



Growing Memories Garden

A 45-Minute Nature-Assisted Terrarium Therapy Programme for Seniors



Executive Summary

Aquatic Eden, in partnership with Creatherapy, proposes a **45-minute Nature-Assisted Terrarium Therapy Programme** designed for seniors, including individuals living with mild to moderate dementia. This structured, hands-on workshop uses guided terrarium creation as a therapeutic tool to promote fine motor coordination, sensory stimulation, cognitive engagement, emotional wellbeing, and social connection.

Research shows that nature-based and horticultural activities support mood regulation, reduce agitation, stimulate reminiscence, and improve quality of life in older adults – including those with dementia. The tactile engagement with soil and plants provides grounding sensory input, while the creative process encourages purposeful participation and positive identity reinforcement. The programme is affordably priced at \$10/pax.



Programme Overview



Duration: 45 minutes (all-inclusive)

Format: Guided group workshop (seated, table-top activity)

Group Size: Minimum 10 participants

Venue: On-site at Senior Centre

Facilitators: Trained facilitators from Aquatic Eden & Creatherapy

Each participant will:

- Create a personal terrarium
- Engage in guided sensory grounding
- Participate in light reminiscence prompts (optional)
- Bring home their completed living terrarium



Therapeutic Benefits for Seniors



🌱 1. Fine Motor & Hand-Eye Coordination

- Scooping soil and arranging plants strengthens finger dexterity and grip.
- Supports bilateral coordination and hand function.
- Encourages gentle physical engagement in a safe, seated format.

Gardening-based activities have been associated with improved motor function and sustained physical activity in older adults (Wang & MacMillan, 2013).

🌱 2. Soil Therapy & Sensory Grounding

Touching soil and plants provides:

- Rich tactile stimulation
- Calming sensory feedback
- Rhythmic hand movements that promote relaxation

Exposure to soil microorganisms such as *Mycobacterium vaccae* has been linked to activation of serotonin pathways associated with improved mood (Lowry et al., 2007).

Sensory-based activities are particularly beneficial for individuals experiencing anxiety or restlessness.

🌸 3. Emotional Wellbeing & Stress Reduction

Interaction with plants has been shown to:

- Reduce physiological stress markers
- Improve mood states
- Enhance feelings of calm and connectedness

Indoor plant interaction has demonstrated measurable psychological relaxation effects (Park et al., 2015).

🌸 4. Cognitive Engagement & Purpose

Terrarium creation involves:

- Following simple sequential steps
- Making aesthetic choices
- Problem-solving placement and balance

Engagement with natural environments has been shown to improve attention and reduce cognitive fatigue (Berman, Jonides, & Kaplan, 2008).

Gardening interventions have also been associated with reduced depressive symptoms in older populations (Soga, Gaston, & Yamaura, 2017).



Benefits for Individuals Living with Dementia



Nature-assisted therapy is especially supportive for persons with dementia because it:

Stimulates Reminiscence

Plants, soil, and gardening often trigger autobiographical memories and life stories. Reminiscence therapy is associated with improved mood and sense of identity in dementia populations.

Reduces Agitation & Restlessness

Structured horticultural activities have been linked to reductions in agitation and behavioural symptoms in dementia care settings (Detweiler et al., 2012).

Supports Sensory Integration

Tactile stimulation from soil and leaves provides grounding sensory input, which can reduce anxiety and confusion.

Encourages Non-Verbal Participation

Even participants with limited verbal ability can engage through touch, observation, and simple placement tasks, promoting dignity and inclusion.

Enhances Sense of Achievement

Completing a tangible product reinforces self-efficacy and positive emotional expression.

Studies in dementia care settings indicate horticultural therapy improves engagement and overall wellbeing (Detweiler et al., 2012; Wang & MacMillan, 2013).



Structure of Programme



Welcome & Orientation (5 minutes)

Gentle introduction, visual demonstration of materials, gentle hand exercises

Guided Terrarium Creation (30 minutes)

Step-by-step layering, planting, decorating.
Facilitators provide one-on-one assistance as needed.

Reflection & Closing (10 minutes)

Optional sharing, simple plant care instructions, positive reinforcement.



Pricing



\$10/Pax. Minimum 15 to start.

Different Tiered pricing for numbers below 15

All packages include:

- Glass terrarium container
- Soil and drainage layers
- Live plants
- Decorative elements
- Facilitated therapeutic guidance
- Set-up and clean-up



Safety & Accessibility



- Lightweight, senior-friendly materials e.g Non-toxic plants
- Seated participation
- Hand hygiene protocols
- Close facilitator supervision
- Adaptations available for mobility or cognitive needs



Contact Us



To schedule a session, please contact:

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About the Organisers



Aquatic Eden and Creatherapy

Specialists in experiential nature-based programmes and ecological engagement.

Integrating therapeutic principles into creative, sensory-based interventions that promote emotional wellbeing across the lifespan.