

**“Like a garden, planning is bringing the future into the present so that you do something about it now.”**

~~ Anonymous

Have you ever planted or thought about planting a garden? Was it a flower garden, rose garden, vegetable garden, herb garden or even a rock garden? Over the next several weeks we are going to focus on the many lessons learned from being a gardener. If you are saying to yourself, I have never planted a garden and have had no intentions, **WAIT...**that is ok. By the end of this series you will be a gardener – a gardener planting seeds with your thoughts, your words, your decisions and your actions. It is amazing the many parallels there are between how things happen in the natural world and how things happen in the human world.



Creating a garden is a process that requires several important stages such as planning, implementing, maintaining and then reaping the rewards of your hard work with the harvest. Then the whole cycle begins again. The beauty of the cycle is that you can learn from the previous cycle. It all starts with proper planning.



When planning out your garden you have many decisions to make and many questions to ask. You have to determine what you want to plant, where to plant it, how much time and energy you have to invest, when to take action and what you want your final outcome to be. Most importantly though, you have to consider whether your garden will receive all of the resources it needs in order to flourish. Too many times we jump into planting seeds without testing the soil to determine the actions needed to prepare for a fruitful crop. If the proper nutrients aren't present in the soil you might get some results from your garden but not the bumper crop you hoped for.



Whether at work or home, start with the goal and, bring the future into the present. What is it you want to accomplish? How much planning and preparedness will be needed to determine the fruits of your labor? It is helpful to set up a system that effectively anticipates needs, clearly communicates expectations so the plan will be successfully implemented. In addition, the plan can be used again for the next planning cycle!



Look for upcoming thoughts on how to have your plan flourish with beauty!

**Sentara EAP is available to provide assistance when one is faced with challenges in home or work life. Please call to schedule a confidential appointment with one of our licensed clinical professionals.**

**1-800-899-8174 or 757-363-6777**

**Log onto EAPOnline at [www.ilab.org/hr/sentaraeap.html](http://www.ilab.org/hr/sentaraeap.html) for additional topics & information.**