



SOUL FULL
GARDEN

FOR THE ULTIMATE
GROWING EXPERIENCE

CONNIE BOUCHER



Man is a microcosm, or a little world, because
he is an extract from all the stars and planets of
the whole firmament, from the earth and the elements;
and so he is their quintessence.

PHILIPUS AUREOLUS PARACELSUS



Hi, Welcome to my Garden!

In this book, you'll learn how to cultivate not just a beautiful garden, but also a deeper connection with nature, yourself, and the world around you. This book combines practical gardening techniques with soulful insights to help you create a thriving, harmonious space that nurtures plants, animals, and people alike.

Here's what lies ahead:

The Power of Love and Connection

- Learn how your energy, intention, and care influence the growth and vitality of your garden.

The Role of Energy and Vibration

- Explore how the unseen forces of nature impact plants, and how you can balance the energy of your garden using tools like muscle testing and essential oils.

Soil and Foundation

- Understand the importance of building healthy, nutrient-rich soil to serve as the foundation for your garden's success.

Elements and Harmony

- Dive into the feng shui and the five elements—wood, fire, earth, metal, and water—and discover how their balance creates a thriving ecosystem.

Practical Essentials

- From irrigation to structures like fences and patios, find guidance on the foundational elements that support a functional and beautiful garden.

Weeds and Natural Solutions

- Shift your perspective on weeds, learn to manage them naturally, and discover the hidden value they can bring to your garden.

The Role of Animals

- Celebrate the perks of sharing your garden with birds, bees, and other creatures, and learn how to make your space welcoming to wildlife.

Mistakes and Lessons

- Embrace the inevitable challenges of gardening with wisdom, learning how to turn mistakes into opportunities for growth.

Soulful Gardening Practices

- Find inspiration in eco-friendly approaches that work with nature rather than against it, creating a sanctuary that brings joy and renewal.

Whether you're a seasoned gardener or just beginning your journey, Soul Full Garden offers insights and practices that will help you cultivate a garden—and a life—that feels vibrant, balanced, and deeply fulfilling.

Let's get started!

The greatest fine art of the future will be the making
of a comfortable living from a small piece of land.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

VIBES





HOW TO MUSCLE TEST

Muscle testing can be used to assess energy imbalances and identify needs for yourself, others (even those not physically near you), pets, and plants. Self-testing, or finger-testing, involves using your fingers as a surrogate muscle to gather information for whomever or whatever you're testing.

I'm going to teach you a simple finger position that's easy to learn and use. While this isn't the only way to muscle test, I recommend starting here because it's straightforward and effective. As you gain experience and confidence, you might naturally gravitate toward a different method that feels more intuitive for you. The specific finger position isn't as important as developing your ability to intuitively sense and interpret the responses you're testing for.

If you're not immediately great at muscle testing, don't worry! Like any skill, muscle testing improves with practice and patience. Confidence is key—trust yourself, keep practicing, and you'll get the hang of it.

To practice self-testing, use the following finger technique: Form two interlocking circles: Interlock your thumbs and middle fingers, connecting them to create two interlocking circles. Your fingers and thumbs should be firmly touching—not clenched tightly, but secure enough to hold their position.

Focus and connect: Concentrate on the person, pet, or plant you're testing for. Energetically connect with them by focusing your thoughts and intentions on their energy. This connection helps align your focus and ensures accurate results.

Vibrant energy is the heartbeat of every thriving garden. The vibes you bring into your garden and the energy within its environment can dramatically impact the health and growth of your plants.

Just like everything else, a garden's energy fluctuates. When it's low, plants struggle to thrive. Over the years, my garden has experienced its share of down days, and at times, I unknowingly contributed to that imbalance. The good news is that Mother Nature is incredibly resourceful and has a way of restoring equilibrium—if we allow her to. That's why the principles in this book are so important.



