

Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

Garden Trends for 2020, Part 1

The Power of RE

... continued from Page D1

We currently live in a throw-away society of major consumption. Many of us remember the days when appliances lasted 20 to 30 years. My mom's washing machine lasted 45 years! Today, we are lucky to get seven to 10 years before replacement. When I was a girl, I learned to sew and made all my clothes. Today I mend torn clothing and alter my wardrobe to replicate current fashions. I don't toss them. Since 1970, global consumption tripled with only 9% of consumed materials reused. This material "mismanagement" contributes to 67% of global greenhouse gas emissions. It's easy to reuse, repurpose or re-engineer items we already have to create new items we need.

Just today I was rereading a letter from my cousin who wrote to me about how he called my dad "Superman" because he was one of those farmers who always stopped to help anyone in distress and could fix anything and everything with baling wire and electrical tape. Daddy did more with less and he taught his growing family to do the same. Repair, reuse, recycle, repurpose, remake, renew! We were all doing these things before it was in vogue. Now the "re" everything is trending. It's the power of RE.

When you buy a plant, either return the plastic container or reuse it. A major goal for 2020 is minimal waste.

Are you looking for a great job or second career? Consider horticulture. Did you know that in 2018, gardening in America grew to an industry of \$40.6 billion according to Euro Monitor? By 2023, gardening is expected to reach \$49.3 billion, meaning that more labor will be necessary.

The next generations will need to learn to grow more food. Encourage children to seek an education that will offer them expertise in urban agriculture, environmental sustainability, or garden installation. Start on the job training now at home, in your backyard. Give your kids seeds to plant, weeds to pull, and areas to irrigate. Allow them to grow a few vegetables to make a pizza. They'll be happier, healthier, and will become automatic stewards of our soils.

As we begin 2020, take a deep breath and walk around your neighborhood. Consider the importance of the flora around you. What can you do personally to be more sustainable and regreen our planet? I'll have more information for you in my next column. Until then, remember that failure is fertilizer and do your part to implement the power of RE.



Refresh yourself by a lily pond in a public garden.



Illuminate a line of birdhouses to spruce up the winter nights!