

# Therapeutic Horticulture Session Plan



## Fruit Themed Session

### Brief Description:

This session kicks off with a fruit-themed mindful eating exercise to engage the senses. Next, participants dive into a "Fruits From Around the World" activity or plant lemon seeds before wrapping up with a fruit-themed closing round to share insights and experiences. Additionally, if you have kitchen space available, you may consider creating a refreshing fruit salad together to tie the session together and engage the sense of taste.

### Activities Included:

1. Fruits Mindfulness Exercise: [Link to the Activity Database](#)
2. Fruits From Around the World: [Link to the Activity Database](#)
3. Planting a Lemon Tree: [Link to the Activity Database](#)
4. Fruit-Themed Opening or Closing Round: [Link to the Activity Database](#)
5. Fruit Salad: [Link to the Activity Database](#)

## Opening Activity: Fruits Mindfulness Exercise

**Brief Description:** In this activity, participants take part in a mindful eating exercise centered around tasting a piece of fruit and reflecting on its journey.

### Materials & Tools Required:

1. Piece of fruit for each participant

### Instructions:

*Read the following script:*

Pick up the fruit in your hand.

How does it feel? Is it furry? Prickly? Smooth? Bumpy? Warm? Soft? Hard?

How does it smell? Does it smell like it usually tastes?

Does this smell remind you of anything – a place, a memory, a garden, a market?

Take a moment to reminisce. Have you shared this fruit with someone before? Have you grown it in your garden? Or perhaps baked with it, or made preserves?

Food fills us with so many memories. I welcome you to sit with those memories for a moment.

When you're ready, I invite you to slowly take the first bite and as you do, notice the sound. Is there a crunch?

Can you hear seeds against your teeth as you chew?

As you continue savouring this fruit, I invite you to consider the taste. Is the fruit sweet? Bitter? What words come to mind as you take another bite?

Now depending on what fruit you chose, you may already be done if it's something like a berry. If you have something like a peach or apple, you may just be getting started.

I invite you now to pause and look at what's left. Does your fruit have a stem? A core? A pit?

Think about all the parts of this fruit that are needed to help it grow and what went into it before it reached your table. As you continue to enjoy your fruit, or savour the taste left behind.

I encourage you to think about where this fruit came from? Did you buy it at the market? Did you grow it yourself? What journey did this fruit have in getting to your table? In what way were you a part of it?

How did it grow? On a tree? On a bush?

If there are parts of your fruit that you don't eat such as the stem, core, seeds, where will they go next?

As we come to a close, how are you feeling? What senses are most engaged right now? Take a moment to notice.

And when you're ready, open your eyes and join us back in the room.

### **Notes/Suggestions:**

Mindfulness exercises generally work best when the facilitator speaks in a slow, calm tone and pauses to allow participants time to think and reflect.

## **Hands-on Activity Option 1: Fruits From Around the World**

**Brief Description:** Participants explore and learn about fruits from around the world, either using fresh fruits or photos in the included printout.

### **Materials & Tools Required:**

1. [Fruits from Around the World Printout](#)
2. Optional: various fruits from around the world

### **Instructions:**

1. This activity can be done by either using the [Fruits from Around the World Printout](#) or the actual fruits. Using the actual fruits increases opportunities for sensory engagement through taste, touch, smell, sound, as well as sight.
2. One by one, pass the photos of the fruits or the actual fruits around for participants to engage with. Encourage participants to share any thoughts they might have about the fruit, such as if they have seen it before, if they have tasted it, if they know where it grows and/or if they know how it grows. Promote discussion and encourage sharing during this part of the activity. Depending on your population and context, you may wish to do this part verbally or written. This activity can also be done successfully online during a virtual session using the photos.
3. As you go through the fruits, share the information from the fruits document, if you wish. If you are able to facilitate tastings of the fruit (or make a [fruit salad](#) with it) this can be a memorable and fun experience.

