GUEST ESSAY

Sophia Shaw[1]

Sophia Shaw serves as president and CEO of the Chicago Botanic Garden, one of the largest cultural institutions in Chicago and a pre-eminent botanic garden of the world. The Garden's main campus welcomes more than one million visitors annually to its living plant museum of 156 hectares, featuring 26 gardens and 81 ha of lakes and rivers, as well as a prairie and woodland of 6 and 40 ha respectively. The Garden is an international leader in horticulture, plant biology and conservation, and public engagement, and serves as an international model for urban agriculture and horticulture employment, training and education, with an emphasis on programmes for diverse and under-served communities in partnership with schools, hospitals and rehabilitation centres.

Sophia's significant achievements include leadership and ongoing execution of the Garden's ten-year strategic plan and master site plan, 'Keep Growing' (2010–2020); the opening of the Gold LEED-rated Daniel F. and Ada L. Rice Plant Conservation Science Center and launch of the plant biology and conservation PhD programme with Northwestern University (2009); the Trellis Bridge and Bernice E. Lavin Plant Evaluation Garden (2011); the Grunsfeld Children's Growing Garden, North Lake shoreline restoration, and Kleinman Family Cove (2012); the North Branch multi-use trail addition (2014); and the groundbreaking Kris Jarantoski Campus (2013) and Learning Campus (2014). Under Sophia's guidance, the Garden generated a 52 per cent increase in attendance from 2005 to 2014, five years of record fundraising ($39 million in 2014) and positive budget results.

Sophia holds both a BA (Wellesley College) and an MA (University of Chicago) in art history as well as an MBA in finance (Kellogg Graduate School of Management, Northwestern University). Prior to joining the Chicago Botanic Garden, she served at the Field Museum as vice-president for exhibitions and education. Sophia also serves as chair of the Plant Conservation Alliance (PCA) Non-Federal Cooperator Committee and is immediate past president of the board of the Arts Club of Chicago. She is active in the Young Presidents' Organization (YPO) Chicago chapter and is a member of the Commercial Club of Chicago, among other affiliations. Sophia has been a gardener and naturalist since she was a child.

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GARDENING AND MENTAL HEALTH

Revitalization

When my cold soul yearns for nourishment
I visit new spring gardens where death and life dwell together
I walk winding paths between decay and creation

As winter ends the sun warms my heart, mild breezes caress my spirit
Sequined ripples on the pond wash away the shadows
Swooping hawks, chattering blackbirds, graceful herons nourish my imagination
Blooming trees, blossoming flowers awaken a dormant desire for being

I walk amidst life reborn
My soul refreshed

Betsy Dolgin Katz, a Chicago Botanic Garden visitor
who dropped this poem off at my office in June 2014

"It's a long row to hoe." These were the first words that came into my mind one morning not long ago. The day before me felt too busy, too much. How was I going to get everything done while being a good mother and daughter, an attentive partner and friend, and an effective CEO? How would I balance the pressure of meetings, phone calls and ever-increasing email traffic while ensuring that dinner was on the table and my two boys' homework was completed on time? Where would I find time to be kind to myself somewhere along the way? I know this challenge is familiar to many women, and it certainly was not the first time I had felt this way. Furthermore, I have wrestled with feelings of anxiety my whole life, and moments like this one have been with me since I was young.

But that morning, when the idiom "It's a long row to hoe"[2] started repeating in my mind with the persistence of a pop song, I smiled, exhaled and experienced an epiphany of sorts. My problems suddenly felt reframed. Never before had I really thought about that phrase. I said out loud, "Wow, the noun is 'row', not 'road'! This phrase is about gardening and farming … growing things!"

What a relief! While I may not yet hold the gift of perpetual tranquillity, I do know how to garden. Yes, I have learned that hoeing some rows is harder than others, when rocks and weeds or puddles are in the way, but I am always certain I can get the job done. And the labour I expend while gardening even makes me feel rejuvenated – both mentally and physically. At that moment I wondered, if I thought of each day that lay ahead as a metaphorical row to hoe – and plant, water, weed, harvest and then allow to rest – would life feel easier? *Yes.* Some seasons give me the most delicious tomatoes

2. The *Oxford English Dictionary* dates the expression to Davy Crockett, *Tour Down East*, 1835: "I know it was a hard row to hoe."

and delphiniums that stand up straight, even in Chicago. Other days I wake to a late freeze, or spend hours picking off slugs. Knowing that I can handle the ups and downs of gardening, I felt better prepared to face my more typical day with renewed mental strength, tranquillity and courage.

