



January
New Year
Edit

Home Making - Welcome to a fresh start!

I hope you are all well and had a revitalising holiday. I thought we could start off the year with some inspiring projects to keep us refreshed and active during this current lockdown.

Home making is a series of creative activities to make at home to enhance your space and self-care. Projects can be kept to enjoy or gifted back to KPC to be passed on to others. Each pack will contain 4 activities and be seasonally themed. Each of the activities will have printed instructions but also a short video.

The packs are aimed at all ages and abilities but some of the activities will require supervision for harder tasks. We will leave it up to you to gauge what fits your situation.

We have a **Facebook group** that you can join and view the videos, ask any questions and share your work. **Online Café meets every Tuesday on ZOOM between 2pm-3pm** to discuss the craft projects but also to have a blether and enjoy a cuppa with some familiar faces. The link for the zoom is in the Facebook group.

If you have a Facebook profile you can join the cafe by searching for KPC Cafe in groups. Once you locate it click join. We will then be notified of your request and it will pend approval. Once your request has been approved you will get a notification and you can access and share information there.



KPC Cafe

Private group

It is free and easy to set up a Facebook profile but if you do not want to use Facebook and would still like to access either the videos or join us at the Zoom meet up then email me at stef@kinningparkcomplex.org and I can send you the links. You can also enjoy this pack in your own way and in your own time.

We also wanted to show our gratitude to The Climate Challenge Fund via the Scottish Government who have given us the ability to supply and distribute these packs free of charge.

New Year Edit - Herbal therapy (Tea Blending and Bath Soaks) Terracotta Diffusers, Hanging Bird Feeders and Wall Hanging or Mobile Decoration.

Have fun, keep fresh and I look forward to seeing what you all make.

Stef x

Herbal Blending

For Tea and Baths Soaks. Comfort your soul, boost your immune system, fight the coldness and enhance your wellbeing.



What you need

Various Natural Food Grade Dried Herbs – (Rose Petals, Lavender, Lemon Balm, Lemon Grass, Rosehip Shells, Camomile, Peppermint) and re-usable tea pouches.

The ritual of brewing a cup of tea or running a bath and taking a moment to yourself is grounding and refreshing, the herbal scents are enjoyable and comforting. There are also additional benefits of using herbs – often called alternative therapy, herbs have been used for medicinal reasons and to target ailments and mental health.

Disclaimer – I am not a doctor or herbal practitioner; I am passing on information that works for me and is widely available through books and online. Therefore, if you have any underlying health conditions please consult a specialist or conduct your own research before experimentation.



Herbal Description

For Tea and Baths Soaks. Comfort your soul, boost your immune system, fight the coldness and enhance your wellbeing.

Chamomile for Anxiety

Although chamomile is a gentle healer, it's still highly effective. This yellow daisy like flower is a popular medicine among herbalists, as it's known to treat a variety of ailments. The flowers contain high amounts of the volatile oil azulene, which has anti-inflammatory properties. Chamomile is also a popular remedy to reduce anxiety and quiet the mind for sleep.

Lemon Balm for Anxiety

Lemon balm is renowned for its treatment of anxiety. It is also known as a natural relaxation aid. The herb has also been shown to inhibit viruses, such as the herpes virus that causes cold sores. It also helps fight headaches and reduce insomnia.

Rosehips to Boost Immunity

Rose bushes that are not deadheaded (removing dead flower heads to encourage more blooming) by a gardener develop rosehips, which are full of seeds and sometimes pulp. They make a wonderful source of immune-boosting Vitamin C and have even been used in the past to treat scurvy. In fact, by volume, rosehips contain about 20 times the Vitamin C as oranges.

Lemongrass for stress busting

Lemongrass is an all round goodie! It is said to reduce stress and uplift the mood which can be good for grounding you. Lemongrass can also be used as a remedy to relieve pain, and boost immunity.



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Rose Petals to help with Digestive Issues and more

Rose petals contains high amounts of Vitamin C, an antioxidant vital to our body's healing process and its ability to fight off infection.

Adding rose tea to your health regimen is thought to help relieve a variety of conditions from arthritis to menstrual cramps.

