

Gardens for Wellbeing, Deb Punton

This course 4 week course introduces 'Therapeutic Wellness' to everyday lives and helps us understand the enjoyment of physical, mental and social benefits of gardening and nature connections. Gardens and gardening have been well researched to provide benefits improving our mental, physical and overall health and wellbeing.

These workshops will introduce participants to:

- Physical health benefits of nature and edible gardening
- Sensory & Wellness Garden Design
- Horticulture Therapy & Therapeutic Horticulture
- Ecopsychology, eco-art therapy and ecotherapy's
- Practical activities to reduce stress levels and sense greater wellbeing.
- Ongoing opportunities to connect and participate in community gardening activities and ecopsychology practices.



Please note: Deb is not a psychologist, carer or counsellor and is unable to support individuals in a mental health crisis. Participation includes activities, group work and extension opportunities. All people are welcome and a personal carer or support worker may also register to accompany a participant to support them in their enjoyment of the course.

Further details about the course:

The Gardens for Wellbeing course is designed to explore the connection between nature, gardening, and health. As an ecopsychologist with a background in nursing, mental health, horticulture and permaculture landscape design and teaching, Deb knows that spending time in nature and cultivating community has significant positive impacts on our wellbeing.

Community gardening is an integral part of this course, as it provides opportunities for social connection and collaboration, as well as a sense of purpose and belonging while creating greater food security and reducing some climate change impacts. Working together to create and maintain a garden can also help to improve our overall sense of wellbeing and reduce feelings of isolation, anxiety and depression, develop self-esteem, confidence, skills and friendships.

The planning of an outdoor area designed for wellness will also be covered during the course, including exploring the various sensations that can be stimulated through plant selection and design. Following the workshops, you will have the opportunity to participate in the creation of a wellness garden initiative at the CSCH location.

Ecotherapy is another important aspect of the Gardens for Wellbeing course. Ecotherapy refers to various nature-based interventions that aim to improve mental health and wellbeing. These nature-based therapies can range from simply spending time in nature to more structured activities such as horticultural therapy, therapeutic horticulture, forest bathing, conservation, animal-assisted therapy and applied ecopsychology. We will explore some of these various approaches throughout the course and consider how they can practically be applied in everyday life.

Finally, the course will touch on ecopsychology and eco-art therapy to deepen our relationships with nature. Ecopsychology and eco-art therapy have several benefits, including developing a deeper connection with nature, promoting environmental awareness and conservation, reducing stress and anxiety, fostering creativity and self-

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expression, and improving overall mental and physical well-being. These therapies can also help individuals explore their personal relationship with the natural world and develop a greater sense of purpose and meaning in life.

Overall, the Gardens for Wellbeing course is designed to provide learners with the tools and knowledge to harness the healing power of nature and gardening for the benefit of themselves and their communities. Healthy people connected to nature are more likely to understand their relationship as part of nature, and therefore love, care, and protect our local natural world. By participating in this course, individuals can promote their own well-being while contributing to the health and sustainability of the planet.

We're looking forward to welcoming you.