

More Garden Therapy Ideas

Here are a few more garden therapy ideas to use with your club.

- If a club member, family member, or friend loses someone, or if your club loses a member, ask permission to collect flowers from the arrangements. Choose flowers that will dry flat. Press them, and once they are dried, have a session to create memories from the flowers. Laminated bookmarks or wall hangings in glass frames are good ideas.
- For children/youth, take a wildflower hike to cut and collect wildflowers. Do not do this in a state/national park or forest -that is illegal! Use caution not to take too many flowers from one patch, leaving plenty to reproduce. Place the flowers in presses or in books between parchment or wax paper. At a later date, once dried, have a workshop to create laminated bookmarks with the children and present them with a garden or nature themed book. (One of WVGCI Past President Brenda Moore's would be perfect for young children!)
- Use nature items to create artwork. This idea would be fun for children, teens, disabled adults, and the elderly in care facilities, and of course for anyone who celebrates the child within! Have participants meet at a park and gather a collection of acorns, ferns, leaves, flowers, sticks, pinecones, nuts, nutshells, any SAFE plant material. Then, use the plant material to make collages and paintings. These can be done as simply or with as much complexity as the participants choose. Ideas include:
 - Have them decorate an unfinished wooden picture frame.
 - Have them dip the items in colorful tempera paints and paint on a canvas or piece of heavy art paper. Encourage stamping or using the plants like ferns as a brush for interesting patterns.
 - The items can be used to paint designs on brown paper or plain white gift bags, or to create a nature-themed wrapping paper using the plain brown shipping wrap.
 - Create acorn people in a small shadow box. Use the other nature supplies to create the scene.
- As a tool to create awareness about dating violence, partner with the domestic violence shelter or family resource network to sponsor a workshop for youth. Have a presentation and printed materials, including a safety plan card, on dating violence. Pass out safety whistles and lights. Then, provide supplies to create corsages and bouquets for prom using orange and red (teen dating violence), purple (domestic violence) or teal (sexual assault) ribbons. I can connect you with resources, if needed.