The antibacterial properties of this tea quickly go to work on any infections in the gastrointestinal tract or gut. It can help to rebalance the microflora in the intestines and relieve digestive issues like constipation, cramping, bloating or diarrhoea.

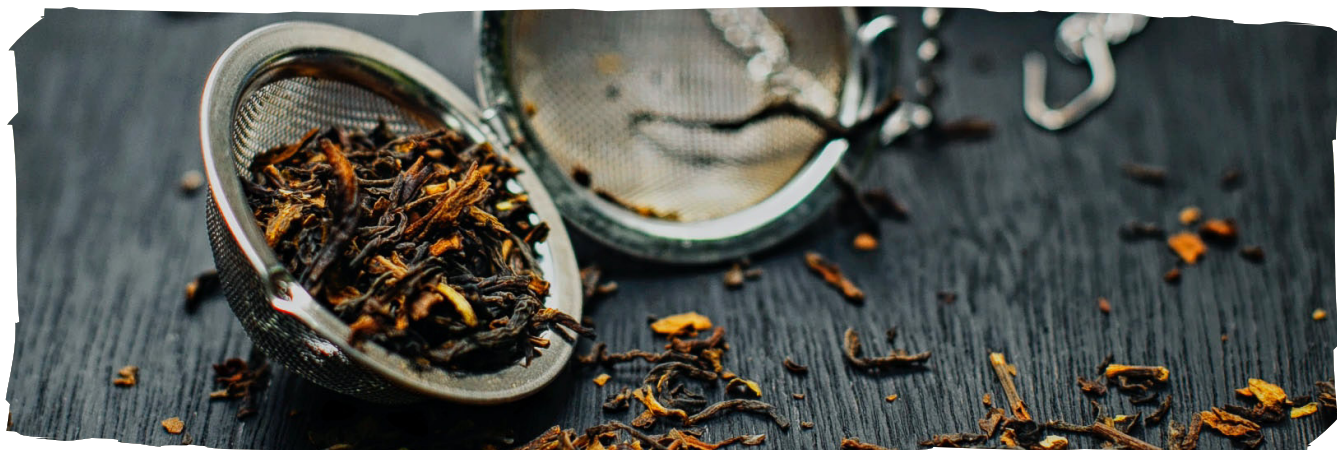
That being said, rose tea can also act as a laxative, particularly if you drink more than 2 cups per day. So, consume the rose tea in moderation and monitor how your body reacts when you first begin drinking this beverage.

Lavender for Sleep Problems

Lavender has profound relaxing, calming and uplifting effects. A number of studies have shown this violet beauty to help slow the activity of the nervous system, improve sleep quality, promote relaxation and lift mood. It's most popular as an aromatherapy aid, where it's used in inhalation therapy to treat headaches and reduce stress, as well as a topical aid where its antifungal actions come in handy. But it also makes a wonderful healing tea.

Peppermint for Indigestion

Renewing, refreshing and energizing peppermint is the perfect herbal pick-me-up. It's renowned as a digestive aid—use this aromatic herb to relieve nausea and gas. Several studies have shown it to be effective at treating symptoms of indigestion and irritable bowel syndrome. Its main active agent, menthol, also works as a decongestant and may help loosen phlegm and break up coughs during cold and flu season.



Blend Suggestions

For Tea and Baths Soaks. Comfort your soul, boost your immune system, fight the coldness and enhance your wellbeing.

Power to the T – Combine a mixture of all the herbs supplied in your pack. This will aid relaxation, help you unwind and give you a boost of Vitamin C to keep you healthy!

Sleepy Tea – Chamomile and lavender before bed.

Anti Anxie Tea – Chamomile and Lemon Balm. Think we could all be doing with a bit of this right now!

Body Boost Tea – Lemongrass, rosehip shells, rose petals and peppermint. With a good hit of Vitamin C and energising mint and lemongrass I like this one in the morning to help wake me up and get my body going!

Blends can also be done by taste – experiment with what flavour you like and play around with quantities if one herb feels like it's overpowering.

