## THAD Therapeutic Horticulture Activity Database

## Activity: Plant Care Goal: Psychological Populations: All

## **TH Activity Plan – Watering Medium Pots**

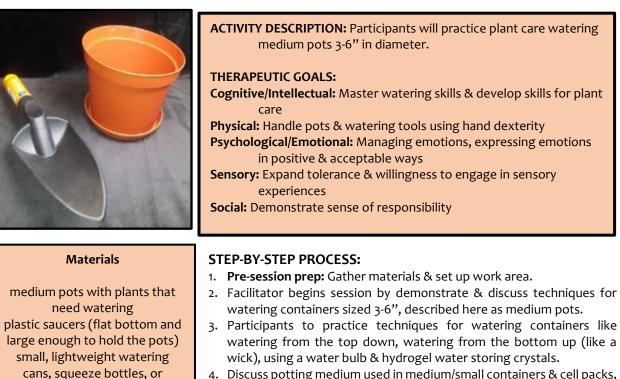
Text by Lesley Fleming, HTR & Diane Relf, PhD, HTM Photo by D. Relf & Southern Living.com

watering bulbs, water meter

water

watering cans and cups

wipes



- 4. Discuss potting medium used in medium/small containers & cell packs, some of which do not hold water for long... with a need to water more frequently.
- 5. Practice watering appropriately using water meters, sense of touch, visual cues, climate & weather inputs, and using facility watering schedule if appropriate.
- 6. Clean-up work area.
- 7. Create a watering schedule if part of the activity is to encourage participants' sense of responsibility through regular plant care.

**APPLICATIONS FOR POPULATIONS:** This activity is appropriate for most populations. For younger children, people with developmental delays, dementia or other cognitive challenges, watering can be an inclusive activity, one with sensory stimulation and enjoyable time in the garden with other people. Delivered in a group setting, this horticultural task can prioritize social goals like expressing emotions appropriately (when having to wait a turn to use watering equipment, getting wet with cold water), working in a group & interacting with leader/therapist. For individuals with sensory processing challenges, the activity can try to expand tolerance to sensory stimuli, especially tactile inputs.

Adaptive gardening techniques of hand-on-hand watering, and use of lighter smaller watering can ensure all participants are able to undertake the watering task. This activity may be an important lesson within vocational horticulture programs, providing hands-on application of theory.

**SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS:** Sun protection is recommended for outdoor sessions. Potable water should be used.

**NOTES OR OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:** Plants that thrive in containers include pansy, sedum, Angelonia, impatiens, vinca, caladium, ivy, geraniums, heuchera & lantana among others. Check their tolerance for heat, cold, sun and water requirements. Smaller plants will need more tending and more frequent watering. Hotter climates will dictate frequency of watering as well.

Related therapeutic horticulture sessions can include watering & water requirements for cell packs, large pots, raised beds, lawns & vegetable gardens. Discuss types of potting medium used for different purposes and how each holds water differently.

## **REFERENCES/ RESOURCES:**

Dyer, M. (2023). What are hydrogels: Learn about water crystals in potting soil. *Gardening Know How.* https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/special/containers/water-crystals-in-potting-soil.htm

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- Stein, L. & Welsh, D. (n.d.). Efficient use of water in the garden and landscape. *Texas* A&M Agrilife Extension. <u>https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/earthkind/drought/efficient-use-of-water-in-the-garden-and-</u>landscape/
- Yasalonis, A. & Dukes, M. (2023). Micro irrigation for home landscapes. University of Florida IFAS Extension. https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/AE524

Edits were made for THAD purposes in 2023.

HT Activity Plan form developed by Lesley Fleming, Susan Morgan and Kathy Brechner 2012, revised in 2023.

