

NEW YEAR'S FENG SHUI GARDEN WITH LUCKY BAMBOO

Reminisce about New Year's traditions, sing a classic New Year's song and propagate and plant a lucky plant to help Feng Shui the garden. The Eldergrow garden offers a therapeutic connection to nature where residents engage in meaningful ways with the garden – cognitively, socially, spiritually, emotionally, and physically. **This activity can be done even if you don't have an Eldergrow garden by planting Lucky Bamboo in water.**

Activity Objectives:

Objective 1: Resident will engage socialization (S)

Objective 2: Resident will engage cognitive stimulation (CS)

Objective 3: Resident will engage motor skills (MS)

MATERIALS:



Note: Residents can snip the leafy sprout away from the stalk. Just make sure the safety scissors used are washed. If you plan to cut the tougher stalk, keep sharp scissors **safely** away from residents.

- **Propagating/Planting**

- Lucky Bamboo Plants (5) 4" stalks or to your preference: [Link here](#) (Keep in mind that if you want to propagate the lucky bamboo, you will need to get taller stocks of at least 6" or more)
- Scissors (if cutting the stalks, you may need sharper scissors/clippers – but keep them out of reach of residents)
- Containers/cups for propagating Lucky Bamboo
- Distilled water (or sit tap water overnight to dissipate its chlorine.)
- *Optional:* Gold and/or red ribbon (to tie around the Lucky Bamboo to add even more good fortune for the New Year.)

- **New Year's Toast:**

- Cups and sparkling cider

- **"Auld Lang Syne" Song:**

- "Auld Lang Syne" audio [link here](#) and matching song lyrics (last page of lesson – print several copies for residents to share)
- Bluetooth speakers to play the song (make sure they're charged)
- "The History of Auld Lang Syne" (in this Lesson Plan)

- **Wish Jar**

- Large plastic jar, paper and pens (to save New Year's goals)
- New Year's Goals examples (pg 4 of this Lesson Plan)

- **Talking Points:** "Feng Shui Your Garden", "Lucky Bamboo", "New Year Traditions"

PREPARATION:

- If you have a garden, have residents gather around it or at table by a window with a view of nature.
- Display lucky bamboo on table with any other supplies to use (not sharp scissors).
- Have song cued up before class and enough lyrics sheets printed for your residents.
- Make sure that tap water sits overnight or use distilled water so it lacks chlorine.

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS – CHOOSE 1 OR ALL 3 PARTS:

Eldergrow Lesson Plans are guides only. In order to maximize resident engagement, please customize these plans to the various interests, cognitive levels and physical abilities of residents.

1. TALKING POINTS & GARDEN OBSERVATIONS

- *Who here has ever heard of Feng Shui and what do you think about it?* Let's learn more about Feng Shui, then see if we can observe any of its elements in our garden! Read "**Feng Shui Your Garden**" Talking Points out loud. See if folks can locate the elements in the "Find the Five Feng Shui Elements" page. Then see if they can find those elements in the Eldergrow Garden. *What might we add to the garden in the future to have those five elements?*
- *Did you know that a lot of people all around the world give the auspicious Lucky Bamboo as a New Year's gift? Who likes to celebrate the New Year and what's your favorite part? Have you ever made New Year's Resolutions?*
- Encourage a conversation around "New Year Traditions" by asking more prompting questions.
- Since we are about to embark on a new year, let's bring a little luck into our lives with a new lucky plant for our garden! (Pass around Lucky Bamboo pieces for folks to observe.) *Have you ever heard of a lucky plant before? Who can give an example of one?* (Ex. four leaf clover) Read the Talking Points, "**Lucky Bamboo**".
- If you noticed anything that needed tending to in the garden, take this opportunity to help Feng Shui our garden space!

2. PROPAGATING & PLANTING LUCKY BAMBOO

- *Would you like to add good luck to our garden by propagating & planting Lucky Bamboo?*
- Decide how many Lucky Bamboo stalks you would like to propagate. Have someone pour distilled water into propagation cups/container(s). Someone else can use scissors to clip off the young shoot(s) (as per the "Propagating Lucky Bamboo" directions in the Talking Points.)
- *Optional;* Have residents tie red or gold ribbon around the stalks to increase luck and prosperity according to tradition for the New Year! (Also great for finger strengthening!)
- Have folks dig 1/2-1" holes in garden soil, plant the rest of the rooted stalks in groups of odd numbers, backfill with soil and gently press around the stalk. Water each plant to the count of three. Have as many people helping as possible! (One can dig a hole, another make the label, another waters)
- Be sure to have a resident hand write the new plant label and include the fact that it's bringing luck for the new year! For example: 'Bringing Luck for 2025 – lucky bamboo
- Some residents may like to tidy the garden to start off the new year with a fresh clean look.