Directions for a great cup of herbal tea

- 1** Select the herb or blend you wish to use. If making a blend combine all ingredients in a bowl or jar to mix thoroughly. You can store any excess in a jar/air tight tub or bag. A good quantity guide to go by is 1 - 2 teaspoons of herbs to 1 cup of water but you can adjust this to your preference.
- 2** Boil some water – whilst the water is heating fill one of the reusable tea bags with the herbs – crush the herbs between your fingers as you fill as this will help release the flavour and scent.
- 3** Place your bag in a mug, pour on the boiling water and cover – I usually let it steep for around 5 – 10 mins. It is important to cover it so the essential oils within the herbs do not escape with the steam. I just use a plate to do this if I'm using a mug.
- 4** I then remove the bag squeeze it on the side of the mug with a spoon and your tea is ready! Sit back relax and enjoy. If you want to sweeten it up add a little honey.

Hints

You can also cool your blends and drink cold. Add ice to speed up the process. If you find the blend a little too bitter shorten the time you leave to brew.

Bath Soaks

For Tea and Baths Soaks. Comfort your soul, boost your immune system, fight the coldness and enhance your wellbeing.

After you have enjoyed a lovely cuppa you can dry the herbs out (on a paper towel on a radiator) and they can be added to the bath. You can also use the herbs as they are before making a tea for a stronger scent in your bath.

Add your herb or blend to a muslin tea bag as otherwise it will be a mission to clean the bath once you're done.

The healing properties trapped in the herbs and released by the water can help boost your mood, calm the mind, soothe sore muscle and joints, opens pores, soften skin, and promote a more restful sleep.

Remember that the bags are re-usable so tip out the herbs. You can collect your used herbs in a tin or box on the side and weekly sprinkle on your flower beds if you have some, no need to dry them out first. You can also mix them into soil or compost before planting new plants, the nutrient-rich herbs will help plants grow.

They can also be disposed of along with food waste for collection or use in your local community garden.

There are plenty of herbs in your packs – make some up for friends and families to give as gifts!



Helping to look after our Planet!



Do you know that most tea bags contain plastic, even though they might not look like they do. The plastic adds strength to the tea bag.

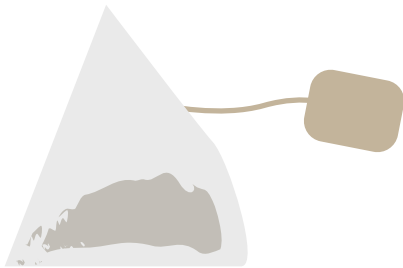
To cut out the plastic from your tea cup, switch to loose tea and re-usable tea bags.

Do your teabags contain plastic?



Pressed Teabags (Crimped Edges)

Pressed tea bags contain 20-30% of plastic called polypropylene which is woven through the paper and melted to help seal the teabag better.



Silken Teabags

Silken tea bags are actually made from plastic and not silk. The type of plastic being used is fossil-fuel based such as nylon or PET. It can also be PLA which is a plant based plastic most commonly known as cornstarch.