HOW TO SHIFT THE ENERGY IN YOUR GARDEN

- Tune In:
 - Pay attention to how the space feels. Does it feel heavy or sluggish? Or does it feel light and inviting? Trust your instincts.
- Clear Clutter:
 - Remove weeds, debris, and anything that feels out of place, as they often hold stagnant energy.
- Refresh:
 - Use essential oils like lavender or cedarwood to uplift the area. Mix a few drops with water and spray it on your plants.
- Be Mindful:
 - Talk to your plants, think positive thoughts, and focus on gratitude for the beauty and growth surrounding you.

Your garden's energy is a reflection of your own. By nurturing it with love, intention, and positivity, you'll create a space where plants—and your spirit—can truly thrive.

SOIL





WHERE TO FIND WELL-ROTTED MANURE

- **Garden Centers:** Most garden centers sell bags of well-rotted manure.
- **Be prepared**—it can be messy and smelly (especially in your car). If possible, transport it in a truck to avoid lingering odors inside your vehicle.
- **Local Farms:** If you live near horses or cattle, many farmers are happy to give away manure for free. Just make sure it's been well-aged in the sun and isn't fresh. Fresh manure can stink up your yard and often contains weed seeds.



USING WOOD CHIPS TO MULCH AND BUILD SOIL

Wood chips are fantastic for mulching and improving soil health. Many public city works departments sell them by the truckload at low cost. I love using wood chips in my flower beds. I spread a three-inch layer in early spring, before dormant plants start coming up, and it keeps the soil moist while suppressing weeds.

- **Unsprayed Grass Clippings:** Unsprayed grass clippings are incredible for building soil because they're rich in nitrogen and other vital nutrients. I spread them in my flower beds and garden during the spring to help retain moisture and protect plants from the harsh summer heat. Of course, they're also a key ingredient in my compost pile. Grass clippings are so valuable to me that I've even asked my neighbors for theirs when I see them mowing their lawns!
- **Lessons from Straw Bale Gardening:** After reading Ruth Stout's book on straw bale gardening one year, I had a small haystack delivered to my home. I spread the hay throughout my flowerbeds and vegetable garden, and it worked wonders to lock in moisture and suppress existing weeds. However, I quickly discovered a downside: the hay was full of weed-like seeds that sprouted everywhere and needed constant pulling. For that reason, I'd advise being cautious about where and how you use hay or straw.

Once your compost is finished, simply spread it around your garden and flower beds to nourish the soil. Then, start over by adding fresh scraps to your empty pile or bin.



COMPOSTING GUIDELINES

A good rule of thumb is: if it grows from the earth and hasn't been sprayed with chemicals, it's probably good for compost. Avoid adding anything weedy or diseased to your pile. Here are a few tips to speed up the composting process:

- Keep piles small: Smaller piles decompose faster than large ones. If you have a lot of organic waste, divide it into several smaller piles for quicker results.
- Optional turning: You can use a pitchfork or shovel to turn your pile weekly to aerate it, but it's not necessary. If you have chickens, they can help turn your compost, but make sure the pile is contained so they don't scatter it everywhere.
- Start simple: If you're new to composting, don't overthink it. Just start piling up kitchen scraps and yard waste, and you'll learn as you go!



WHY HOMEMADE COMPOST IS SUPERIOR

Not only does homemade compost recycle kitchen and yard waste, but it also provides your plants with all the essential nutrients, trace minerals, and beneficial organisms they need to thrive.

Homemade compost is far superior to anything you can buy in a bag, and it's completely free. With a bit of patience and care, you'll have a steady supply of "black gold" to keep your garden healthy and vibrant.

I choose to make compost because it's free, incredibly beneficial for my garden, and honestly, it just feels good to toss kitchen scraps onto my compost pile! When I'm away from home, I even feel a pang of guilt when I have to throw scraps into the garbage—it seems so wasteful.

YARD



At first, I wasn't sure what I wanted to do with the yard. But as I took a closer look at what I had to work with and thought about what I truly wanted, a plan began to form. I didn't have the money to make it happen right away, but I had a vivid imagination and a strong desire to transform the space. So, I started there.