I know I am not alone in believing that people live better, healthier lives when they create, care for and enjoy gardens. Millions of people tend backyard or container gardens, or keep plants in their home or office window to enrich their life. Gardening, visiting gardens and taking advantage of the programmes offered by more than 1,000 botanic gardens, arboreta and conservatories around the world[3] are helping many individuals and communities to cope, mourn and rejoice. How? In the pages that follow, I offer evidence from my professional experience as Chicago Botanic Garden president and CEO since 2007 along with personal anecdotes to support my strong belief that the practice of gardening, visiting botanic gardens and the healing, education and science programmes of botanic gardens are fundamentally important to the mental well-being of all people.

THE PRACTICE OF GARDENING

Children often pose questions that give us the opportunity to understand ourselves, while figuring out solutions and new ways of thinking. My younger son asked me one night, "You know those periods of time when you're really doing something and your mind just goes quiet? How nice those times are?" "Indeed," I replied. Nice. Rare. Peaceful. Refreshing. He then went on to ask, "Mom, when do you feel that way?" I thought for only a moment before answering, "When I'm gardening." I recognise that sports, music, art, cooking, religious study and other activities can have the same effect for others, but it has been gardens and gardening that have been most helpful in stabilising and strengthening my state of mind during difficult times – and there have been more difficult times in my life than people may know or could expect.

December and January's joy for me is working hard all day clearing invasive buckthorn and honeysuckle from our woods. February's reverie is aided by the arrival of plant and seed catalogues. March is full of optimistic raking and cleaning of flower stems I've left up throughout the winter for their beautiful architecture decorated with snow, often windblown into puffs and spears, in place of petals. Sometimes I have to crack through the last layers of ice and snow as I get my exercise jumping up on the rim of my shovel to loosen the soil in the kitchen garden in early April, and by the end of the month, I savour washing my muddy hands in warm water after spending the morning on my knees with my favorite trowel and garden fork. And the planting hasn't even begun! Yes, you could say that I'm happiest, at my best, and with my clearest, most productive

3. There are approximately 575 member gardens of the American Public Gardens Association (APGA), a number that includes many of the larger gardens of the United States, Canada and Mexico. There are more than 700 member gardens in Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) with an approximately 40 per cent overlap. There are many additional public gardens, arboreta and conservatories throughout the world that would not be included on these lists.

thoughts when I am gardening, mowing, clearing wooded areas or otherwise tending to nature. And I have heard the same from other gardeners.

Why? Because growing a thriving garden and balancing the mind require that we adhere to the same principles: patience, beauty, science, a desire to learn from and give to each other, hard work, respect and faith. I believe these seven components bundled together both yield a good garden and improve mental health.

Patience

Even more than good soil and seed, a successful gardener needs patience. The proverb 'A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they will never sit in' captures the first requirement and positive mental health-inducing quality of gardening: patience. Very few flowers, fruits or vegetables worth waiting for grow quickly. What demands our patience and respect for the earth's limits and miraculous capacity more than collecting a seed, protecting it through the winter, planting that seed come springtime, tending to its needs, watching it grow, cherishing its fruit and then waiting for the cycle to repeat?

When I was a graduate student at business school, it seemed every professor at one point contrasted the short-term focus of most American public companies with the long-term orientation of Japanese businesses. In America, our obsession with quarterly earnings and immediate rewards – fad diets, ready-to-eat meals, one-season-only clothes, disposable plates and unaffordable mortgages, for example – has produced companies and brains programmed for impatience. Impatience, however, is not an asset in building enduring value. Impatience often breeds waste, causes us to make mistakes and makes us feel quite the opposite of satisfied, but rather anxious, or even frantic. Retraining our brains to enjoy the slow and steady process of growth can be both rewarding and good for our mental health.

