



President's Message

Dear Colleagues in Horticultural Therapy,

Welcome to the January 2024 edition of the AHTA newsletter, a sharing of information for all! As we welcome the new year into our lives I am reminded of the miracle of seeds with the message of renewal, growth, and potential. What a great metaphor for AHTA, and congruent with how we start our 2024 gardens with the selection and propagation of seeds.

Whether you are a new member of AHTA or a long supporting member, or somewhere in between, consider renewing your connection and passion to AHTA in helping AHTA grow and reach its highest potential. Please consider joining a work team, the Board of Directors, and reaching out to potential members. The one word resolution for AHTA is GROWTH! Come grow with us as WE can do this collectively!

Hope this New Year brings you the best for you, your families, friends, and the world of horticultural therapy!

Lana Dreyfuss LPCC, LCADC, SEP, HTR, President of AHTA

News and Events

Save the Date for the AHTA 2024 Annual Conference

October 18-19, 2024 | Raleigh, North Carolina

AHTA is pleased to bring you the [2024 Annual Conference](#) as an in-person, two day platform. Please save the dates as we look forward to meeting together in the Raleigh-Durham area of North Carolina, **Friday, October 18, 2024 – Saturday, October 19, 2024**. As a friendly reminder, pre-tours will occur the Thursday prior to the conference for those interested in participating.

Lastly, in light of accessibility and equity, the AHTA will be holding future conferences on a virtual platform again. We will likewise provide in-person conferences as well, as we continue to balance the the importance of affordability, accessibility, and the human need for social interaction. Thank you for your interest in the [AHTA 2024 Annual Conference](#) and stay tuned for additional updates.

[Learn More](#)

February Webinar

[An Introduction to Motivational Interviewing \(MI\)](#)

February 20, 2024 | 7:00 PM ET

Do you want to better engage your clients in the garden? Do you feel something is missing with your conversations with them? There's an approach that may serve you and your clients better.

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a collaborative and client-centered counseling technique aimed at eliciting behavior change by exploring and resolving ambivalence. In the context of horticultural therapy programs, MI can be a powerful tool for engaging participants in a manner that respects their autonomy and facilitates a genuine commitment to therapeutic goals. This one hour overview will explore MI and its uses, as well as leave participants with some tools to get started.

Melody Cole, MS, RDN, is an experienced clinician and consultant who provides Motivational Interviewing for a variety of professionals in the medical community. In addition to clinical training, Melody integrates MI-enabled content into strategic initiatives and organizational change. Throughout her career, she has been instrumental in championing MI-informed leadership skills that support process improvement. Melody enjoys developing and coaching others in an MI-consistent communication style that builds trust and establishes person-centered relationships. Melody became a member of the Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers (MINT) in Berlin, Germany, in 2015. She has a keen interest in MI in Leadership and MI in Medical Groups and is an active member of the Wisconsin MINT community.

[Register Today](#)

Come Join Us

AHTA would like to invite you to join one of our [work teams](#) to help in giving back to AHTA and receiving the benefits of being involved in helping AHTA

move forward and connecting for the purpose of promoting horticultural therapy!

The AHTA Magazine Work Team, Conference Work Team, Credentialing Work Team, Marketing Work Team, Membership Work Team, Professional Education Work Team, Sponsorship Work Team, and Webinar Work Team invite you to share your expertise and support the growth of AHTA!

[Learn more](#) and send your interest to info@ahta.org!

Thank you and here's to a great 2024, another year of continued growth for all!

[Learn More](#)

Plan Now for National Horticultural Therapy Week 2024

Let's celebrate! [National Horticultural Therapy Week](#) is **March 17–23, 2024**. Each year, the American Horticultural Therapy Association coordinates the efforts of regional networking groups, affiliated horticultural therapy programs, and AHTA members to collaborate in celebrating the profession on a national and local level. Take time to connect to the outstanding [regional groups](#) for upcoming NHTW events and to be part of the planning process!

[Learn More](#)

UCLA Extension Horticultural Therapy Program

The AHTA HT Certificate Review Board has approved the [UCLA Extension Horticultural Therapy Program](#)! Contact Stephanie Landregan at slandreg@unex.ucla.edu for more information and check out all of the [AHTA Accredited Horticultural Therapy Programs](#).

[Learn More](#)

Peperomia Activities for HT

By Karen L. Kennedy, HTR

- Use the plant characteristics, growth habit or environmental needs to facilitate discussion with clients about their goals or progress. For example: Well drained soil and bright light are ideal growing conditions for peperomias, what characteristics make a supportive environment for the client? What are an individual's "best" or most colorful features that make them unique and special? What plant features represent a goal the client is working towards?

- Explore propagation techniques with include stem cutting of *P. obtusifolia*, *P. incana*, *P. prostrata* and leaf cuttings of *P. argyreia*, *P. caperata*, and *P. polybotrya*.
- Create open terrarium gardens with smaller species to provide well-drained soil with high humidity or dish gardens with a variety of plants.
- Create a display of hanging plants. *P. puteolata* (parallel peperomi) and *P. pereskiiifolia* are good choices. As is *P. prostrata*, the (string of turtles), whose leaves resemble tiny turtle shells.
- *P. obtusifolia* (baby rubber plant) is one of the easiest to grow. The thick sturdy stem is resilient and withstands light pressure, increasing transplanting success for those with poor fine motor control.

About the author: Karen L. Kennedy, HTR is the Education Coordinator at The Herb Society of America, a membership based nonprofit educational organization that seeks to promote knowledge of herbs and their uses. She is a horticultural therapist with over 30 years' experience currently serving people touched by cancer. She is also a faculty member of the Horticultural Therapy Institute

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Peperomia incana.

[Photo Credit](#)



Peperomia caperata has unusual flowers -- an abundance of tall, slender spikes.

[Photo Credit](#)

Therapeutic Horticulture Activity Database

Shout out to the Regional Groups for this resource!

The [Therapeutic Horticulture Activity Database](#) is a new **free database** that shares activities in 9 plant-based categories with related therapeutic goals and information on populations that can benefit. This initiative strives to expand the knowledge and practice of therapeutic horticulture (TH) within HT and in other disciplines.

The collaborative project was initiated by Diane Relf, the THAD Working Group, which includes the Florida Horticulture for Health Network, Nova Scotia Horticulture for Health Network, California Horticultural Therapy Network, Mid-Atlantic Horticultural Therapy Network, Carolinas Horticultural

Therapy Network, and the University of Florida Certificate in Horticultural Therapy.

Learn More

Supporting AHTA

Your generous support makes it possible for our organization to grow and thrive. Your contributions help keep us going, including helping with the expenses of our annual conference, increasing our ability to work toward credentialing, offsetting the cost of our journal and other outreach publications, and connecting to colleges and universities, facilities, prisons, hospitals, and agencies that [support the profession of horticultural therapy](#).

Ways to Support AHTA

Become a Member

Not a member of AHTA? [Join today!](#) AHTA's membership is comprised of individuals who are passionate about the unique benefits of horticultural therapy as a therapeutic modality. Members are committed to the growth of the profession. Membership in the AHTA will keep you up to date on the latest in horticultural therapy news, as well as give you access to outstanding educational and networking opportunities.

Join Today


American Horticultural
Therapy Association.

American Horticultural Therapy Association

info@ahta.org

(206) 209-5296

www.ahta.org

