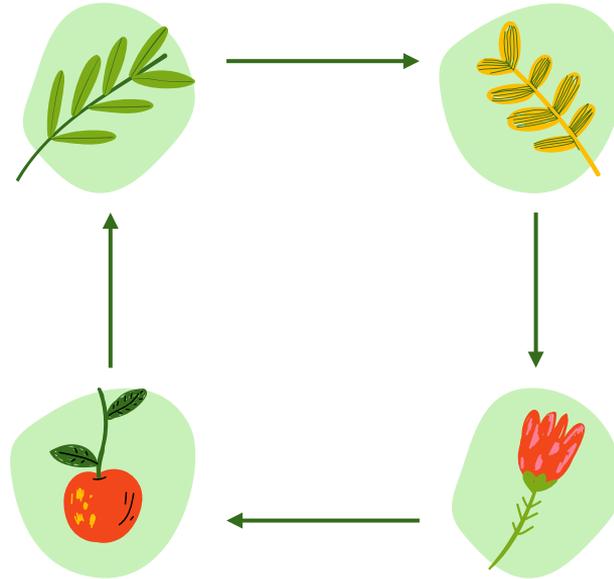
Inspiration from a Community Garden

Urban rooftop garden with raised beds in Kansas City, MO





A case study in growth



Case Study: Luisa's Garden

Name: Luisa S.

Age: 82

Location: Los Lunas, NM

Background: After the **loss of her husband** of 56 years, followed by a **bad ankle sprain**, Luisa found herself struggling with loneliness, depression and a **lack of purpose**. Once an avid walker, she found herself **withdrawing** from friends and activities she once loved.



The Turning Point: One afternoon, while cleaning her garage, Luisa came across an old box of garden tools and seed packets.

Gardening had been something she **enjoyed** years ago. On a whim, she decided to **plant a few herbs** in containers on her porch.



The Evolution: One **small step** grew into something much bigger. Over the next year, she:

- Built 2 raised beds with the help of a neighbor
- Increased stability in her formerly injured ankle
- Grew lavender, mint and tomatoes
- Made lavender sachets, which she gifted to friends
- Joined a local garden club for friendship and inspiration
- Began journaling her garden progress, which evolved into a small blog

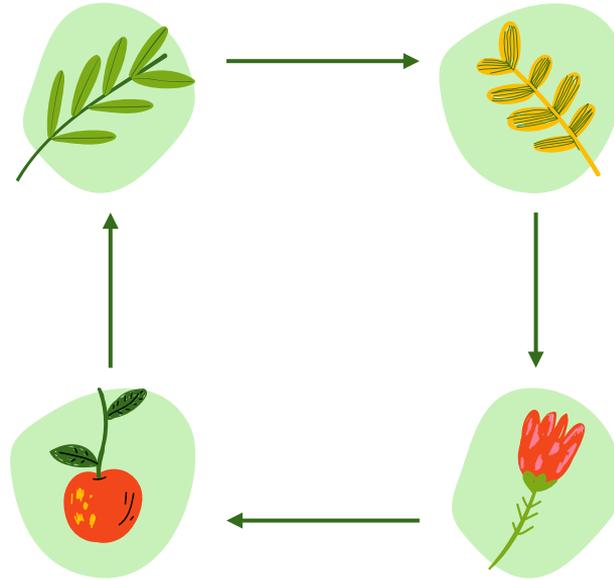


The Impact:

- **Mental health:** Reduction in anxiety and depression
- **Physical health:** More agility and less aches and pains
- **Social connection:** Rekindled social ties via garden club and gifting
- **Purpose:** Luisa now mentors others on starting gardens in small spaces



An accessible approach



Affordable Solutions



Seek free seeds at the library or Facebook Marketplace



Focus on high-yield produce (herbs, tomatoes, lettuce and peppers)