Practising patience during gardening can strengthen our ability to tolerate and even appreciate waiting in our day-to-day lives. Gardening helps teach us the art of deferred gratification at a time when we can purchase almost anything we want on the internet, with overnight delivery in most cases. But in life we can't always have what we want when we want it. For example, a tomato will grow, mature and ripen according to its own schedule, with our assistance and nutrition from the earth and sun – and we get it when we get it, not by subscribing to Amazon Prime. It is no coincidence that gardening brings us the phrase 'fruits of our labour'. If we apply and model the principles of deferred gratification from gardening to our businesses and governments, in our roles as a friend, partner, relative, colleague and parent, we all will be better off. If we can do this, we will go a long way to providing that metaphorical shade and fruit to our grandchildren. And we will feel better – and mentally stronger – as we focus our efforts on the future, thinking not only of our own rewards, but also about how our actions will affect both those we love and strangers alike.

Beauty

True and natural beauty is essential. In today's world of advertising and media focus, the word *beauty* has at times taken on superficial qualities. We have grown to equate it with youth and glamour, not with the skill, effort and time required to produce enduring beauty. However, a beautiful mountain or waterfall, a beautiful garden or meal, a beautiful piece of furniture, a beautiful painting, song, athletic achievement or even a beautifully crafted legal argument or business deal are all the culmination of work, care, time and patience. When I spend time creating something of beauty, however simple – like the flower arrangements my sons and I create from the flowers in our yard – I feel better. I feel stronger, proud and more peaceful. I also feel good that when I take the time to craft something beautiful, many times I have been more efficient, less wasteful and more resourceful than if I had rushed out to the store. When we rush, we make mistakes. For example, many plants considered invasive today were planted as 'quick fixes' to create screening or shade, or to eliminate a garden pest, but soon grew out of control. In fact, slow processes, such as raising a child, preparing for a holiday or meal, springtime, gardening, career growth, travel, or learning a new language or sport always demand patience while toeing the line between joy and frustration. Even though the arts of the kitchen, studio, garden and flower-arranging table have been highly regarded for millennia, contemporary practitioners must make a concerted effort to successfully revive support for and acknowledgment of beauty in creating a healthy environment, economy and population of 'whole-souled' people (Eddy, 1896).

Science

Learning about plant science begins in our earliest elementary school science classes. We grow radishes and watch their stems move towards the sunlight. We learn about the earth's most basic functions – photosynthesis and the carbon and water cycles. Somehow, though, by the time we become adults, many of us have forgotten that humans are dependent on plants and healthy ecosystems for food, clean air, water, medicine, clothing and shelter. We forget that the future of life on earth depends on plants. Gardening reminds us of this essential connection. Our earliest science lessons literally come alive as we watch the seeds of flowering plants sprout! The cotyledons initially are all exactly alike, but each one then develops in its own unique way. And when the plants flower, they attract bees, bats, birds and other pollinators. Ultimately these plants grow fruit and then finally go to seed – blown or carried away to begin again. Watching this process, we are reminded that we are part of this cycle of life, just one living organism among billions of diverse creatures working together to form the biology of our planet. We are not the centre of it. If we pursue this thought further, we recognise that we are all part of a beautiful world much greater than ourselves. When I think of it this way, and turn my gaze outwards, looking up, out and around, I often feel better. I redirect my

thoughts from an often self-critical and unsatisfyingly self-centred focus to one that sees every day as an opportunity to grow and learn.

Learning from and giving to each other

Journalist Dahlia Lithwick wrote, "There is something about caring for the plant world that makes us more apt to behave well in the human world … The earth and the garden have rooted us all to one another when no one was looking" (Lithwick, 2013).

Gardening reinforces how we must always be learning from and giving to each other. A garden and, after the harvest, a kitchen provide the perfect places to learn from each other and work together. People of different generations, cultures, religions and abilities have different ways of actively and productively participating in the gardening process, from seed to soup. We all have special techniques to repel garden pests, just as each of us has our own recipes for preparing and preserving our harvest. For example, I have loved learning how to make pickles from fresh cucumbers with my Romanian friend, comparing horseradish recipes for Passover with extended family, debating the right size to cut fresh broccoli florets with my older son. My eye has been trained in the art of horticulture, first over many summers by a dear friend's mother and now through patient Chicago Botanic Garden colleagues; I am forever grateful to them all for giving me the ability to appreciate the subtleties of colour combinations, crafted vistas and pruned trees.