I sketched out a picture of what I envisioned and colored in the shapes to make it more visually appealing. Then, I taped it to the wall where I could see it every day as a reminder of my goal.

From that point on, I stayed focused on my vision and did whatever small things I could to move closer to it. At first, it wasn't much—just tiny steps here and there—but I kept holding onto my plan and doing what I could. Slowly but surely, the yard began to change. Bit by bit, it started coming together.

One of my kids, Care, took an interest in my ideas. Whenever she came over, I'd take her out into the yard for what we jokingly called "garden appreciation." I'd carry my drawing with me as we walked around, pointing to different spots and excitedly explaining where everything was going to go.

Eventually, Care moved out of state and lost track of the progress in my backyard. Five years later, she came home for a visit. We took another "garden appreciation" tour, and this time, she stopped and looked around in amazement. "Wow!" she said, almost surprised. "You really made it happen! Remember when this was all just grass and you had that colored drawing on a piece of paper?"

I remembered. In that moment, I realized just how closely the picture I had drawn years ago resembled the garden we were standing in. It hit me—I had manifested it! The garden I once dreamed up and nurtured in my mind was now a reality, right there before my eyes.

HARMONY





**Nature is ever at work building and pulling down,
creating and destroying, keeping everything whirling and
flowing, allowing no rest but in rhythmical motion,
chasing everything in endless song out of one beautiful
form into another.** JOHN MUIR

When I lived in Savannah, my garden struggled. I was working hard to keep it looking good, but it still floundered. Fast forward to when I learned how to work with my garden instead of against it—creating harmony rather than disrupting its natural rhythm with chemicals—and it’s a much brighter story.

In my early gardening years, I spent most of my time trying to control bugs and keep my garden looking “proper,” like some of the other houses on my street. But everything changed when I stepped back and started paying attention to the natural rhythms of my garden.

One summer, I decided to experiment with companion planting. Instead of forcing plants into neatly segregated rows, I paired plants that supported each other—like marigolds with tomatoes to repel pests and beans with corn to fix nitrogen in the soil. I also adjusted my watering schedule to match the weather instead of rigidly following a plan.

The results were exciting! My garden thrived like never before. The tomatoes were healthier, the beans grew taller, and I spent far less time battling weeds and pests. By working in harmony with my garden’s natural ecosystem instead of disrupting it, I saw firsthand how aligning my efforts with nature creates a thriving, balanced garden.

What I didn’t know back then—but thankfully do now—is that if I’d simply used compost to build my soil and planted a variety of ground covers and flowers near my shrubs, I could’ve created a diverse miniature ecosystem.

SOLUTIONS





CONCOCTIONS

If you discover that your plant has a specific need, use muscle testing to see if it would benefit from a concoction. Test through the items listed in this section to determine what your plant wants. Once you identify the right ingredients, test to find out the proper amounts, how to apply them, and how often. Keep reading—this will all make more sense as you go!



ESSENTIAL OILS

Pure essential oils are plant extracts that are 50 to 70 times more potent than herbs. They can be incredibly soothing and healing, not just for people, but also for plants, soil, and even pets!

However, not all essential oils are created equal. Many brands that claim to be "pure" contain synthetics and lack the therapeutic properties that plants respond to. Synthetics are chemical-based mimics of real essential oils, and plants can tell the difference.