String - and - tag teabags

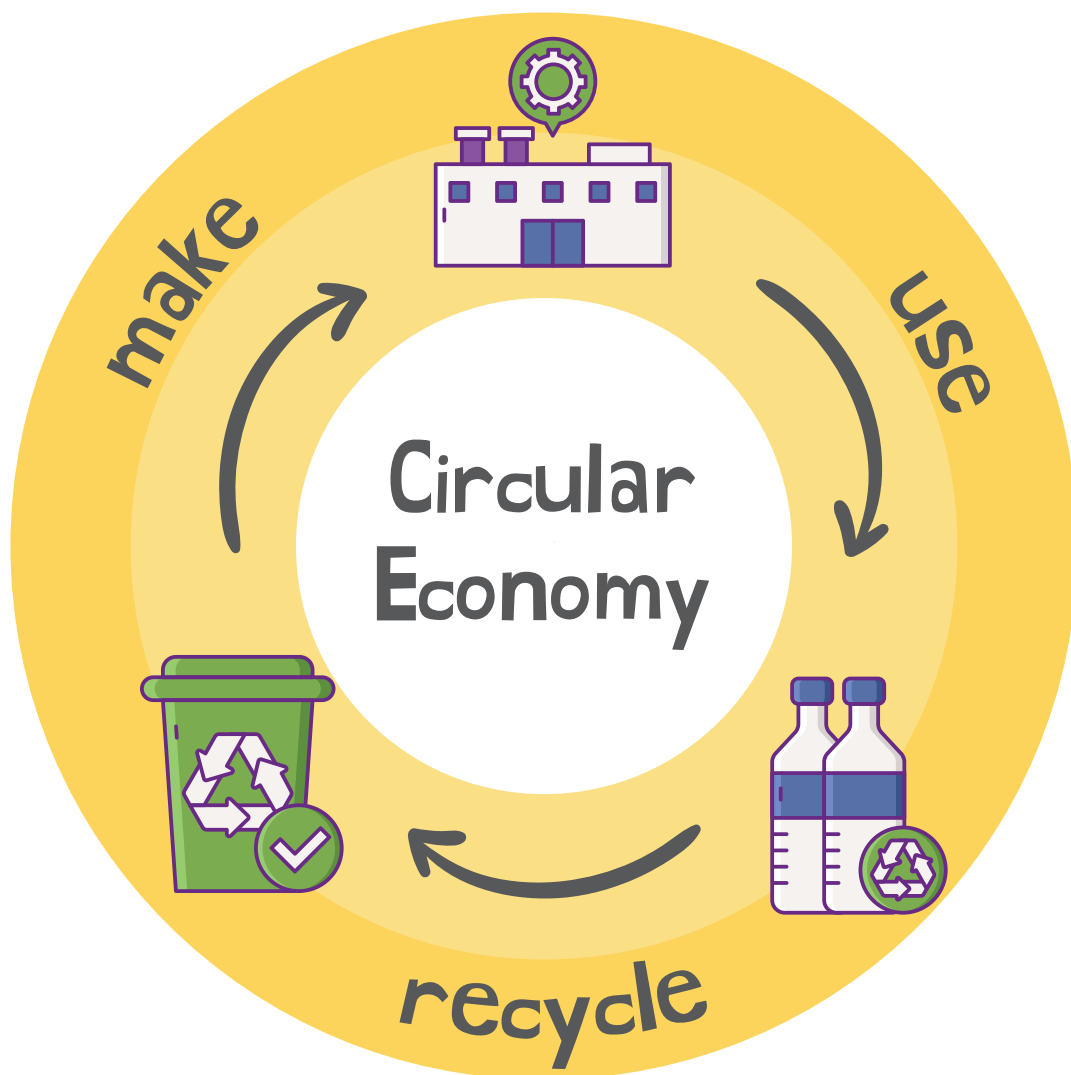
String and tag tea bags are paper layers folded at the top and secured using a stitch or staple rather than using heat. They often come in individual sachets, which can contain a hidden layer of plastic fibres to keep the packet airtight.

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Feel good that your bath soak is full of all-natural ingredients, so they aren't doing any harm to the planet. The herbs are completely compostable so there is zero waste and you are returning nutrients to the earth.

This is what is called a **circular economy**:



Terracotta Diffuser

Can be used as a small plate, hanging decoration or necklace



What you need

Kit – Stef's Refreshing NY Scent blend (Basil, Sweet Orange, Mandarin and Lime pure Essential Oil) Air Drying Terracotta Clay, Straw, String, cord or ribbon, cookie cutters and brass eye screws.

Terracotta is a porous substance and will soak up any liquid it comes in contact with (in this case, essential oils). The blend supplied is Lime, Sweet Orange, Basil & Mandarin which is uplifting and balancing, zingy yet delicate and refreshing. If you have your own scents feel free to use them too. The terracotta will help diffuse the scent into the area it is placed.

- 1** For hanging diffusers. Roll out the clay (I used an old glass bottle for this – you can also use a jar, rolling pin or anything smooth and cylindrical) I made my sheet approx. 15mm thick. Use the cookie cutters to cut as many pieces you want. Take the end of one of the paper straws and pierce out a hole. (I have also included a bit of thick wire in the kit to help pierce smaller holes.)
- 2** For Dish type. Free form the shape of the dish you want to make (you can also use a cutter or a kitchen knife to help). Fold up the edges slightly to create a dish like side to stop the little beads from rolling off the side. Make beads in different shapes (balls, cubes etc.)
- 3** Leave the clay to dry for at least 48 hours. The clay lightens in colour when ready. You can also create free form shapes by cutting or moulding into whatever you wish. Just remember to create a hole if you want to hang it. It may also take longer to completely dry out.
- 4** Add as many drops of essential oils to your terracotta shape and place wherever you wish. These diffusers work best in small spaces such as a clothes drawer, wardrobe or bag and can also be worn as a necklace. If wearing as a necklace I would only add a few drops at a time so the smell isn't overwhelming. To make the necklace use one of the eye screws, when your clay is wet make a small hole, once dry use this as a guide to screw in the brass eye screw - this will create a nice hanging loop.