3. CONVERSATIONS ABOUT NEW YEAR'S TRADITIONS

- Let's talk a little bit more about some **New Year's Traditions** here and around the world by taking turns reading, "**New Year's Traditions**" Talking Points. There are many more interesting and funny traditions in your Daily Programming!
- Let's partake in a few of these traditions together! (Intersperse the corresponding talking point as you do each activity:
 - **Create "Wish Jars"**: Write down goals or wishes for the new year, place them in a jar and open next year to see how you did! See the New Year's Goals (examples) for inspiration.
 - **Sing "Auld Lang Syne"**: Distribute copies of the lyric sheet (last page of lesson) and cue up the music. If residents are enjoying themselves, you can sing another round or even play another version of the song for them! There are tons of versions on Youtube, from Mariah Carey to Scottish bag pipes.
 - **Toast to a New Year**: As folks are reading about the traditions or singing "Auld Lang Syne", pass out cups to each resident with sparkling cider in each cup. Ask for help from a resident for more engagement and purpose!
 - *Who would like to make a toast to 2025?* Let's raise our cups to the New Year! (Toast ideas: Daily Programming.)
 - Enjoy the cider and encourage residents to share more about their own traditions from New Years past.
- All of us at Eldergrow, wish you all a lucky, healthy and Happy New Year!

CLOSING & ACTIVITY AMENDMENTS FOR DIFFERENT LEVELS

Always have a **garden journal** ready to write down **resident comments, activity participation, garden observations** and **tasks**. Many residents love to review notes in a journal to help them remember activity highlights. For residents with other **limitations** or those who need **more challenging projects**:

- Here's an **Eldergrow New Year's Challenge** for your residents! Now that you know the health benefits of gardening, dedicate yourself to 10 minutes a day in the garden, in your courtyard, or tending window plants. Your 10 minutes could be planting seeds for the spring, or tending to the various tasks while keeping with the Feng Shui spirit, or simply having a cup of tea as you observe the colors and smell the herbs. Let's make our garden even more beautiful in 2025!
- **Tape Talking Points to the garden or around the room** to help connect those short term memories.
- **Have residents work as partners or in teams** when tying colorful ribbons and planting the Lucky Bamboo for more socialization. Consider having a higher functioning resident support a lower functioning one – gives them both a sense of purpose!
- Encourage a resident with **hand support assistance** or have them hold your wrist as you cut the sprout from the Lucky Bamboo stalk. For low vision or residents with limited finger dexterity, have them guide your hand as you do various garden tasks.
- Have a **resident garden journal secretary write the various garden tasks that were completed**. Next time they make garden observations, compare the difference between this time and last time! (Add photos of your garden to better visualize the changes in plant growth, or use a ruler to measure each plant and make a graph to log such changes.)
- Assist as minimally as possible to the particular resident's ability. **This way it's a collaboration that plays to the resident's strengths, allowing them to be successful and fulfilled with the work they can do!** This may require you to ensure a staff member can work with that particular resident during the activity so they are still included and supported.
- Engage residents with the **Eldergrow "Scratch & Sniff – 5 Senses Stimulation"**! Pick off a leaf from one of the garden herbs and ask the resident(s) questions such as:
 - **Sight:** Do you know what herb this is? Notice the leaf shape. Is it a wide or narrow leaf? Does it have a smooth or a jagged edge? Does it have any other interesting features?
 - **Touch:** Feel the leaf. Is it smooth or bumpy? Thick or thin?
 - **Smell:** Smell the leaf after rubbing it. Do you know what that scent is? Does the scent remind you of anything?
 - **Taste:** (Wash first and get approval.) Have you tasted this herb before? Do you have any favorite dishes that use it?
 - **Sound:** This "Scratch & Sniff" conversation automatically activates the auditory cortex.

