

# healthy HOME



## Garden. Pretty.

Easy Two Step DIY Vertical Herb Gardens and Why Time Spent In Nature Is My Favorite Healthy Home Hack.

It's no secret - I'm an outdoors freak and a garden junkie. Nature is my drug and gardening is how I soak-up all of momma nature's blessings.

Unfortunately, not everyone else enjoys getting out into the sun and breaking a sweat in the garden as much as I do. Nowadays many folks seem to be more inclined to less natural activities and are becoming more and more addicted to binge watching and binge eating.

On top of this, it's becoming the norm for many people to go from home, to garage, to car, to work – rinse, wash, and repeat. Unless it's forced, plenty of the population goes way too long without any real sun exposure or time spent active in nature.

The sad part is, for many, healthy habits and healthy activities, like spending time in nature and gardening, were never introduced. Our society has simply turned a blind eye and rolled along as if the “unnatural” were the “natural” – and outdoor activities, that promote wellness, fitness, and an over all balanced state of being, have been replaced. People are now tethered to phones, computers, junk foods, social media, and other modern day hang-ups instead of creating a tight tether to the earth.

And, yes, this just crushes me, because I want the best health for everyone – no matter what the person looks like or where they're from.

Well, I'd like to take this time to share why nature and gardening are so darn therapeutic and the many ways they increase overall health and wellbeing.

Of all of the wonderful ways nature and gardening work to increase health and wellness, let's start with a few that might be a bit surprising. For instance...

- People who live close to green spaces report less health complaints and those who routinely venture into green spaces experience greater lifespans.
- Those who get more daily exposure to fresh air and sunshine are less likely to suffer from poor attention or anxiety disorders and children who routinely play and enjoy time outdoors receive higher test scores and are less likely to be medicated for any learning related disorder.

- Recent science (and we all know Ben shares the good science with me) has proclaimed gardening as one of the best natural stress relievers. Ben explained that lower levels of stress often correlate to decreased irritability, decreased headaches, decreased stomach upsets, better overall heart health, and a happier disposition. Cool, huh!

Additionally, personal gardens and family cultivated green spaces boost family time, strengthen family cohesion, increase property value, and save families money at the grocery store. Households that garden also save money on gym memberships; the garden, if you're giving you're all to it, serves as a serious fitness zone.

So, now you know some of the great stuff nature and gardening can do for you, and here's a glimpse into what it has done for me...

Hands down, the time I've spent gardening and working outdoors has been one of the most helpful tools for finding joy, peace, purpose, and clarity - even through difficult times. There is something so magical about nature and every time I give myself fully to a gardening or back yard project I just feel better. I feel connected to God and to the earth. I get out of my own head and I just zone into "being" without over thinking anything or worrying about things I can't control.

I think anyone, who gardens or who has a daily practice including quality time spent in nature, would argue that it is the best choice for increasing peace, wellness, inner balance, joy, gratitude, and one of the best ways to become a happier and more likeable person.

Now, this isn't just my opinion, Ben explained that this is science proven stuff. Nature and gardening are legitimate "drugs" recommended for all who hope to improve mental outlook, develop a better state of tranquility, and who hope to turn the traditional food reward system up- side down. You see, gardening and outdoor activities are truly the better reward. Think about it - wouldn't you rather reward a loved one, or yourself for that matter, for a success or a good deed with a beautiful, purposeful, and fun activity rather than the usual candy bar or cake? Good thoughts to ponder...

Of course, we can't forget that spending time in nature and gardening simply make people feel super good, and, by default, look super good. Gardening is a physical workout. I mean, if you really work in a garden, you're exercising, sweating, and burning energy - which is particularly great for those who can't seem to tolerate going to the gym or exercising for just the sake of exercise. Gardening allows us to become lost in the activity of gardening, without being caught up in the construct of exercise.

Also, gardening results in a product...a fresh, beautiful, tasty, organic, and edible product. Now that's great for wellness too.

So, please don't think that my love of gardening is a girly thing, a pointless thing, or a boring thing - no way - this gardening stuff is for real. In all honesty, if you want to dial in your wellness and improve your health, I recommend you start with spending time in nature and gardening. I consider this duo as one of the most important health hacks known to man and I encourage you to get started as soon as possible.

With that said, let's get started with a super easy and super cool DIY vertical herb garden project. This

project is perfect for beginners and allows the newbie or the pro gardener to start small and grow large – anywhere, and I mean anywhere.

We're going to use simple zip-ties to secure clay pots to railings, staircases, chicken wire structures (that might need a beautiful disguise), outdoor structures, and more.

The point of this project is to introduce you to new and easy ways of creating functional potted gardens almost anywhere. I think this project is the perfect way to quickly beautify your spaces and to create a vibe of healing energy. I bet, after you've completed your vertical potted garden, that you'll be outdoors gardening and tending to your herbs and flowers all the time. And, that my friends, is a real good thing!

Now, on our property, I have a pretty large garden that I've lined with a chicken wire covered wooden structure. This keeps our chickens and other critters out, but I often think it could look a little better. So, I've been tossing around the idea and, when I discovered the zip-tie method of attaching small pots, I basically went bananas and had to get started. I just knew that my chicken wire would be the perfect medium to attach and grow herbs in a beautiful vertical way.

I found a large bag of zip-ties, gathered all of the small terra cotta pots I had collected over the years, and set out to do some design testing in my garden.

Sure enough, the process was as straightforward as could be and there were no problems with the secure fastening or anything else. I created a beautiful design along the chicken wire walls and I hung the pots in a really cool and artistic way.

I then filled the pots with seedlings I've been growing indoors, added some of my home made seedling soil, a bit of water, and voila - the look and functionality was awesome – really, for such a super simple project, the look is very cool.

I then became inspired and set out to attach a series of pots to the railing along my outdoor staircase. Same thing, great turn out – and this time I planted tulips that had been growing indoors.

So get out there friends and garden. I know most of you think you have to go at it on an obstacle course, in a gym, or on some kind of cardio machine – but that's not true! Gardening can be your go to to get going! Just do it and let me know how your zip-tie vertical herb gardens are doing.

Until the next workshop –

Peace,

Jessa