Helping to look after our Planet!



Hints

Just like any diffuser, you will eventually need to replenish your oils to maintain the scent. Once the scent fades just re-soak your terracotta in more oil and they will be as good as new again.

If the terracotta feels too wet and sticky just leave it out to dry for a short time and keep testing it until it's the desired pliability. If it becomes too dry – you can add a little water to your fingers to soften again.

Take It Further

Make patterns in the clay decorations. You can use anything around to imprint - stamps, cutlery, keys and you can also draw into the clay with a sharp pencil. You can also add texture by pressing lightly against fabric, walls or tree bark etc. Make smaller pieces if you have any small cutters or play dough tools, these can be placed into your small plate as decorations or placed in an organza bag and hung.

Terracotta is an eco-friendly material because:

- It is 100% natural and also goes by the name baked earth
- Manufacturing terracotta does not use any harmful chemicals
- It is cheap to purchase good quality terracotta products
- It is long lasting and recyclable



Bird Feeders

Even if you don't have a garden these feeders can be taken with you on a walk and placed in a tree.



What you need

Bird seed, agar-agar (vegan alternative to gelatine), ribbon, cord or string, cookie cutters and straws.

- 1** Dissolve 1/2 tablespoon of Agar-Agar, there is 1 tablespoon supplied in your pack so use about 1/2. (or gelatin also works) in 1/2 cup water and bring to a boil. If using Agar-Agar make sure you bring it to a rapid boil, as it will not set properly if it does not get hot enough.
- 2** Fold in 1 cup of birdseed and stir until evenly mixed and coated. Fill your cookie cutter and pack in as tightly as possible. Add the straw in to make the hole.
- 3** Let the decorations chill for at least 2 hours in the fridge. Remove, and allow it to dry overnight. When it is set it should pop out with a just a little pressure! There is enough to do this twice or so in your pack – you may find you have extra mixture – you can find other objects to use as moulds – small cupcake moulds, bowls.
- 4** There will definitely be left over bird seed – scatter on your next walk or empty into a bird feeder if you have one.

Hints

If you have a garden space or time to watch the tree where you placed your feeder sit and bird watch – find out what types of birds inhabit your local area. Let us know what you see! Beware these may dissolve in heavy rain so look for somewhere fairly sheltered to hang.

Take It Further

If you have larger moulds at home such as cake tins or jelly moulds experiment by creating a larger shape.

“It's always good to care for other things around you and this activity will help look after the birds over winter.”

