

## *Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian*

### Fall out

Other last-minute chores before fall falls into winter include:

- **FERTILIZE** your trees while they are dormant. Underground the roots are active and can use the nutrient boost.
- **TAKE** cuttings of coleus, pelargoniums, and geraniums before you prune them back for the winter. Put the stems in a jar of water and when they root, you can transplant them to use indoors.
- **DIVIDE** your peonies daylilies, and bearded iris if you didn't do it last month. Exchange with friends or find new needy places in your garden.
- **CONTINUE** reusing your gray water for outdoor container plants that won't benefit from any rainy weather. Every drop you save is crucial as we are not out of the drought woods.
- **PROTECT** roses from extreme temperature changes by covering plants with eight to ten inches of mulch above the crown.
- **ADD** non-breakable decorative ornaments to trees and shrubs as festive garden features.
- **COVER** frost-prone plants such as bougainvillea with burlap.
- **CLEAN** gazebos, decks, patios, porches, fountains, stairs, bricks, and other structures.
- **RAKE** debris from gravel paths.

Fall gardening is a wonderful way to reap the benefits of nature. Studies show that spending time outdoors decreases levels of the hormone cortisol, lowers blood pressure, and reduces other markers of stress. Relaxation is the reward. When you are working in the garden, you are exercising which is a critical pillar of optimum health. Going outside encourages you to get up and move. With your autumn gardening duties, your mood will be elevated, especially during this hectic holiday season amidst a pandemic. Spend time in green spaces to reduce your anxiety. The magnificence of nature lowers levels of inflammation in the body. Pollution is the culprit for many illnesses including respiratory problems, cancer, and heart disease. Breathe in the fresh air and experience the awe of autumn.

As we watch the final fluttering of autumn leaves, let your garden be a natural prescription to lower your stress and heighten the excitement of the forthcoming holiday season.

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Happy Gardening. Happy Growing.



**A friend's beautiful mature garden with redwoods and healthy shrubs.**



**Parsley is a perfect plant for containers.**