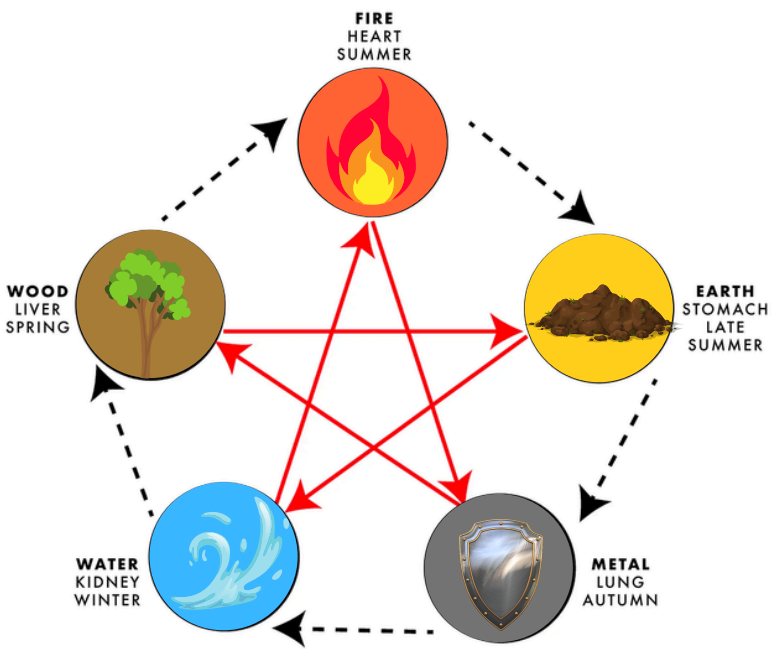
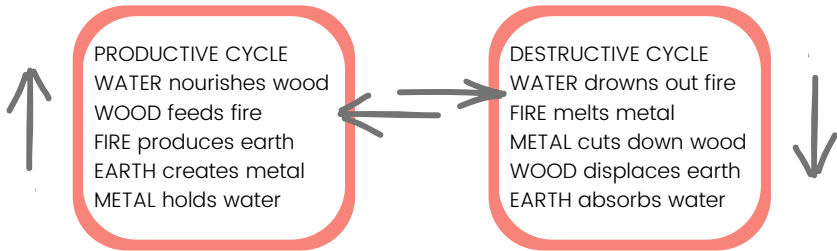
It's vital to use truly pure, high-quality essential oils. Unlike authentic oils, synthetic or low-quality oils can't balance or restore plants and soil. In fact, studies have shown that synthetic oils can stress plants rather than heal them.

Soon after I began experimenting with essential oils on my plants, I noticed one of my honeysuckles looked dull and lifeless. On closer inspection, I found its leaves were covered with a sticky film—it was infested with aphids.

I muscle tested the honeysuckle's vitality rate and found it was only a two. Then, I tested to see what the plant needed to regain its health and vibrancy. The answer? A combination of lemon essential oil, liquid cayenne, colloidal silver, and liquid minerals, diluted in 8 ounces of water. I mixed up the concoction and sprayed it on the honeysuckle's leaves.

ELEMENTS





The Five Elements interact and cause chain reactions. None of the elements is better, more powerful, or more important than another as they have an equal influence on us. The effect (good or bad) of these elements depends on their interaction with one another.

There are many ways the productive and destructive cycles can be interpreted. I've broken the Five Elements down for you so you can see how to best use them to create balance.

