

Neuro Café: Therapeutic benefits of gardening 5th January 2022

A new year - new growth

- Whatever the season, there's something very therapeutic and welcoming about being out in a garden or growing things indoors.
- Gardening gets harder with a neurological condition and as we age but has many therapeutic benefits and tasks can be adapted
- "Things that I plant and nurture in my little garden have helped me to focus on the future in a positive way, which has made me feel back in control of my life again."

(Parkinson's sufferer)



- You can garden using just one pot
- you can start the activities at any time
- gardening is good for you and it's fun!



Benefit of gardening

A report by the <u>National Garden Scheme</u> showed that gardening can:

- reduce depression, loneliness, anxiety and stress
- improve balance which can help to prevent falls
- alleviate symptoms of dementia
- improve fitness & strength
- The report suggests garden access has potential to help with healthcare costs, and should be used more in our health and social care system.
- Many neuro rehab units have gardening groups for their therapeutic benefits

Gardening-

The Ultimate Body & Mind Workout

BODY

(per 30 mins of gardening)

Raking

works back muscles burns 100 calories



Digging/shovelling

works legs/buttocks
 burns 250 Calories



Weeding

works triceps
 burns 105 calories



Lawn Mowing

works arms/shoulders
 burns 195 calories

MIND

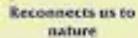
Relieves stress

Reduces levels of cartisol. (stress hormone)



Mood enhancer

gardening releases happy hormones



Brings a sense of purpose and understanding



Better Brain Health

Protects the brain from agoing



Annual Control of the Control of the

Gardening – as exercise!!

- Gardening is a great form of exercise
- Many physical advantages of gardening,
 - functional strength training
 - balance multiple planes of movement
 - Stretching
- Gardening can help you to stay active, fit and flexible
- You may not always consider gardening to be 'exercise' because it is so rewarding and enjoyable - an added bonus really!





The Physical Benefits of Gardening

















Gardening and mental wellbeing

- Being in the garden helps you connect with nature, and there's a positive link between gardening and mental wellbeing.
- Studies have shown that gardeners have reduced levels of the hormone cortisol, which leads to better sleep and lower stress

Gardening can:

- Reduce depression, anxiety and stress-related symptoms.
- Alleviate the symptoms of dementia, such as aggressive behaviour.
- Increase the ability to concentrate and engage.
- Reduce reliance on medication, self-harming behaviour.



Choose plants and tools to suit you

- Long-handled tools or high-stemmed plants mean less bending.
- Ground cover planting, gravel or shingle can all help reduce weeds, meaning less time kneeling.
- Consider carrying your tools a simple apron with large pockets, a tool belt or wheelbarrow can save you time and effort.
- Create a relaxing environment with lavender plants or the sound of a water feature.

•

The Best Gardening Gadgets



Kneelers:

This lightweight kneeler from Spear and Jackson features a handle so it's easy to carry. It has five layers of padding which moulds to your knees and gives extra support. Plus it's made from neoprene so is wipe clean, water resistant and quick drying.



Kneelo:

If you don't want to carry a kneeling mat around, then these gardening kneeling pads from Kneelo could be the solution. Pull them on and forget about them. These stretchy pads are made from neoprene and memory foam and provide protection on the go

The Best Gardening Gadgets cont...



Garden Kneeler Folding Seat Stool with Handles & Tool Bag

3 in 1 The garden kneeler folding seat lets you do both, converting into a kneeler and gardening seat. It folds flat for easy carrying and storage and has a small bag that will fit some gardening tools (such as a trowel and secateurs). Meaning you'll always have the tools you need at a close distance.

Long handled gardening tools — to aid poor

balance, bad backs, & improve our posture



Long handled lawn shears Lawns are not as low maintenance as you might think. If you have one, you probably know you need to keep it in shape and we like these long handled lawn shears which stop gardeners from having to bend down.



Spear & Jackson long handled trowel. This back-saving aid is a must-have garden tool. It's weather proof and made to last. In fact, Spear & Jackson (the company who make it) have a range endorsed by the Royal Botanic Garden in Kew so they know what they're talking about!!

Long handled gardening tools – to aid poor balance, bad backs, & improve our posture



Walensee Stand Up Garden Weeder and Root
Removal Tool, Stand up Manual Weeder Hand
Tool weeding tool, avoids bending

Improving grip of tools



Active Hands General Purpose Gripping Aid is designed for people who are gardening with a weak grip. It has adjustable wrist straps and hand covers, pulling your hand into a fist shape. They're available for the left and right hand.





