



# Mindful Gardening

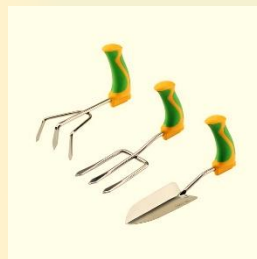


When life feels like it's getting overwhelming, spending time in a quiet garden can really help you create inner balance and perspective. Gardening forces you to slow down and be present. It's not something that you can rush, thus it gives you the chance to be mindful.

Spending a little time gardening each week can help reduce stress and promote positive mental health. Plus, it's a great activity for any age or to do as a family!

## *Steps to Mindful Gardening:*

- 1) Gather your supplies. You don't need fancy tools or equipment to start a beautiful garden. Start with the basics: seeds or a live plant, a small shovel and spade, and planting soil. If you don't plan to plant directly in the yard, you will also want some pots. These can be found at your local dollar store, farmer's market, Home Depot or even online through stores such as Amazon.



- 2) Find a quiet place in your yard. Take a moment to sit down and breathe in the fresh air. Breathe deep and slowly, in through your nose and out through your mouth. Taking a moment to breathe can be centering.

- 3) Allow yourself to tap into your senses with each action. What do you see? How does the soil feel? What can you smell? How does the sun feel on your face? How does the grass feel beneath you? Can you hear birds chirping or a breeze rustling? Pay careful attention to all that is around you.



- 4) Spend time walking through your garden barefooted. Research has shown barefoot contact with the earth can produce nearly instant changes in a variety of physiological measures, helping improve sleep, reduce pain, decrease muscle tension and lower stress.