THE BAGUA

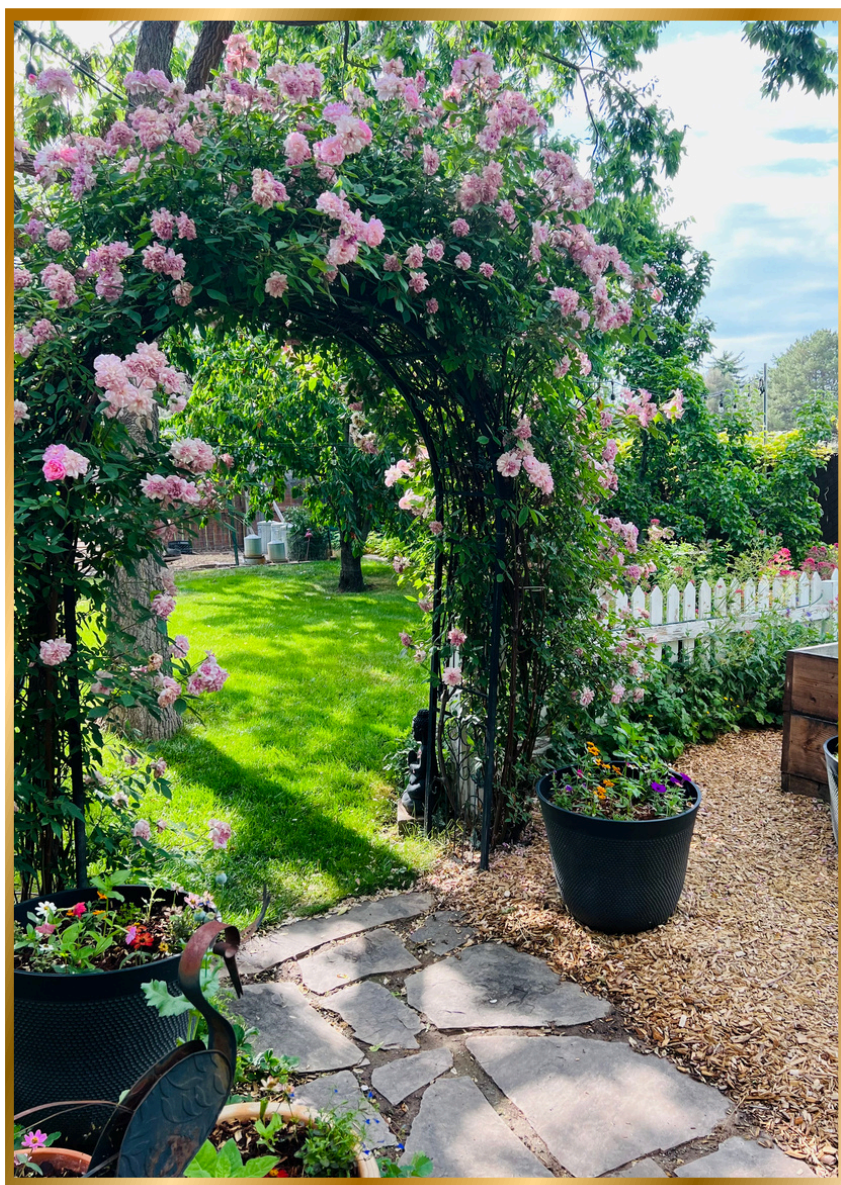
The Feng Shui Bagua creates supportive energy and can help you attract more of what you want. Here's how to use it: In your mind, place the bagua over your yard, with the bottom of the bagua lined up with the front of your house. Then use imaginary lines to divide your yard into nine sections. If you have a rectangular-shaped yard, you can adjust the bagua accordingly.



If you have an odd-shaped yard, or if a corner is missing, you will need to do a cure to fix it. Do a cure by placing small reflecting mirrors in your yard positioned to create imaginary lines that meet up and form the missing corner.

Now, on paper, use the Five Elements to place colors and objects in each of the sections. You can do this in your home, and each room of your home, as well as your yard.

ESSENTIALS





THE ADORNMENTS

WATER FEATURES

A well-planned water feature, such as a pond, pool, or fountain of softly flowing water will create positive energy and be very beneficial in your garden. It's very important that the water always be sparkling clear and circulating though, because dirty, stale, and swampy water will create stagnant negative energy.

Even if you can't install a pond or pool in your yard, there are still many options available. For instance, you can use a sturdy, waterproof container to create a small and attractive pool. I did this by plugging off and sealing the drain hole in a large round planter. Installing a solar pump or fountain, along with a couple of goldfish, will keep the water circulating.

Fish are fun to watch and will add life-giving energy to your garden, as well as help keep the water clean. Frogs and water plants will help control algae and keep pond enzymes balanced. Water plants are inexpensive and multiply rapidly, so don't buy too many, and thin them when they start getting out of hand.



LIGHTING

Lighting is a super important part of an energetically supported garden. It's also one of the easiest and most fun elements to work with. I really love little globe lights strung across patios, pergolas, and sections of grass. Garden string lights have become popular and are easy to come by, but years ago, when my friend's daughter had a wedding in my yard, they weren't a thing. So, we strung white Christmas lights around and it was an easy and inexpensive way to create beautiful wedding lighting. The lights made my garden look so good that I left them up, and that, started my string light obsession.