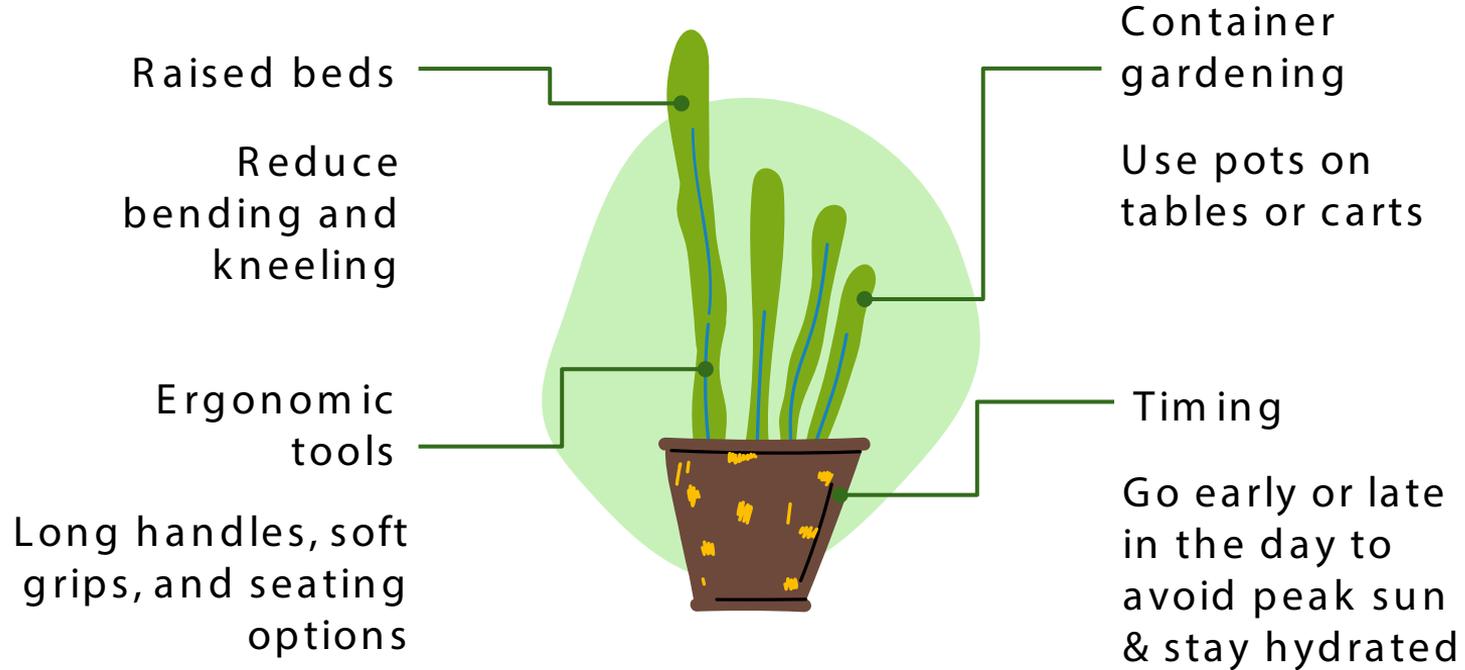


Borrow tools

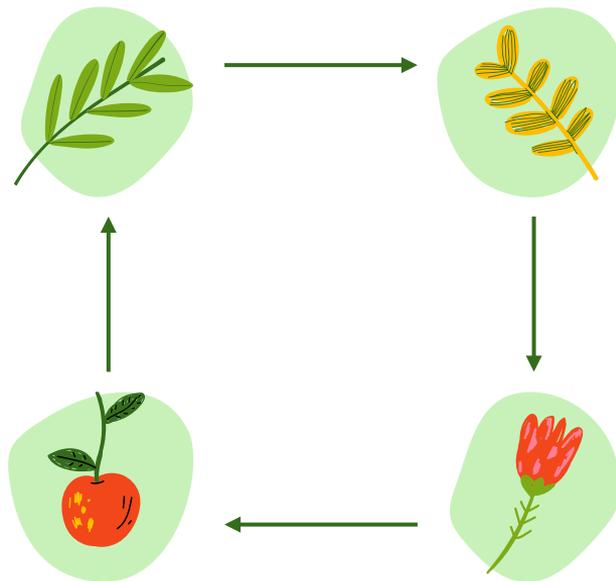


Repurpose containers as planters (milk jugs, buckets, old drawers)

Accessibility



Bring the outside in



Lacking outdoor space?



Options abound!

- Containers
- Windowsills
- Vertical gardening
- Balcony or porch
- Tabletop gardening
- Indoor greenhouses or terrariums
- Join a community garden (search online for NM opportunities)

Tabletop greenhouse



Strategic shelving



Vertical gardening



Container gardening



Meet nature halfway for full benefits

- Listen to nature or birdsong recordings
- Open windows to bring in fresh air and ambient sounds
- Hang artwork of landscapes, flowers or wildlife
- Set up a bird feeder to watch from your window
- Incorporate natural objects like shells, leaves or smooth stones into your mindfulness practice
- Take short “sunshine breaks” throughout the day



Thank you!

You plant the seeds of well-being,
one habit at a time.

