

Saving the Planet One Garden at a Time



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Ohio Master Gardeners

Ohio State Master Gardeners

- Over 3,165 MG in 62 counties
- Nationwide MG
 - 86,000+ volunteers
 - 5.6 million volunteer hours
 - Av. 60 hrs yearly/MG



The Master Gardener Mission

- **California:** To extend research-based knowledge and information on home horticulture, pest management, and sustainable landscape practices . . .
- **Ohio:** We are Ohio State University Extension-trained volunteers empowered to educate others with timely research-based gardening information
 - Integrated pest management
 - Invasive species
 - Backyard and local foods
 - Environmental horticulture



"When we tug at a single thing in nature, we find it attached to the rest of the world." John Muir



<https://www.antioch.edu/centers-institutes/conservation-psychology-institute/>

Master Gardeners are a great audience!

- Enthusiastic and knowledgeable
- Gardeners trust MGs
- Offer solid, science-backed information
- MGs share their knowledge in person



How much do gardens matter?

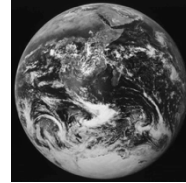


Doug Tallamy



One Planet Living

Living within the resources of one planet



Botanic gardens and other shared garden spaces

- Ideal setting to engage visitors
- Can offer models of sustainable practices
- Places to teach
- Places to participate



Making connections

- Urban centers to wild lands
 - Watershed
 - Neighborhood habitat corridors (shrub borders!)

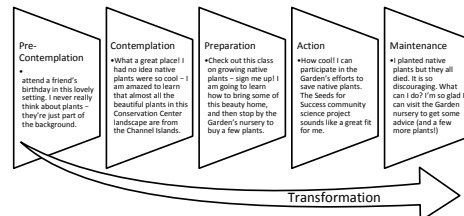


Who is our audience?

- Divided by:
 -
 -
 - level
 - Subject
 - Entry motivation (gardens/institutions)



Moving towards change: one example



Pre-contemplation:
Nothing needs to be changed



Contemplation:
Does something need to change?



Preparation:
I've got to do something
– but what?



Action:
I'm working hard to change



Maintenance:
I need a boost right now



Programming for change: the
gardening audience

- Provide transformative experiences
- Provide multiple programs
- Develop imaginative and layered programs



Aquariums and zoos

The real-cost café at the Monterey Bay Aquarium is always eye-opening for visitors, an immersive, multi-layered experience. The take-away is a wallet card for their popular, nationwide Seafood Watch program, advising consumers on the sustainability of their seafood choices.

<https://www.seafoodwatch.org/>



Challenges in shifting public conservation behavior

- change
- Humans are biased and short-sighted
- People perceive themselves as separate from nature
- Social norms guide behavior



Interpretation

- Engages hearts and minds in our mission
- Includes all the ways we share that mission



Interpretive Media: Passive



Interpretive Media: Active

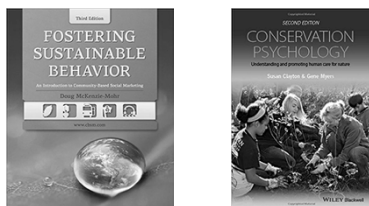


Language and communication

- Positive language is always preferable
- Be aware of your audience. Ask questions
- Programming and printed materials in other languages is helpful
- All messaging should be in close alignment



Environmental psychology



Power of the collective



Early adopters and the tipping point

- 2.5% innovators
- 13.5% early adopters
- 34% early majority
- 34% late majority
- 16% laggards



Simon Sinek TED talk: How Great Leaders Inspire Action

Information campaigns

- – increased knowledge will change behavior
- – that we systematically evaluate choices, and act in our best interest
- – Easy to distribute
- – Not much evaluation



Power of values

- Shared beliefs
- Focus on values in common
 - Family
 - Home
 - Children
 - Nature



Power of stories

- Speak to hearts
- A simple story can carry more weight than facts
- Know how to effectively frame your stories.



www.frameworksinstitute.org

Community-based social marketing

- psychology
- Behavior change most effectively achieved through initiatives delivered at the community level
 - Remove barriers
 - Enhance benefits

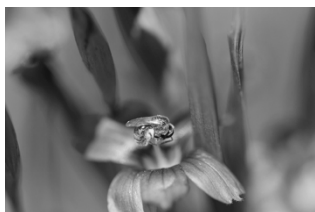


Single achievable actions

- Messages that focus on single, achievable, specific actions are more likely to succeed
- Messages that promote positive behavior are more likely to induce change than attempts to prevent the behavior



Framing stories: Why native plants?



Coevolution

"One approach to what we would like to call coevolution is the examination of patterns of interactions between two major groups of organisms with a close and evident ecological relationship, such as plants and herbivores."

Paul Erlich and Peter Raven, 1964



Herbivorous insects

- Plants convert sun's energy to provide nutrients to planetary life
- Herbivorous insects
 -
 -
 - energy for use by other animals
- 90% of all herbivorous insect species are specialists
- Role in food web rarely discussed in horticulture



Bird food

- 96% feed their young arthropods
- 70%+ eat arthropods as adults
- 50%+ diet is Lepidoptera
- Provide pest control
- US bird populations down 60-90% in past 40 years



Photo: Kay Markham

Oak trees

- Innumerable organisms of all kinds ecologically tied to oak trees
- 11 species of oaks in Ohio
- 800+ species of insects
- Dozens of bird species
- Mammals, reptiles, molluscs, worms . . .



<https://www.workman.com/products/the-nature-of-oaks>

Connecting the dots



The role of Master Gardeners



The role of Master Gardeners



The role of Master Gardeners



Full circle

- Another approach to behavior change: write about the change you want to see!
- Available at local independent bookstores, and the usual online sources

