

JAPANESE GARDENS AND THEIR POSITIVE IMPACT ON WELLNESS

(Wellness Gardening)

Spring 2022

Sabbatical Report Clarification
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The sabbatical narrative was revised (COVID related changes) and posted on the sabbatical website on 6/26/22. This revision was approved by unanimous vote of the sabbatical committee (via email) in June 2022.

This is a summary from that revision:

Objectives

- 1.** To assess the impact on wellness of Japanese people from their perception about gardening and its role in Japanese culture
- 2.** To research specific elements of Japanese gardens on wellness in the social, cultural, and religious aspects in Japan
- 3.** To identify practical recommendations for well-being in the US through wellness gardening, based upon findings of the Japanese gardens and their positive impact on wellness

Activities

- 1.** To research historical aspects of the positive impact on wellness from Japanese gardens
- 2.** To collect and record researched data
- 3.** To identify exemplary Japanese gardens
- 4.** To compile and assess data collected for Japanese gardens' positive impact on wellness
- 5.** To identify practical recommendations for wellness gardening in the US
- 6.** To prepare the final report and presentation slides

Products

1. Historical data research report on Japanese gardens and their role on wellness in Japan
2. Examples of gardens in Japan
3. Practical recommendations for wellness gardening in the US
4. Final research report

Revised Timeline

January 2022 Research Hypothesis / Assumption – Identify and define the aspects on wellness from Japanese gardens, and hypothesize its positive impacts on the lifestyle in the US

February-April 2022 Data Collection – List of Japanese gardens for the research. Historical background and important aspects of findings. Identify and research specific aspects of wellness from gardens

May-June 2022 Data Review / Assessment – Review data collected and compiled. Assess fact-findings and compare with hypothesis and assumptions set at the beginning of the research

July-October 2022 Prepare the final report with recommendations applicable to the US lifestyle

The report was submitted and posted on the sabbatical website in October 2022. Here is a compilation of what was done (as shown in the posted report). Extended discussion of the data collected, research methods, conclusions and recommendations can be seen in the written report and in the PowerPoint Appendix posted on the sabbatical website.

Activities

1. To research historical aspects of the positive impact on wellness from Japanese gardens
 - Hypothesized positive impacts on daily lives and culture from gardening in Japan.
 - Researched historical aspects of gardening in religion and culture, and,
 - Impact on wellness by embracing nature.
 - Identified and assessed positive roles of gardening on overall wellness from historical precedents.
2. To collect and record researched data and 3. To identify exemplary Japanese gardens

Researched (virtually or in person in California), the wellness aspects of Japanese gardens in various locations

- Visited local Japanese Gardens and observed how people perceived and interacted with garden space (see list below)
 - Collected data about Japanese gardens and wellness from past visits as well as web sites.
 - Assessed the importance of Shinto shrines and Buddhism temples and their positive influence on public wellness.
 - Identified the “*passing down*” of wisdom from generation to generation, emphasizing the importance of gardening by embracing nature.
 - Identified contributing activities from gardening to personal wellness.
 - Assessed the inter-relationship between gardens and gardening, recognizing “*Sense of place, ownership and belonging*”, which contributes to positive mental and physical wellness.
4. To compile and assess data collected for Japanese gardens’ positive impact on wellness and 5. To identify practical recommendations for wellness gardening in the US
- Assessed and identified the current perception of gardening from the general public in the US.
 - Summarized positive gardening impacts on personal wellness in Japan.
 - Compared facts identified from Japanese gardening, positive impacts on mental and physical wellness, with hypothesis and assumptions at the beginning of the research.
 - Identified recommendations for practical implementation of gardening that may improve, both mentally and physically, personal wellness in the US.
 - Addressed “*Wellness Gardening*” with clearly identified definition, objectives and implementation scopes, to promote gardening as the primary activity for pursuing and enhancing personal wellness mentally as well as physically.
6. To prepare the final report and presentation slides
- Final report is the *sabbatical report*, and the slides are the *PowerPoint/ appendix*

Timeline as completed

January 2022 Hypothesis / Assumptions

1. Identified and defined hypothesis / assumptions of positive impacts on personal wellness from garden(ing) in Japan.
2. Identified and summarized garden(ing) roles in historical, social, cultural and religious aspects in Japan.
3. Compiled hypothesis / assumptions identified for the positive impacts on well-being from garden(ing).

February - April 2022 Data Collection

1. Researched and collected the historical examples of wellness garden(ing) in Japan.
2. Researched and collected specific functions or aspects of garden(ing), focusing on well-being.
3. Visited local Japanese Gardens and observed people's perceptions and interactions with garden space and elements.
 - Descanso Gardens at La Canada on March 15, Tuesday, 2022
 - Fullerton Arboretum at Cal State Fullerton on March 24, Thursday, 2022
 - Earl Burns Miller Japanese Garden at Cal State Long Beach on April 7, Thursday, 2022
 - San Diego Botanic Garden at Encinitas on April 14, Thursday, 2022
 - Huntington Library at San Marino on April 25, Monday, 2022
 - California Scenario Garden at Costa Mesa on April 30, Saturday, 2022
4. Researched other countries garden(ing) and well-being
 - Denver Botanic Gardens in Denver, the US
 - Kew Royal Botanic Gardens in London, the UK
 - VanDusen Botanical Gardens in British Columbia, Canada
 - HortPark in Singapore
 - Yu Garden in Shanghai, China (*Feng Shui*)
5. Compiled the data collected for the review.
6. Organized the data for in-depth assessment.

May - June 2022 Data Review / Assessment

1. Analyzed data collected and identified the key elements of wellbeing from garden(ing) in Japan.
2. Analyzed data collected and identified the key elements of wellbeing from garden(ing) in other countries, such as, UK, Canada, Singapore and China.
3. Assessed key elements identified in details of contributing factors from garden(ing) to well-being.
4. Confirmed assessed findings and organized for the final recommendations of practical logistics and implementations in the US.

July - October 2022 Recommendations

1. Compared data between Japan (and other countries) and the US to identify similarities and differences in garden(ing) focusing on personal well-being.
2. Analyze assessed data for the final recommendations.
3. Prepared the recommendation with applicable tasks list and executable logistics.

Please note that the PowerPoint presentation has extensive images and data and I have referred to it as the PowerPoint / Appendix.