Introduction to Horticultural Therapy

NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

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The People-Plant Connection
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• Plants and gardening can be part of all programs that strive to improve the quality of life.

• Plants provide appealing, adaptable ways to transform the environment that we live and work in.
The People-Plant Connection

• Horticulture and gardening is a popular leisure activity that offers opportunities for socialization.

• Is an enjoyable experience that renews enthusiasm for living.
The People-Plant Connection

• A developed Horticultural Therapy program provides the tools for:
  – increased physical activity
  – increased social activity
  – increased cognitive functioning
  – increased relatedness to the Natural world
The People-Plant Connection

• Horticultural therapy activities enrich and expand life’s experiences.

• Horticulture activities can facilitate clinical goals:
  – While adding to the individual's capacity for enjoyment.
The People-Plant Connection

- Research has shown that involvement in therapeutic horticulture programs maintains or improves life satisfaction or the quality of life of participants.
  - Kansas State University
  - Rusk Institute
  - Calvary Hospital
    - Palliative Care Institute
Benefits
• Provides endless topics for discussion where opinions can be freely expressed
  – on an equal level, as one gardener to another

• Motivates cooperation among groups
Social Benefits
The Garden

• Accessible
• Relaxing
• Educational
• Inviting
Getting Around the Garden

- Paths & surfaces: paved area must be smooth, level & firm
- Provide good traction at all times
- Ramps must not exceed 5% grade
- Handrails may be needed
- Proper width of paths
Getting Around

• Provide direct routes through the garden

• Paths shall have a sharp contrast at the edge

• Provide a large gathering area

• Reduce glare and heat absorption
Raised Beds
Enabling Garden Structures
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Garden Tools

• Adapting tools
  – Lightweight
  – Longer handles
  – Smaller blades & tool heads
  – Tool handles & grips
  – Springs in tools for assistance
Garden Tools

• Types of tools
  – Reaching aids
  – Gripping aids
  – Leverage aids
  – Cutting aids
  – Watering aids
  – General garden helpers
Garden Tools
Adapting the Plants

• Emphasize plants with interesting color, scent, texture & form

• Choose plants based on amount of maintenance you can do

• Use plants with four-season interest
Adapting the Plants

• Use plants that attract birds, butterflies and other wildlife

• Include edible landscaping

• Use indigenous plants as much as possible
Adapting the Plants
Types of Plants

- Vegetables
- Bulbs
- Annuals
- Perennials
- Ornamental grasses
Perennials
Types of Plants
Vegetables
Ornamental Grasses
Types of Plants

- Vines
- Herbs
- Shrubs
- Trees
- Fruit trees
  - Dwarf fruit trees
Five Steps to Garden Design

- Base information: size, location, sun pattern etc.
- Site analysis
- Checklist of wants & needs (wish list)
- Concept plans
- Final design
Seed Starting Trays
Hebrew Hospital Home
Calvary Hospital
Calvary Hospital
Calvary Hospital
Contemplation
References