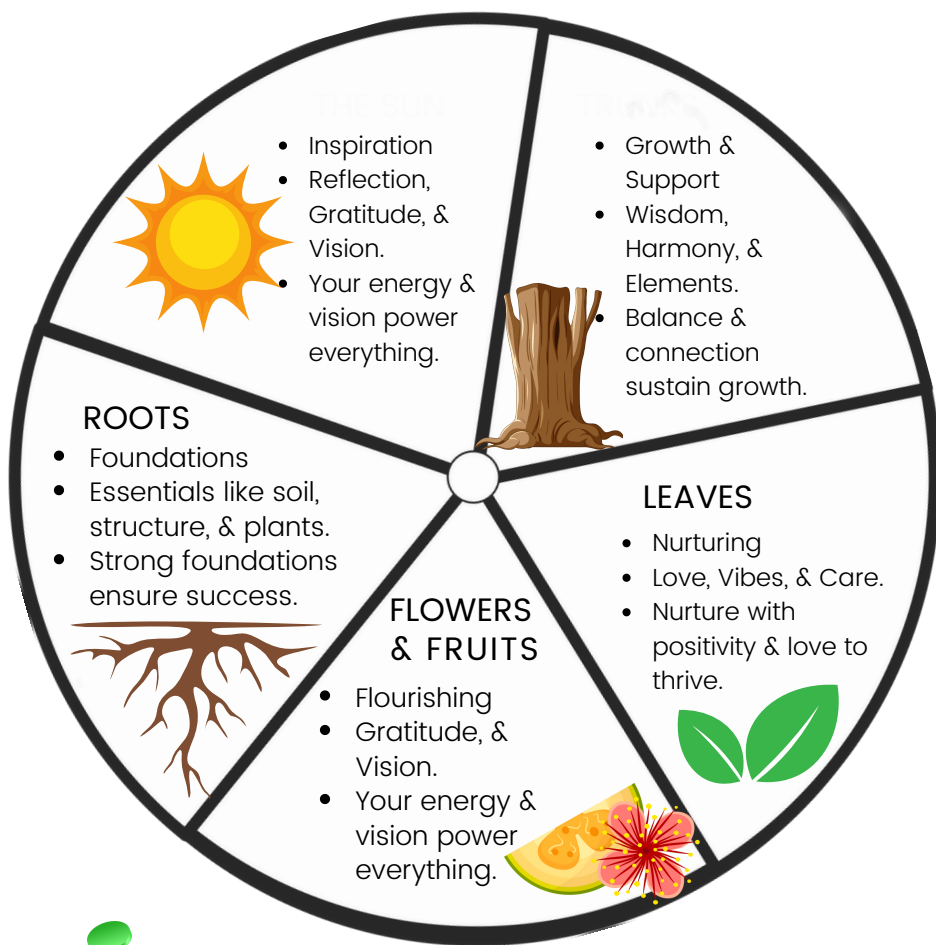


DIGGING DEEPER

The foundation of a garden isn't just in the soil—it's the structures, plants, and design choices that create a unique space fitted to you. Gates, pathways, trees, and decorative elements all work together to shape your garden into a reflection of your style and values.

