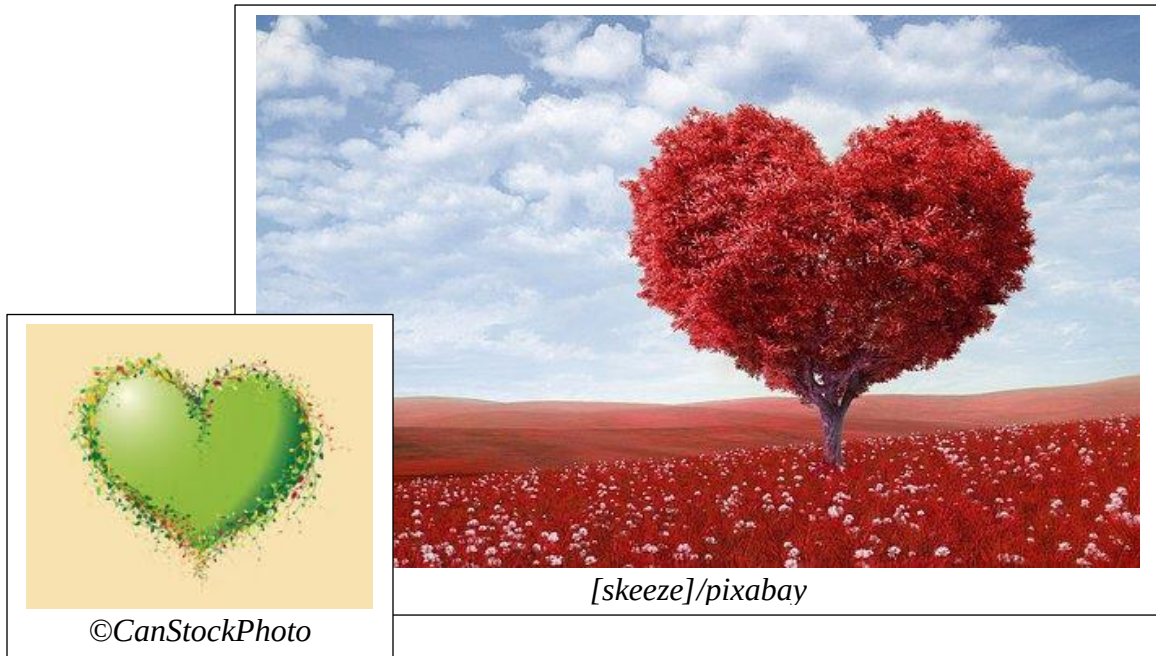


LIVING HEART

(Or shamrock for St. Pat's Day, or symbol for the occasion)



OBJECTIVES:

1. **Educational Components** (What are the patients going to learn relevant to horticulture?)
Each participant will learn basic information regarding the growth and maintenance of grass. They will then learn how to plant fast growing seeds on a specially prepared surface.
2. **Activity** (What are the patients going to do in your presentation workshop?)
Each participant will then plant (or be assisted to plant) grass/alfalfa seeds on a specially prepared heart-shaped surface.
3. **Take Away** (What things are patients taking back with them?)
Each participant will take a heart-shape object planted with fast growing seeds back to their rooms.

MATERIALS:

(Plan for 8-10 patients. Eight is supposed to be the minimum, but sometimes we get 10.)

- _____ Pens
- _____ Markers
- _____ Watering cans (2 available in BRI supply cabinet) or individual watering bottles for patients to use
- _____ Name tags for patients (check BRI supply cabinet)
- _____ Example of completed project you're doing
- _____ An extra set of the patient project materials listed below in order for you to demonstrate the project

MATERIALS *(Continued)*

- _____ TWO completed presentation forms (1 to BRI and 1 mailed to Ext. office)
- _____ Your clean receipts for materials purchased (give to BRI therapists)

SPECIFIC ITEMS NEEDED for this project

- Foam trays or other means for participants to transport their planted heart
- Red construction paper
- White doilies/decorative stickers
- Cotton batting
- Spray bottles containing water
- Alfalfa seeds (could get from health food store, nursery, etc.)
- Spray bottles with water for each patient
- Optional, red metallic heart chains to outline the heart just before adding seeds
- Optional, CD with “oldie” love songs and something to play CD with
- Optional, variety of Valentine cards

IS A POWERPOINT OR PREZI OF PRESENTATION AVAILABLE? NO

IS A HANDOUT AVAILABLE? No

BEFORE CLASS

1. Have some pre-cut red construction paper hearts ready to use as well as some batting already shaped into outline of a heart.
2. Consider having variety of valentine cards on table for participants to review.
3. Play collection of “oldie” love songs.

