

# **Plant Parenthood: The Power of Caring for Plants**

A guide to the mental, emotional, and physical benefits of plant care for students

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Discover the healing power of plants through "Plant Parenthood," a zine designed to help you cultivate both your greenery and your personal well-being. Whether you're a seasoned plant parent or just beginning your journey, this zine offers practical tips, thoughtful reflections, and journaling prompts that connect the act of caring for plants with emotional growth and self-care.

As someone who found solace in plants during the uncertain times of the COVID pandemic, I've experienced firsthand the transformative impact that nurturing a living thing can have on your mental health. This zine is a reflection of that journey—how plants can offer us grounding, purpose, and even joy on the toughest of days. I invite you to join me in exploring how tending to plants can help you tend to yourself, too.

If you're looking for a meaningful way to de-stress, build mindfulness, and foster a deeper connection with nature, this zine is for you. Pick up your copy and let your journey with plants begin!

## **WHY PLANTS ARE GOOD FOR YOU**

- Caring for plants offers numerous mental, emotional, and physical benefits, particularly for busy college students.

## **EMOTIONAL BENEFITS**

- Interacting with plants has been shown to reduce stress and anxiety, helping to foster mindfulness and a sense of calm. The daily routines of watering, pruning, and tending to plants create a grounding experience that helps build emotional regulation and patience. Through this simple act of care, students can develop healthy coping mechanisms and a sense of accomplishment, nurturing not only their plants but their own well-being.
- “My journey with plant care began during the COVID pandemic, and it quickly became a meaningful escape for me during a time of uncertainty. Caring for my plants gave me a sense of purpose when much of the world felt out of control. They served as a constant reminder that in order to nurture them, I had to take care of myself first. Tending to my plants wasn’t just about

their survival—it became an act of self-care. On days when I struggled to get out of bed, knowing that my plants needed water would give me a reason to start my day. The simple routine of watering and pruning them became something I looked forward to. Watching them grow and eventually sprout little offshoots filled me with an immense sense of pride.”

- “My plants also became a source of companionship. I would often find myself talking to them, encouraging them to thrive. In return, they reminded me that I wasn’t alone in my own growth.”
- “This practice of caring for something living helped me feel grounded, motivated, and connected during a time when those feelings were hard to come by.” – Sadaf Farahmandifard

## **JOURNALING PROMPT**

- **Growth & Care:** How does caring for a plant mirror the way you care for yourself? Reflect on what your plant needs to thrive and how those needs compare to your own.
- **Self-Care and Routine:** How does the routine of tending to your plant (watering, pruning, etc.) affect your daily life? How can you incorporate this mindset into other areas of self-care?

## **PLANT AS A TOOL FOR SELF-CARE**

- **Grounding Yourself in Nature, Developing Patience and Sense of Achievement**
- plants can serve as a reminder of self-care, offering a small yet impactful way to reconnect with nature.
- By incorporating plant care into their routine, students can develop positive habits that support their emotional and mental health, finding both joy and stress relief in the process. Whether it’s through establishing a care routine, enjoying the growth of their plants, or simply taking a mindful moment to observe their greenery, plant care provides a peaceful escape from the daily pressures of academic life.

## **JOURNALING PROMPT**

- Draw a portrait of your plant
- **Plant as a Metaphor:** In what ways is your plant a metaphor for something in your life right now? Think about its resilience, its need for care, or its ability to adapt to new conditions. How does this reflect your own journey?

## **CREATE A PLANT BIRTH CERTIFICATE**

- Name:
- My birthday (date you got me):
- Favorite thing about me:
- Last watered on:

## **JOURNALING PROMPT**

- **Mindfulness in the Moment:** Take a few minutes to observe your plant closely. What do you notice about its leaves, its growth, or its condition? How do these observations relate to how you’re feeling in this moment?

- Emotional Grounding: When you feel stressed or overwhelmed, how can the act of caring for your plant help you feel more grounded? What do you notice about your mood or emotions before and after spending time with your plant?

## **PLANT CARE TIPS**

- Watering: Make sure your plant's soil is dry before watering. Don't be scared to get dirty! Stick your finger in down to the first knuckle. If it's wet/moist hold off. If it's dry, go ahead and water :)
- Lighting: Most houseplants need bright, indirect sunlight. If your plant needs more light, try placing it near a window that get filtered sunlight.
- Soil & Potting: Choose pots with good drainage to prevent water buildup. Make sure the plant is in well-draining soil too <3
- How to Know What Your Plant Needs:
  - Underwatered Plants: Leaves may curl, become dry, or turn brown at the edges.
  - Overwatered Plants: Yellowing leaves, wilting, and soft stems can indicate overwatering. Let the soil dry out before watering again.
  - Light Issues: If leaves are turning yellow or dropping, your plant may need more light. Alternatively, scorched leaves may mean too much direct sunlight.

## **PLANTS FOR BEGINNERS: EASY TO CARE FOR PLANTS FOR BUSY STUDENTS**

- Aloe Vera: Not only does it require minimal care, but it also provides a soothing gel that can be used to treat minor skin irritations.
- Snake Plant: Nearly impossible to kill! It thrives on neglect and can survive with minimal light and water.
- Spider Plant: Perfect for new plant parents! It adapts well to different environments and tolerates occasional neglect.