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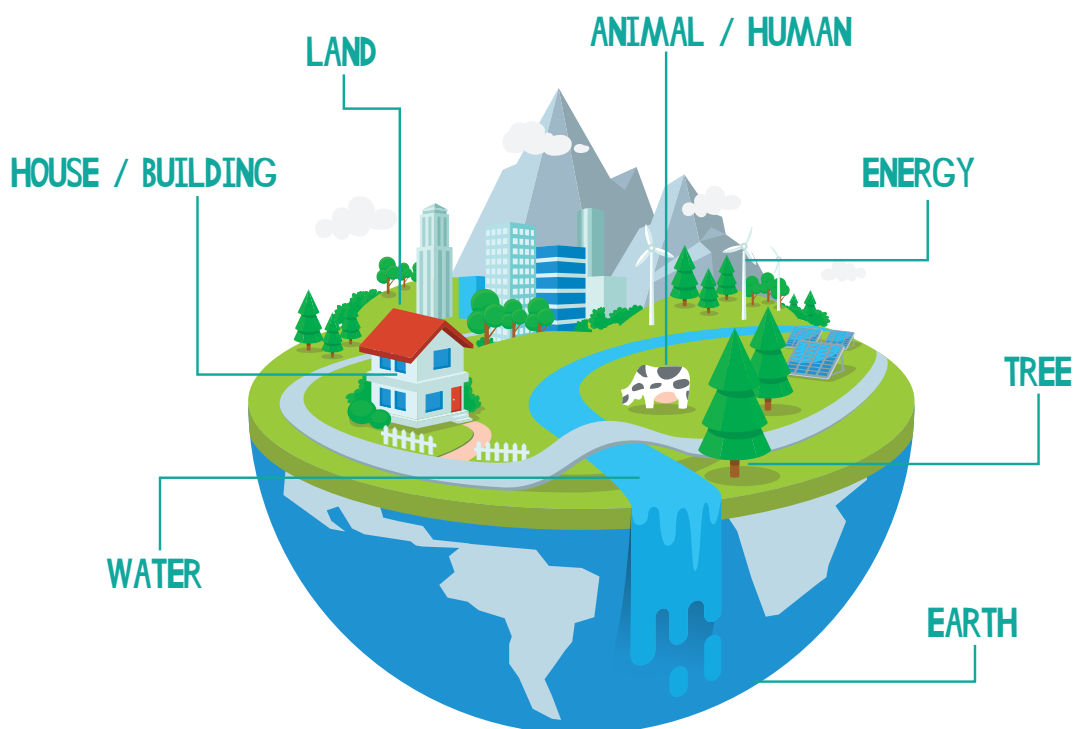
Seeds are all natural, agar-agar is a vegan alternative to gelatine – again all plant based and zero waste. Twine will decompose or can be reused as well. The seeds will feed the birds, birds then poop in your green space which is a good fertilizer. Helping the eco system

Our eco system is made up of energy, minerals, water, oxygen, and living things. Five components that an ecosystem must contain to survive. It is important for it to maintain its natural balance.

In the past 250 years (since the first industrial revolution) humans have been responsible for the release of too much carbon into the atmosphere through chemical processes and burning fossil fuels.

This has impacted the ecosystem and raised global temperatures, which causes climate change, symptoms of which include melting of the polar ice caps, the rising of sea levels, the disturbance of animals' natural habitats, extreme weather events, and so many more negative side effects.

Eco System



Mobile Decoration

Making the most of the other materials in your kit (and with a couple of additional items) you can create a beautiful wall hanging or mobile.



What you need

Terracotta, cookie cutters, ribbon, string or thread with wooden rod, beads, and eye screws.

1 Decide upon a design and aesthetic first. Draw a quick sketch and make a plan of what you want to make. I found Pinterest a great source for inspiration – I will share some additional images on the KPC Café Facebook group so head over there for some extra inspo!

2 Decide whether to use found objects, or make some out of terracotta, there are also some beads supplied in the pack.

Remember you may need to balance the weights of the objects.

3 If making your own, ensure you make large enough holes for the string to fit through. I have also included a bit of thick wire in the kit to help pierce smaller holes if you find the straw is too wide.

4 I used some of the string to make a tassel. You can do this by cutting around 10 or so lengths of the string and tying it in the centre.

Then fold it in half and wrap around a coil of string to make it look nice.

5 For a simple wall hanging – tie on a ribbon to act as the hanger part. Then thread your objects on to the thread – you may have to tie a knot after each object if you don't want them to bunch at the bottom.

6 When making a mobile it becomes a little trickier to get the balance correct. You need to persevere or make things that all weigh roughly the same weight. By changing the lengths of the string this plays around with weight distribution and you may be able to fiddle to get it to balance.

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Hints

You can also add your essential oils to the terracotta shapes to diffuse lovely aromas. Sew little shapes if you have any scrap fabrics left over from last pack. You can even use your cookie cutters as part of the mobile but make sure you have finished using them for the other activities first!

Take It Further

Add in beads, or any other elements to bring in your own personal tastes. You can paint it to add colour. Add various levels by cutting the wooden dowels and working out the weight and balance distribution of objects and string.

Using previous materials we are not generating or needing too much other equipment to produce another activity so we are making the most out of the resources we already have.

