



## **My Sleeping Garden Will Awake**

**By: Cindy Brown-Carlson, UCCE Master Gardener of Lake Tahoe**

A couple weeks ago, while walking through my garden, I noticed buds beginning to show the tips of their heads. The mountain snow at lake level had pretty much melted—though in Tahoe we can get snow well into May, I had hopes that this year would be different.

Well, this year did turn out to be far different than any other past year. Our world was bombarded with the deadly Covid19. Overnight, all of our lives changed. Things we took for granted like grocery shopping, meeting friends out at a restaurant, a Friday night concert or dropping our kids off at school were no longer the norm. We were told to self quarantine in our homes, and if we did have to grocery shop for food we were told to stay six feet from another person—so not to spread the virus.

We had another snowfall, covering the delicate buds which had tried so hard to wake up and turn our gardens into places of beauty for another year. I couldn't help but think that they too—like us—were forced into quarantine. Each plant had to stop in its tracks and halt its growth until the snow melted and warmer weather arrived.

The other night I couldn't sleep and was reflecting on how fragile we are. I tried to make sense of the world's current situation but to no avail. As I watched the snow fall, I thought about the sleeping plants in my garden, then a profound thought brought me around.

There is something for us all to learn from our gardens which we've toiled so hard for them to flourish. We thin out and move plants that have overgrown each other, sort of social/personal distancing so they have a better chance of survival. Some are moved to other parts of our yards or given to a friend for them to cherish.

We re-work the soil and add in nutrients to help the plants grow strong—as we ourselves take vitamins and try to eat healthy to take care of our own bodies.

We water and remove pesky pests from the stems and foliage so the plants are not destroyed—where we take medicines or herbal remedies to get rid of any “bugs” we might have.

Without this process our gardens would have little chance of survival. Gardening is a love we have, a love sometimes hard to explain—but not without days of nurturing and hard work. Watching a plant go from dormancy, or a small seed to that magnificent living thing that we ourselves provided care for, is an accomplishment in itself.

I heard that this next week will be a tough one with mounting illnesses from Covid19. We must all shelter at home. Learn from your gardens, wait with them until it is safe to pop your head outside. And remember that as tough as times are right now, we will recover and our gardens will awake.

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