These learning and sharing experiences cut across all ages and backgrounds. In 2013, I was visiting the farm that was then managed on the West Side of Chicago by the Chicago Botanic Garden and the Cook County Department of Corrections when a young ex-offender showed me a purple – almost magenta – beet he had grown and harvested. With a sharp knife he proudly cut and offered me, from his soil-covered hands, a surprisingly amethyst-pink slice. I had a moment's hesitation, largely because he and I were strangers from different places in life, but I slowly opened my lips and he gently placed the slice of beet in my mouth. The moment was magic – and I can honestly say that it transformed my life to a degree. Yes, in a garden we can experience a special physical and emotional intimacy with each other.

This intimacy is what we seek to create and secure when we give plants and flowers as gifts – when we use them to court those we desire, to lift the spirits of friends or acquaintances who are sick or to memorialise and honour those who have passed away. Flowers bring us together. We use them as metaphors, referring to our personal history with those people we know and love. The Victorian language of flowers specified which blossoms to bring to whom for each occasion. Today, brave and hopeful Valentines deliver red roses on 14 February, and guests coming to a spring brunch bring a fragrant hostess gift of Easter lilies. The organisation Random Acts of Flowers reuses flowers that would otherwise be thrown away to create arrangements delivered to patients in hospitals and to senior centres. I give my mother gladioli on her August birthday to remind her of her father. From an army base days before being deployed to Normandy

in summer 1944, my grandfather sent a bouquet of their long, flamboyant stems to my grandmother's maternity room, where she was alone with my newborn mother. In turn, my mother always gives me pink carnations on my January birthday, because when holding me in her arms for the first time after I was born, my pink cheeks reminded her of these blooms.

On the other side of the spectrum, every day someone places a bouquet of flowers by a grave at a cemetery or visits the site of a friend's or relative's cremated remains that have been distributed in a park or garden. In this regard, the Mount Auburn Cemetery in Boston is both a historic cemetery and one of my favorite botanic gardens. I must confess that despite the illegality of scattering human remains on public grounds in the United States, Chicago Botanic Garden horticulturists continually find ashes while making their rounds. The use of a garden bed as a resting ground for more than just fallen petals supports my belief in the healing power of gardens. Through all seasons, laying a person to rest in a garden-like setting connects those who are living with those who have passed away, helping to soothe grief by replacing images of ending with a vision of renewal and rebirth. I can think of no better way to ignite optimism and to share memories and hope with one another.

Hard work

A thriving garden or natural area – or anything productive for that matter – requires hard work. While we all like to get things for free from time to time, it's what we work hardest to achieve that yields the greatest pleasure. When I have felt at my lowest and when my outlook on life has been the bleakest, I have headed outside to work in the garden. The satisfaction of productive labour and the soothing rhythm of toil have always combined to lift my spirits.

At the end of the day, even if our hands hurt, our backs ache and we're sunburned, we feel great; the work of gardening buoys our spirits. Active gardeners don't need a gym to stay fit, or extra vitamin D in the growing season. Gardeners who eat mainly what they grow by their own hand, or can acquire by exchange with a fellow gardener or during a visit to local farmers' markets, have earned their nutritious and delicious meals. Friends laugh because in the late summer months my handbag is usually cradling some piece of produce given to me in the course of my day – perhaps a crisp crown of broccoli from our North Chicago farm or a mini aubergine from Darius, who manages our McCormick Place convention centre rooftop farm. Gardeners who decorate their homes with bouquets clipped by hand rather than shipped by plane experience greater joy from the flowers' beauty. For me, there is nothing more empowering, relaxing and mood-elevating than working hard to create a garden and then eating a meal grown, harvested and cooked by hand, with a centrepiece of flowers on the table, cut by hand (often by my children's hands), with friends and family. The rewards reaped from that type of hard work never cease to help make my life feel more worth living.

Respect

Gardening allows us to marvel in the miracles of earth's abundant, varied environments and different seasons, all the while building respect for our Mother Nature. One huge surprise and major disappointment in my life – and I think one of the reasons for my occasional despondency – came from the revelation in my early twenties that there is no 'they' out there. There is no group of all-knowing elders making sure our bridges stand strong, that our planes fly safely in the sky, that our political systems remain fair … that all will be OK. I came to learn that every day behind closed doors powerful men and women (and the rest of us, for that matter) occasionally forget to do the right thing, lose their perspective and exert their authority in inappropriate ways. Realising this, I lost my youthful respect for and blind trust in many decision-makers and institutions. I felt unsafe, vulnerable and disappointed. However, I still desperately wanted something larger than myself to trust and respect – because the ability to trust and respect others helps me feel stronger, happier and more secure. In the end, it was gardening that helped me fill that void.

