



Module 4: All in the Process

Module 4: All in the Process

Objectives:

- Identify key elements for caring for plants
- Mental health & vegetable gardening

ELEMENTS FOR PLANT CARE

A productive garden requires implementing key elements alongside attention and care. As a Gardner, you must stay in control, or the I.D.W will control your garden, better known as Insects, diseases and weeds; water, as well as nutrients, must be supplied; your plants require love and support to thrive; Harvest must be done at the proper time for best flavour, yield and nutrition benefits.

We believe in implementing control of insects and diseases with common sense and sanitation. Turn insect or disease-infested plants or remove them from the garden altogether after harvest. Never save seeds from diseased plants. Support tall growing, non-supported vegetables, for example, cucumber and tomatoes. Space plants within your garden bed far enough apart so air can circulate freely.

Time plants to avoid the worst pest problems avoid watering late in the afternoon, as wet plants are more susceptible to certain diseases.

Rotating plant families between different garden sections in successive years will reduce many insect and disease problems. Peas and beans, for example, are in the same plant family and are susceptible to many of the same insects and diseases. Do your due diligence and research; google is often very informative and lists the same plant families as there many.

Whenever available, purchase disease-resistant varieties such as beans, peppers, tomatoes, spinach, peas, onions, eggplant, leeks, sweet, corn, and beets. When using insect control, we also recommend non-chemical products when available. These include sanitation, barriers, repellents, traps and baits. Encourage beneficial insects, snakes and birds. For example, the juvenile grey rat snake is a beneficial snake that helps to eliminate pests and ticks. They are found in the garden often and are beneficial and harmless. When only a few large insects are present, they may sometimes be successfully removed by hand.

Frequent observation of the garden is yet another key to controlling insect and disease problems. Walking through the garden at least every two or three days and looking for problems. Identify insects or diseases that pose a threat and get rid of them before the problem becomes severe.

Module 4: All in the Process

Weed control

Lack of proper weed control has limited production for gardeners more than any other production practice. Weeds compete with vegetable plants for nutrients, water and sunlight. Therefore, they must be controlled if garden vegetables grow and produce well. Weeds also serve as housing for insects and hosts for diseases. Weeds may be controlled by cultural practices, mechanically, chemically or by a combination of all three.

Begin cultural controls by preventing weeds from developing mature seeds. Maintain clean cultivation while vegetables are growing. When gardening, mulch is your friend, and understanding their character differences will benefit your plants. Black plastic mulch absorbs sunlight and speeds up the warming of garden soils. Laying strips of black plastic over-fertilized garden soils, a week before planting.

Commonly used organic mulches include leaves, straw, compost, rotted sawdust and grass clippings. It's imperative that when collecting grass clipping and leaves, you avoid weed seeds. Light colour mulches reflect sunlight and are best used around cool season plants or on warm season plants when the soil temperature has become warm. Apply them 2 or 3 inches thick and turn them under at the end of the growing season. Weeds that grow through organic mulch can be easily pulled and often are very small about the amount.

Water

Many gardeners refer to their plant's life-support liquid system as irrigation. However, we like to keep things simple and call it a watering system, so let's jump right in. Maximizing your vegetable production requires providing 1 to 2 1/2 inches of water per week. Vegetables require less water early in the growing season when they are small and more when they are large and during certain critical growth stages. In addition, most years have dry periods when watering will significantly benefit plant growth, yield and quality.

Gardeners commonly water with a sprinkler system. Reduce erosion and runoff by applying water slowly place cylindrical containers in the watering area to measure the total water distribution. Apply 1 to 1 1/2 inches of water, then discontinue watering for several days. Shallow watering promotes shallow root growth. Shallow roots will require more frequent watering than roots distributed deeper in the soil. Shallow plant roots are also easily damaged by cultivation and are prone to disease. As previously mentioned, water early in the day so plants dry before evening. Since the plants are already wet with dew, the ideal time to water is just before sunrise. Your plant's life support liquid system is a crucial part of your garden thriving; therefore, we consider it element number one.

Module 4: All in the Process

Mental health & Gardening

I included this chapter as mental health is something that I strongly advocate for. Everything that happened in my life has helped develop the whole being that I am today, but I was not always whole mentally and helping others has always been my ministry, so I have great faith that this will benefit others.

Very early on, we learned that communicating with self out loud, therapist and taking medication for mental health were all looked at in a negative light and many times taboo. However, gardening has created many a safe place and provided natural, chemical-free medicine. It has to date; been the best therapy one could receive. I am a survivor of domestic abuse, miscarriage, postpartum depression and bipolar disorder; gardening was my saviour and reversed my thought process, giving me a purpose and zeal for life that I never knew possible.

Gardening provides a serene and inviting, promising experience with nature, allowing one to, in turn, tune in to their inner and connect with nature which provides an abundance of love, reflection, protection and peace. I hope that you become the best version of yourself through gardening. I envision mental solitude and abundance for you whenever you enter your garden space. Empty out and turn over any turmoil that has a hold on you mentally each time you visit your garden.

Meditate and become one with the sun as it shines and warms your skin, basks in positive thoughts and lets it radiate through the chambers of your mind all day. Gardening improves physical and mental health; it is scientifically proven, and I'm a living testament to its life-changing benefits.

After finishing module 4 read over the information again if you need then take the quiz.

After completing your meditation and write in your journal how you felt after

Module 4: Quiz

1. Life-support liquid system is commonly referred to as what?

2. What type of insect control do you recommend?

3. I.D.W is abbreviation for what?

4. What are some benefits that gardening provides for mental health?

**Check out recipe book pick out a dish to make tag us and or email us how
@flavorbyfaith #gardentotable**

**Write in your journal any new thoughts ideas or feelings you have
pertaining to gardening or the course**