

Adventures in My Garden by Angelyn Whitmeyer

Many years ago I read Machaelle Small Wright's book Behaving As If the God In All Life Mattered. I was impressed and ever since then I have talked to the trees on the land where I live—asking them to be strong and if they need to fall down, to do so in a way that minimizes harm to any human structures or other plants. And they have always complied.

Over the years I occasionally opened a coning (explained in Machaelle's books) and asked the nature spirits to tell me where to plant different seeds in my vegetable garden. With my move to the Asheville area in 2005, I began a new vegetable garden. I started by digging up some dirt which had been back-filled around my newly constructed house. I planted lettuce and peas. The lettuce grew one inch tall, refusing to grow any more. The peas grew three inches tall, deciding that was quite enough. It was clear I needed lots of help if I was going to grow plentiful food to eat.

I decided to utilize some of the co-creative science principles Machaelle talks about in her books. I re-read Perelandra Garden Workbook and read the second garden workbook for the first time. I went outside, opened a coning and committed to the Deva of this land to work co-creatively. I felt a powerful "yes" response and imagined great cheers and applause when I made my declaration.

During spring 2006 I built a dozen raised beds in that same back-filled dirt on a slope. It was evident grass was reluctant to grow in this soil although it had been planted at least three years earlier. As I dug dirt, I found lots of stones and absolutely no worms. I asked my nature team what soil amendments to add and in what quantities. I also put in a request for some worms. After adding the soil amendments, I covered each bed with straw and waited until it was time to plant seed.

As part of our co-creative plan to enhance the garden space, I found just the right bird bath, installed a bird feeder and made a Genesa crystal. (The instructions for building a Genesa crystal are in the appendix of Perelandra Garden Workbook.) This crystal helps to circulate, cleanse and balance energy in the surrounding area. I also added specific crystals to some of the vegetable garden beds—as instructed by my nature team. Throughout the season I did some energetic soil balancing processes outlined in Perelandra Garden Workbook II.

During early spring I checked with my nature team to find out what seeds to plant and where. I asked when to plant seeds and learned I was to plant just about everything on the same day! Oh my! There was no way I could do that much, so I asked for the top three items to plant that day. Over the next couple weeks I planted all the seeds—a few at a time—according to nature's recommendations.

As I planted seeds in one of the newly created beds, I found a worm! A worm where none had been before. Later I purchased and planted worm “eggs” in all the beds to encourage more worms.

The pea plants grew this time—nearly five feet tall. I received an abundance of sweet green and snow peas. Such a contrast from the previous year’s plants.

One of the seeds I planted was something I had never heard of—buttercup squash. I dutifully planted it and watched gigantic leaves grow along with a dozen squash. I discovered that I love the taste of buttercup squash—even more than I love the taste of the dozens of butternut squash I also harvested.

I planted yellow tomato seed and was thrilled when the tomatoes starting developing on the vine. Later I was dismayed to find the tomatoes consistently rotted from the inside out before becoming yellow. I delved into Machaelle’s garden books again and found a number of questions to ask nature whenever problems occurred. I worked through several processes—including the simple one of putting a sheet over the tomato plants for several days during the sunniest days. The tomatoes ripened a beautiful yellow with no brown spots.

Feeling ready to take a risk, I decided to not intentionally kill any bugs that might come to the vegetable garden. I was curious to see if the garden could stay in a healthy balance. Although bugs did devastate the leaves of squash and bean plants, I still harvested plenty of delicious beans and squash.

The yellow jackets and hornets were another adventure. As I worked in the garden early in the season, I realized there were yellow jackets building a nest in one end of a vegetable bed. A month later I found hornets building a nest in an outdoor light fixture on the house. Well, I talked and talked to those hornets and asked them to leave and set up a new home elsewhere in the woods, beyond my property line and in a place where no human would go or bother them. They never responded as I requested and later demanded. The hornet, yellow jacket and bee populations grew tremendously throughout the summer. I started getting up very early in the dark of the morning, allowing me to work for about 30-45 minutes as I created mulched paths around the raised beds. As soon as dawn began, the hornets and bees were out and about and I retreated to the house. After a hornet stung me, I swore off being nice and arranged for a pest control company to destroy their nest. At the end of the growing season, I put a bucket over the yellow jacket entrance to eliminate that nest.

Two other “critters” became part of the garden—a toad and a rabbit. A couple times I almost stepped on the toad who gave a loud “chirrup” in warning. The rabbit has been generous with droppings and has also been great at eating only the grass and plants outside the garden.

Not everything I planted grew, or even sprouted. I planted soy beans twice. They never came up. When my neighbor said her soy beans refused to sprout this year, despite great crops in previous years, I felt relieved. This just wasn't the year for soy beans.

I wanted a fall garden, too, after the great spring and summer garden. I checked with my nature team and was told to plant asparagus crowns—among other things. After searching the Internet, I learned no asparagus crowns could be had during fall—only in spring. I could get asparagus seed in the fall; however my team was clear that asparagus seed was not to be planted. The other confusing information I got was to plant a dozen of these asparagus crowns in a space about six by fifteen inches. I could not see how that was going to work. Now I am waiting for spring to ask my team again about the asparagus.

Although the information I get from my nature team does not always make sense to me—as with the asparagus—I still believe using the co-creative science principles is the way for me to go. I enjoy having a nature team to work with. They know what I do not—how a plant grows, the best placement given the current landscape, what soil amendments would be helpful for a particular plant, etc. Given the year's results, I know this co-creative process works.

How have I been transformed by my garden? I work with instead of working independently. I practice patience and trust with the process, waiting for plants to mature. I am learning to speak for myself—what I would like to see in the garden as well as what I am physically capable of contributing—without abdicating all decisions to nature. My garden nourishes me emotionally and spiritually, along with physically. Whenever I wander through my garden, I feel open, peaceful, and safe. I love my garden!

I wonder what garden adventures are next?

--Angelyn Whitmeyer enthusiastically utilizes energy processes in her healing work with people (and their businesses) as well as plants. She also visits other people's gardens to teach these hands-on co-creative processes. Angelyn can be reached at 683-7246 or angelyn@treehaven.org.

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