Gardening brings about respect because it keeps us in touch with nature's inventiveness and perseverance. Nature doesn't let us down. Nature is generally consistent, and when it isn't, nature is surprisingly consistent in its inconsistency. We can trust in nature to adapt and evolve, to persevere and, when we let it, to heal and support us. We have no choice but to respect and defer to nature's ways, even when they don't always act in our favour. Gardening can also teach us respectful ways to heal our environment – and even our economic systems – by teaching us useful lessons about waste and renewal. Successful gardening dictates that we carefully monitor which inputs we can thoughtfully and affordably take from and give back to our environment – water, fertiliser, healthy soil and other nutrients. Good gardeners also learn the importance of reuse, recycling the waste they create rather than simply dumping it into the garbage bin. As any gardener will tell you, compost makes 'black gold' for our vegetables and flowers. Rainwater collected in barrels and used to water our crops is also better for our plants than water from the tap or from the well, and it's free to boot![4]

When we become anxious or feel overwhelmed by the issues of our day – overpopulation of the world, climate change, natural disasters – we can use most basic principles of growing things and keeping our inputs pure to guide our understanding of problems and help us figure out solutions, rather than waiting for a non-existent 'they' to do it for us. For example, knowing the processes of nature, we can help answer difficult global questions such as how can we use natural gas, which emits half the carbon of oil, but not at the expense of fresh-water aquifers? How can we protect the land while creating jobs and leveraging earth's natural resources? How can we mitigate the threats of climate change, which is causing both droughts and floods? We can also apply this knowledge to our personal lives, all the while remembering the principles and metaphor of gardening.

4. See Brooklyn Botanic Garden's perspective on the virtues of rain-barrel water for gardening at http://www.bbg.org/gardening/article/gardening_with_rainwater

Faith

Closely related to respect is faith, the last factor in how the act of gardening helps strengthen our mental health. Even with the best intentions and commitment to patience, beauty, science, learning from and giving to each other, hard work and respect, we still have to trust that the seed we plant will grow. During an extended midwinter freeze, we have to believe that spring will eventually come. Around the third week in February, before there is any clear-cut evidence that winter will soon be behind us, I take pleasure in pointing out the longer days, brighter sun and birdsong of cardinals to people who may not be as aware of nature's changes. Colleagues and friends have told me that these reassurances are always appreciated – perhaps because after a long winter, some measure of faith that spring will actually arrive is diminished despite the empirical evidence to the contrary. A gardener's awareness of nature's subtle changes day to day, hour to hour, reduces this pessimism, which, when left unchecked, can foster hopelessness in the future of other aspects of life as well.

Regardless of our religion, it is difficult to put our feet on the floor in the morning if we don't operate with some measure of faith. It could be something as seemingly simple as the conviction that things happen for a reason – that there is an order to life beyond that which we can tangibly comprehend. Codified or not, nature and gardens are central to all religions. Gardens are mentioned in the Bible, the Koran and the Torah, as well as in the practice of Buddhism. Nature is also central to many agnostic belief systems.

On 11 September 2012, the Chicago Botanic Garden hosted a meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Forest Preserves of Cook County, the Garden's partner and landowner. The County opens all of their board meetings with a prayer. In this case, Suzan Hawkinson, a local pastor, offered this prayer:

> *God of sun and rain, of soil and living things, we turn to you in the brightness of this morning in gratitude. You moved across the waters of nothingness before the world was born and let your imagination and power do good: water and dry land, sun and moon, green and flower, creeping things and birds of flight. Before there was a garden you turned the dust to light.*
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> *We turn to you in the brightness of yet another day that is a gift from you, and we bow our heads in awe and gratitude. Thank you. Thank you for beauty, for scent, for the wonder that it is to watch growth happen. Thank you for the seasons and the cycle of life that sprouts and spires, blooms, fruits, seeds and returns to earth.*
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> *By the grace of your providence we accept again today the call to be stewards over all that you have made, and all that you sustain. We are humbled and delighted to have been given charge of this Botanic Garden, and the garden of*

the earth. Watch over all who till and keep, who cultivate and guard. Prosper your creation Lord, here and in all the earth.