NEW YEAR'S GOALS (EXAMPLES)

Here are some New Year's Goals to put into your Wish Jar if you like! ([Source here](#))

- **Start a journal.**
 - Start keeping a regular record of your personal thoughts, feelings, and insights. The benefits of journaling are plentiful: It can help reduce anxiety, create awareness, and regulate emotions. Plus, you'll love looking back on your musings later in life. Your future self will thank you!
- **Give more compliments.**
 - A little compliment can go a long way. In fact, research has shown that receiving a compliment can enhance positivity in relationships and increase general happiness, according to HuffPost. And giving compliments can be just as uplifting as receiving them—so you'll brighten their day *and* yours!
- **Send more cards.**
 - Make someone's day with a heartfelt card, whether you're writing to say thank you, happy birthday, or happy holidays!
- **Create something special.**
 - It's a new year and a new opportunity to finally tackle that DIY project you've been putting off. Doing something creative can be relaxing, rewarding, and fun!
- **Exercise.**
 - As cliché as it may sound, making a resolution to exercise more in the new year can prove incredibly beneficial for both your body and mind.
- **Become an early bird.**
 - As much as you may hate waking up early, Sleep Advisor suggests that doing so could be the trick to ushering in a healthier, happier life. Waking up earlier is said to improve diet and quality of sleep, both of which have an immediate impact on mood.
- **Drink more water.**
 - We're all guilty of reaching for coffee, soda, tea—anything more exciting than plain water. However, upping your H2O consumption might be the key to radiant skin, a more balanced diet, improving the body's ability to bounce back after a tough workout, and so much more. Suffice it to say, drinking more water is always a good New Year's resolution to have.
- **Make time to catch up with friends and family.**
 - In **2025**, make a concentrated effort of showing up for those you love. You'll be blown away by how much that simple connection can improve your mood and overall feelings of satisfaction with life.
- **Participate in Nature activities.**
 - Eldergrow's Nature activities provide a good opportunity to learn something new, feel the mood boosting benefits of working in the garden, and it's a fun way to connect and socialize with friends!

THE HISTORY OF AULD LANG SYNE

'Auld Lang Syne' is a quintessential New Year's song that is sung all around the world after the ball drops. Yet no one knows the lyrics or the meaning of the song. With lyrics like, "We twa hae run about the braes, and pu'd the gowans fine," it's not surprising that English speakers can't understand it.

'Auld Lang Syne' directly translates to "Old Long Since," but has the same meaning as "for old times sake." The reason why the lyrics of 'Auld Lang Syne' are so incomprehensible is that the lyrics are in Scots, a minor language spoken in Scotland. 'Auld Lang Syne' was originally a Scottish folk poem and was only written down in 1788 by poet Robert Burns after he heard an old man singing it. However, the poem didn't gain such widespread popularity until 1928, when Guy Lombardo and his band sang it on the radio. "I never questioned why we sing the song. I just assumed that it was a custom," said Lee.

The New Year is a very big deal in certain countries. In Scotland, New Year is known as Hogmanay, which is a more traditional holiday than Christmas for Scots. At one point, Christmas was banned in Scotland. The popularity of New Year in Scotland meant many of its traditions caught on elsewhere. It just happens that 'Auld Lang Syne' is one of them. But it was only after 1928 that the song did catch on. Guy Lombardo hosted a radio and television show every year on December 31, and it was his annual broadcasting of 'Auld Lang Syne' that turned it into the tradition it is. Since then, we've been playing his version on the radio and the television every holiday season. The song has been covered so many times (by artists such as Elvis Presley and Mariah Carey) that the lyrics have been altered by each individual artist. In addition, many also alter the tune of the song.

The original poem penned by Burns is rarely heard because no one can understand it. Instead, every year we hear either Lombardo's or someone else's version. The original tune is also lost to history, and we can only speculate the true melody based on documents alluding to the song. Regardless of the fact that the lyrics and tune might be slightly different, the sentiment of the song remains. The song is about the hopes of maintaining old friendships and reminiscing about the good old days.

"The tune gives me a tranquil and calming mood when I hear it around the holidays. It makes me feel a bit nostalgic," said Samgar Aidarhanov '22. 'Auld Lang Syne' is not only a tradition on New Years but it's also a fitting way to bid farewell to the year gone by.

AULD LANG SYNE LYRICS

Should old acquaintance be forgot,
and never brought to mind?
Should old acquaintance be forgot,
and old lang syne?

For auld lang syne, my dear,
for auld lang syne,
we'll take a cup of kindness yet,
for auld lang syne.

We two have run about the slopes,
and picked the daisies fine;
we'll take a cup of kindness yet,
for auld lang syne.

For auld lang syne, my dear,
for auld lang syne,
we'll take a cup of kindness yet,
for auld lang syne.

Should old acquaintance be forgot,
and never brought to mind?
Should old acquaintance be forgot,
and old lang syne?

For auld lang syne, my dear,
for auld lang syne,
we'll take a cup of kindness yet,
for auld lang syne.