

Creating a Zen Garden by Shane McClellan

Have you ever heard the saying that your inner world reflects your outer world? Look back at the different stages of your own life and put this to the test. Is it true? We all know the type of worker with a messy desk who has scattered thoughts. Likewise, we know the person who has a very tidy desk and is very focused without distractions.

The same principal applies to all aspects of life including your garden. Is your garden full of zen or is it full of weeds? Follow these tips to your zen garden:

- **Plan:** This is the most important step as it needs to be applied to all the following steps. What type of garden do you want to have? Do you want raised beds? Do you want to buy your soil or learn to build your own? When you are planning a garden, you are managing the future! There are so many macro and micro elements to consider when planning a garden. You need to spend time with this, do your own research and build your own garden. No two gardens are the same, just like no two people are the same.
- **Start Small:** The greatest gardening failures happen when building a garden bigger than you can handle. You would be shocked to see how much production one can get out of a small space. YouTube is full of countless examples of this! My advice is to go smaller than you think. It is easier to have a very small garden and manage it well. Too large of a garden can easily turn into a chore and become unenjoyable, quite quickly. Remember – you can always start as small as a container garden!
- **Plant What You Enjoy:** It is easy to get carried away and plant unique vegetables which don't incorporate into your meals. Focus on planting what you eat. For example, if you do not like preserving tomatoes at the end of the season or you only want to eat them every now and then, don't plant 20 tomato plants. Keep your garden simple.
- **The Learning Never Ends:** You will make a lot of mistakes and have huge failures. Plan on this fact and accept it as part of the learning process. This is a process that never ends!

Take time to reflect back on these tips. How can they be applied to other areas of your life?