Grant to us this day the blessing of your continued presence. Remind us that we walk in every garden with you. Teach us ever to celebrate your generosity and accept the praise of our delight in all that you have privileged us to enjoy.

Whether one is devoutly religious or, like me, spiritual but not particularly religious, this prayer resonates, providing a reassuring reminder of the power of faith, gratitude and hope. I take pride in knowing that the place where I work inspired Pastor Hawkinson to write these moving words and those of us who work at and visit botanic gardens see a nature-based faith manifested each and every day.

FINAL PERSONAL THOUGHTS ON GARDENING, GARDENS AND THE GOOD THEY DO

My father taught me how to garden – how to grow flowers, herbs, vegetables and trees; how to mow, save a prairie or fen, and identify the seeds, scents and the earliest signs of spring. Skunk cabbage. Jack-in-pulpit. He taught me how to grow and arrange daffodils, lilacs, peonies, lilies and zinnias. The passion and knowledge for gardening, and the importance of patience, beauty, science, the desire to learn and give back, hard work, respect and faith that I learned from my father have enabled me to become president and CEO of the Chicago Botanic Garden. Gardening has always brought the two of us closer together. You might say that he taught me how to hoe a row, no matter how rocky the soil.

My father is getting older. He, like many aging people, has faced bouts of one illness or another. He has always persevered – we jokingly call him the cat with ten lives – but on occasion I worry that the end may be in sight. For many years in his downtown high-rise apartment, he had been growing a *Hoya carnosa* (wax plant) vine. He nurtured it from a cutting and grew it into a vine with many intertwined tendrils, some dozens of feet long. When I was a child, and it bloomed its waxy, honey-dripping flowers each spring, I would lick its nectar when I thought no one was watching. My father carefully cared for this plant, training it up an elaborate twine trellis and fertilising it with a special brew. However, during his recent move, 'Hoya' was too big, too knotted and too unwieldy to be housed in a much smaller apartment. Knowing that he would have to give up his favourite plant, he called to ask me a favour: "Sophia, is there any way the Chicago Botanic Garden would take her?"

I hesitated to request from Garden staff a favour like this, but I had never heard my father appeal to me as he did that day. With the help of two horticulturists, last autumn we moved Hoya to the Semitropical Greenhouse at the Garden. My father became sick at the same time she lost all of her hundreds of leaves. I went to visit her daily; the plant really looked terrible. When my father was feeling better, he and my stepmother joined

my sons, my partner and me on a special outing one icy January day to offer words of encouragement and to say goodbye in case Hoya didn't recover. Unbelievably, the very next afternoon I went to check on her and discovered she had sprouted a dozen new leaves. Did our pep talk really work? I exhaled – knowing that she and my father would both live to enjoy at least another spring. Hoya will most likely outlast my father, and I will continue to visit her. Perhaps, if the horticulturists will allow it, I will even help her to wind up the new wooden trellis made by the Garden's expert carpenters. Caring for this plant while remembering the love that I have for my father, and doing so in a place I have come to love, will be a central part of my healing when he is gone.

Nature and the cycles of life bind us all together. Sometimes when world events seem threatening or unsettling to me, I think of people around the world cultivating their gardens, whether in a city, backyard, sunny window, farm or rainforest. I feel calmer in the knowledge that whatever upheavals we experience far from one another, gardening can and does link us all together. Gardening can help us realise and emphasise what we have in common rather than what makes us different, ultimately reducing tension and helping to bring about a more optimistic and stable world.

What a gift it is to know that through gardens and gardening we have the opportunity to cultivate the power of plants to help sustain and enrich life, our own mental and physical health, and the healthy future of life on earth. Spring will always come for us and for those who follow in our footsteps. I can confidently and joyously move forward having faith in that fact, and faith in my ability to continue to "hoe the row".

Having considered the benefits to mental health of patience, beauty, science, learning from and giving to each other, hard work, respect and faith delivered through gardening, my second paper in this edition of *Sibbaldia*, 'The Positive Effects on Mental Health of Visiting Botanic Gardens' looks at how visiting botanic gardens and taking part in the programmes they offer can help people.

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