Improving grip of tools

Easi-Grip Peta Arm Support Cuff. Cheaper, it's made from plastic and slots onto your arm. It connects to all Easi-Grip gardening tools which have ergonomic easy







Adapt your garden

- Widening pathways may help, especially if you use a wheelchair or walking aid.
- Narrowing flower beds reduces the distance you have to reach.
- Raised beds mean you don't have to bend so far to tend to plants or vegetables.





Vegetable Gardening

- Raised Vegetable Beds:
- Easy 'quick win' vegetables to grow:
 - beetroot
 - radish
 - chard
 - salad leaves
 - spring onions
 - peas
 - beans are great to grow in raised vegetable beds.
- All these vegetables can be directly sown in April or May and you can start harvesting around five weeks later.







National Garden Scheme

- If visiting gardens is difficult National Garden Scheme during first lockdown created virtual garden visits
- 190 clips of gardens
- https://ngs.org.uk/virtual-garden-visits/
- Going in person- benefit of visiting a garden National Garden Scheme garden is money is raised for their beneficiaries for example Parkison's UK, the more visitors the more money donated!



Other ways to get involved

Individuals

Volunteering with our client groups or in our sales kiosk

Corporates

Partnerships, volunteering and wellness days

Everyone and Anyone

Following us on social media, fundraising or making a donation are great ways to support us and mean we can continue to deliver essential programmes

You can even hire our training





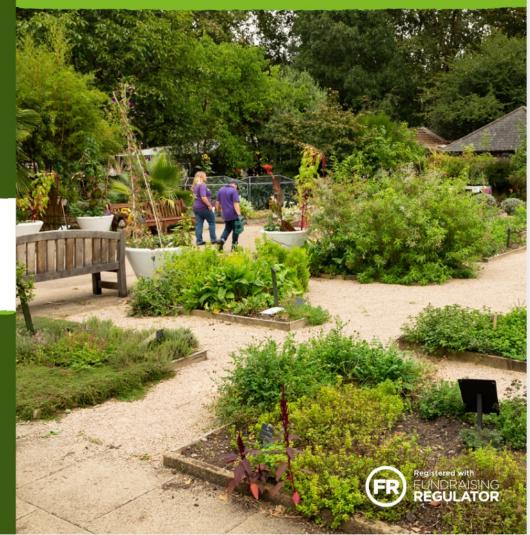






The gardening for health charity

London, Battersea Park







To discuss any of our programmes, or to arrange a visit to our gardens in Battersea Park, or if you are interested in other ways to get involved, please contact the Thrive office on 020 7720 2212 or email battersea@thrive.org.uk





www.thrive.org.uk









or call us on 0118 988 5688



Thrive, The Society for Horticultural Therapy.

Registered Office: The Geoffrey Udall Centre, Beech Hill, Reading, RG7 2AT.

A charity registered in England and Wales (no. 277570). A company limited by guarantee in England and Wales. Registered company (no. 1415700).



Thrive - gardening for health charity

- Thrive use an approach called <u>social and therapeutic</u> <u>horticulture (STH)</u>, where our team of trained horticultural therapists work with plants and people to improve an individual's physical and psychological health, communication and thinking skills.
- https://www.thrive.org.uk/howwe-help/regional-centres-andprogrammes/london





Free booklet on thrive website for gardening exercises for post stroke and heart conditions: https://www.thrive.org.uk/files/images/Shop/Gardening for Hearts and Minds.pdf

a guide of gardening activities to support your rehabilitation, recovery, health and wellbeing this guide has been put together with the help of people affected by heart disease and stroke, and professionals you can garden using just one pot you can start the activities at any time

gardening is good for you and it's fun!
 So have a go, because gardening really can help your long-term health.

Top gardening tips

- Stretch Before Gardening
- Planning Ahead Is The Trick To Smart Gardening
- Gardeners should Bend From The Hips
- Pace Yourself In The Garden
- Use equipment to improve kneeling
- Have phone on you to call for help if you get into difficulty
- If no garden grow herbs indoors, have indoor plants and colourful flowers indoors



Top Tips For Staying Safe In The Garden

- Use gardening gloves to keep hands from being cut or dried out from soil.
- Use quality tools that you find comfortable and keep them clean and sharp. Use a wheelbarrow or trolley to move anything heavy around the garden (or ask someone to help you).
- Have a small kit bag with all the gardening tools you need for that day.
- Remember the effect your medication may have on your ability to garden.
 - Spasticity meds
 - Parkison's meds Think about times you're 'on' and don't forget to take your tablets while absorbed in gardening.
 - Try taking a pill timer or reminder alarm to help you stay on track.
- Find a well-balanced watering can. I know this sounds a little strange, but it can be difficult to water with a cheaper version.
- If physically something has changed meaning you are less able to maintain your garden, then look for alternatives.