DURING CLASS

1. Cover the foam tray (or whatever surface is provided to hold the project) with red paper.
2. Pull apart cotton batting and shape into an outline of a heart.
3. Using the spray bottle, mist the cotton with water. Wet, but do not saturate it.
4. Sprinkle seeds onto the cotton batting following the shape of the outline. Clearly fill the outline or this project will not turn out well.
5. Mist the seeds well using the spray bottle.
6. Place tray in well-ventilated area that gets light but not direct sunlight.

NOTE: Have each patient take back a spray bottle with their heart.

MAINTENANCE

- Place in a warm bright sunny location.
- Rotate the pot a quarter turn each time you water to keep the plants from leaning toward the light.
- Mist the plant pot every day or two, keeping the soil moist but not soggy.
- Growth should appear in 5 to 7 days.

INFORMATION/DESCRIPTION/FACTS:



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Alfalfa is the plant *Medicago sativa*. There are many subspecies. It is a perennial plant growing up to 30 inches in height in a wide range of soil condition. Its small flowers range from yellow to purple. Alfalfa is probably native to the area around the Mediterranean Sea, but it is extensively cultivated as fodder for livestock in all temperate climates.

Alfalfa is a member of the legume family. It has the ability to make nutrients available to other plants both through its very long, deep (6–16 ft.) root system, and because it has a hosts

INFORMATION/DESCRIPTION/FACTS *(Continued)*

beneficial nitrogen-fixing bacteria. For these reasons it is often grown to improve soil or as "green manure." Other names for alfalfa include buffalo grass, buffalo herb, Chilean clover, purple medick, purple medicle, and lucerne.

Uses:

Medical: Alfalfa has been used for thousands of years in many parts of the world, as a source of food for people and livestock and as a medicinal herb. It is used both in Western and traditional Chinese medicine. It is probably more useful as a source of easily accessible nutrients than as a medicinal herb. Alfalfa is an excellent source of most vitamins, including vitamins A, D, E, and K. Vitamin K is critical in blood clotting, so alfalfa may have some use in improving clotting. It also contains trace minerals such as calcium, magnesium, iron, phosphorous, and potassium. Alfalfa is also higher in protein than many other plant foods. This abundance of nutrients has made alfalfa a popular tonic for convalescents when brewed into tea.

In addition to using the seeds and leaves as food, alfalfa has a long history of folk use in Europe as a diuretic or "water pill." It is also said that alfalfa can lower cholesterol. Alfalfa is used as to treat arthritis, diabetes, digestive problems, weight loss, ulcers, kidney and bladder problems, prostate conditions, asthma, and hay fever. Alfalfa is also said to be estrogenic (estrogen-like). (Be aware--That is a lot of claims for one plant! And because of its effect on blood clotting it can be a very dangerous plant to take without your doctor being aware.)

Crops: Alfalfa is harvested as hay which is processed or fed directly to livestock, or for seed production. It is also used in pellets as forage supplements.

Livestock: This plant is grown in combination with grasses in improved pastures. It is grazed by all types of domestic livestock. Caution should be taken when using alfalfa for grazing due to its high bloat hazard.

Wildlife: Alfalfa is an excellent food for antelope, deer, elk, Canada goose, and sage and sharp tail grouse. It is fair food for Sandhill crane, mallard, Hungarian partridge, and pheasant. In addition to providing high quality hay, grazing, and wildlife forage and protection, alfalfa is an important source of leaf meal used for fortifying baby food and other special diet foods prepared for human use. Large quantities of dehydrated alfalfa are also used in manufacturing concentrated feeds for poultry and livestock.

SOURCES

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