## Hands-on Activity Option 2: Planting a Lemon Tree

**Brief Description:** Participants plant lemon seeds from a grocery store lemon.

### Materials & Tools Required:

1. Fresh lemons with seeds
2. Potting soil
3. Small pots (approximately 2 inch pots) or containers (such as takeout dip containers or coffee pods)
4. Watering can or spray bottle
5. Optional: Plastic wrap or a plastic bag

### Instructions:

1. Provide a Sample: Lemon trees make attractive houseplants with their glossy leaves and scented blossoms. If possible, bring in a lemon tree plant that you have already started to pass around for participants to engage with. Alternatively, you could show photos of the plant throughout its life cycle.
2. Select a Lemon: Choose a fresh, ripe lemon. Make sure that it is not a seedless lemon! On average, lemons may have approximately 10-20 seeds inside. Keep in mind that the resulting tree may not produce fruits identical to the parent lemon.
3. Extract Seeds: Remove seeds from the lemon. Rinse them thoroughly to remove any residual pulp or juice. Since you will just be using the seeds for this activity, the lemon and/or juice can be set aside and used for another activity, such as [fruit salad](#) or lavender lemonade. This can be a great time to manage expectations and explain that it can take many years for actual fruit to grow on the plant, especially if indoors.
4. Planting: Use a well-draining potting mix and fill pots or containers. Plant the lemon seeds about half an inch to an inch deep in the soil. You may want to encourage participants to plant multiple seeds in case some do not germinate. Explain to participants that the seeds may take a few weeks to sprout.
5. Watering: Depending on your setting and context, participants may wish to water their plants during the session or when they get home. To water, moisten the soil with a spray bottle or watering can. Be sure to not oversaturate it or have it sitting in water for prolonged periods of time.

## 6. Explain Short and Long-term Care Instructions:

- a. Covering the Pot (optional): Cover the pot with plastic wrap or place it inside a plastic bag to create a humid environment. This helps retain moisture during the germination process and can be removed once the seed(s) sprout.
- b. Location: Place the pot or container in a warm location where they will receive plenty of indirect sunlight.
- c. Transplanting: When the seedlings have grown large enough to handle, you can transplant them into larger containers.
- d. Fertilizing: Consider fertilizing with a fertilizer specific for citrus trees to promote health and growth.
- e. Patience: Be patient, as it may take several weeks for the seeds to germinate and several years for the tree to reach maturity and potentially produce fruit.

## Closing Activity: Fruit Themed Opening or Closing Round

**Brief Description:** A set of fruit-themed questions useful for opening or closing a session.

### Materials & Tools Required:

None.

### Instructions:

Introductions themed around the other activities in a session can help to bring focus and foster connections and sharing during a session. This can also be used as a closing round to end a session.

1. Ask participants to share their name (if appropriate) and answer a fruit-themed introduction round question(s), such as:
  - a. What is your favourite fruit and how do you like to eat it?
  - b. What fruit do you feel like today (optional: and why)?
  - c. Have you ever grown fruit before in your garden?
  - d. What is a fruit that is popular in your culture or region?
  - e. Are there any cultural traditions related to fruits that you enjoy or find interesting?
  - f. If you could create a new fruit by combining two existing ones, what would it be, and what would you name it?

- g. How do you like to enjoy fruit (e.g. fresh, dried, juiced, smoothie, in salads)?
- h. What fruit is in season right now that you enjoy?
- i. Have you ever participated in fruit-picking or harvesting activities?

2. Best practices for introduction and opening rounds:

- a. Demonstrate how you would like participants to introduce themselves by sharing first. This helps set the tone and provides a clear example for participants to follow, especially in terms of timing.
- b. Be clear about the order of participant introductions. This could be alphabetical, by seating arrangement, or a more creative approach such as “popcorn style”.
- c. Be clear about the time allotted for each participant. Depending on your group, you may need to set a time limit to ensure that everyone has time to answer and share, or be clear at the beginning that you may need to “cut off” participants in order to keep the round moving. If there will be ample time for socializing and discussion later on in the session, be sure to mention this before the introductions start.
- d. Depending on your participants, you may want to offer one question (to keep it short and simple) or two or more (to provide options).
- e. Encourage and model active listening during the introductions to set a positive and supportive tone for the session.

### Additional Activities Related to the Theme: Fruit Salad

**Brief Description:** Participants create and enjoy a fruit salad together.

**Materials & Tools Required:**

- 1. [Community Kitchen Style Fruit Salad](#) (ingredients and materials required listed in recipe)

**Instructions:**

Follow the instructions in the recipe and refer to this [Best Practices for Facilitating Culinary TH Activities](#) document.

### Materials & Tools Required - Consolidated:

1. Piece of fruit for each participant
2. [Fruits from Around the World Printout](#)
3. Fresh lemons with seeds
4. Potting soil
5. Small pots (approximately 2 inch pots) or containers (such as takeout dip containers or coffee pods)
6. Watering can or spray bottle
7. Optional: Various fruits from around the world
8. Optional: Plastic wrap or a plastic bag
9. [Community Kitchen Style Fruit Salad](#) (ingredients and materials required listed in recipe)