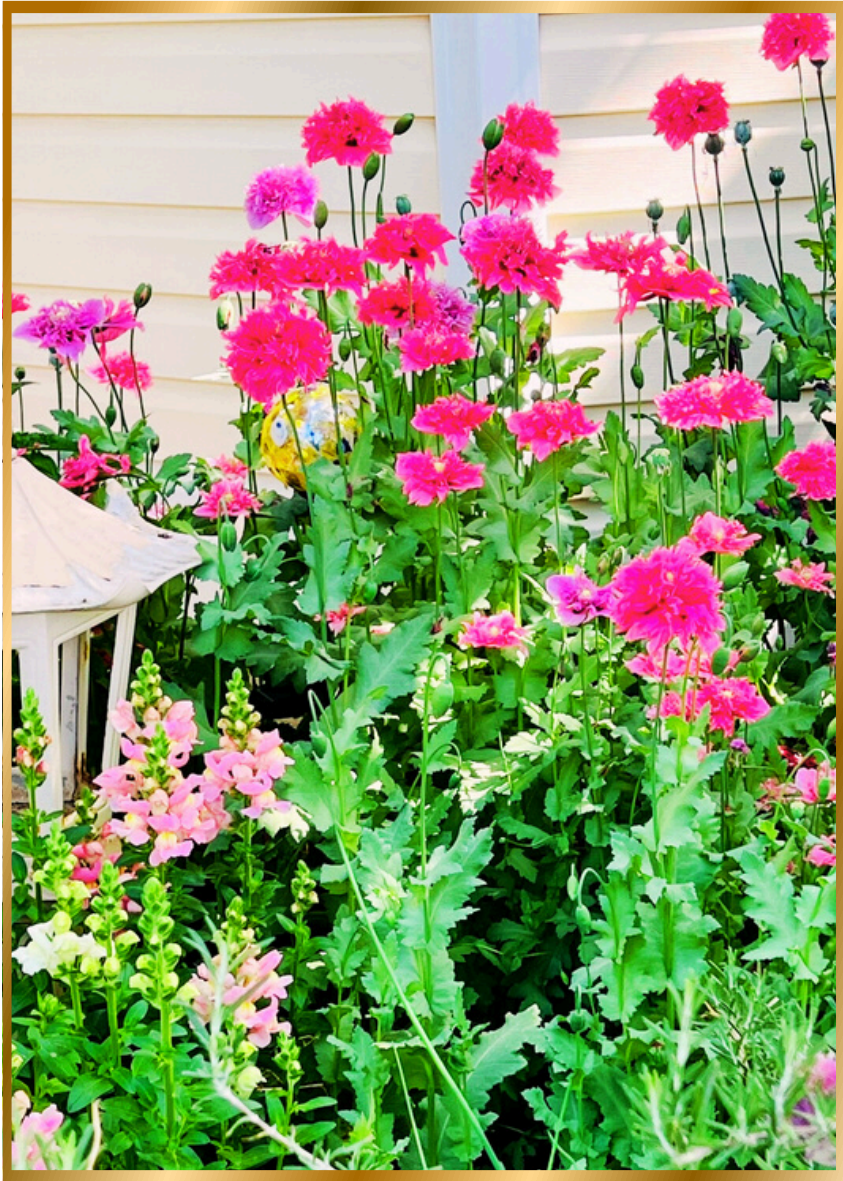
- Take a moment to evaluate the foundational elements of your garden. Are there areas that feel complete and others that could use improvement? Walk through your yard and imagine its potential. Could a pergola or bench add charm and purpose? Would thoughtful choices in fencing, pathways, or plantings bring more flow and functionality to the space?
- Cedarwood essential oil, with its grounding and earthy aroma, is a wonderful companion for reflecting on foundations. Diffuse it or apply it as you envision how these elements could transform your garden into a space that feels more complete and connected to your heart.
- Write down one foundational change or addition you'll make. Would planting a tree, laying a new pathway, or adding a decorative feature that feels meaningful make your garden more beautiful and inviting? Make a plan to add something that will help create a garden that reflects who you are and what you value most.

THE SOUL-FULL GARDEN FRAMEWORK



**USE THIS FRAMEWORK TO REFLECT
ON YOUR GARDEN AND LIFE.
WHERE ARE YOU THRIVING?
WHERE CAN YOU GROW?**

LIVING





I believe in blooming where you're planted and there's something about birdbaths and David Austin roses and hot pink flowers that always makes it feel like home! So, that's what I do.

One year I hung prayer flags to remind me to look up and pause and count my blessings. They say, when the wind blows it sends up prayers for peace! YES please!!