
Living Homegrown Podcast – Episode 130 Wellness Gardens Show Notes are at: www.LivingHomegrown.com/130

Theresa: This is the Living Homegrown Podcast, Episode 130.

Announcer: Welcome to the Living Homegrown Podcast, where it's all about how to live farm fresh, without the farm. To help guide the way to a more flavorful, and sustainable lifestyle, is your host, national PBS TV producer, and canning expert, Theresa Loe.

Theresa: Hey there everybody, welcome to the podcast. I'm your host Teresa Loe, and this podcast is where we talk about living farm fresh, without the farm, and that can mean anything from preserving the harvest, small space food growing, raising backyard chickens, and just taking simple steps towards living a more sustainable lifestyle. All the different ways that we can live closer to our food, even if we have little, or Living Homegrown Membership, just visit my website, livinghomegrown.com.

Today's episode is all about using our garden more for wellness. Now, most of us, if you're a listener, you probably are into growing your own food, or you're thinking about growing your own food, and that is definitely a big part of wellness, and we will touch on that today. Some of the things that we can grow that are nutrient rich, some of the reasons why we are growing our own food, some of the benefits of growing our own food, but I wanted to take that conversation a little bit further.

I wanted to talk about some of the other ways that we can use our garden for wellness beyond just growing food, so to do that, I brought on my friend Shawna Coronado, who is an expert in not only organic gardening, but in using your garden for wellness as well, so she was the perfect person to bring on. Now, you might recognize Shawna's name, because she has been on the podcast before, and I will link in the show notes to her previous episode, as well as her website, and everything that we talk about, in fact, let me just tell you now, that if you are interested in any of the links that we discuss, you can go to livinghomegrown.com/130, and I'll have all the information there for you.

Let me tell you a little bit about Shawna in case you missed the episode before. She had come on before to talk about organic gardening hacks, which was a very popular episode, but there's a lot of things that Shawna does beyond organic gardening, so let me just tell you a little bit about her, and then we'll

dive into the episode. Shawna is an author, blogger, photographer, and a media host, who focuses on green lifestyle living, organic gardening, and wellness. She's also an on-camera spokesperson, and social media personality, and she has a YouTube channel with over 2 million views.

Shawna's garden food, and eco-adventures, have been featured in many media venues, including television, news programming, radio broadcasting, and PBS television. Now, I'm going to let Shawna tell her entire health story, and why it has led her to inspire other people to focus on shifting their diet, and growing more organic food, so I'll let her tell that story, but I did want to mention that her latest book, "The Wellness Garden," is all about how to grow, eat, and walk your way to a better health, and she also wrote, "101 Organic Gardening Hacks," which was what we talked about last time she was here, and she has also written, "Grow a Living Wall," and several other garden guides.

To get all the information on her, and some of the magazines, and other publications that she's been in, I will have all of that in the show notes today. Without further ado, I'd love to bring on Shawna, and just have this discussion around our garden, and how we can use it for wellness. Hey, Shawna, thanks so much for coming back on the show.

Shawna: Thanks for having me, we're old buddies now.

Theresa: We were old buddies before, except for the old part.

Shawna: Yeah, leave the word old out of that.

Theresa: Yeah, we're buddies, there we go, we're buddies. Well, I'm very, very excited to have you come back on the show, you were on episode 87, where we talked about simple organic gardening hacks, and now you have this new book out, which is a great topic, "The Wellness Garden," and so I'd love to chat with you about that, because I think so many people, especially my listeners, are growing fruits, and vegetables at home, and they're probably doing it, not only for the flavor, but for the nutrition, so we'll definitely talk about that.

I think that's where a lot of people stop, and you take it much further, so for part of our discussion, I really want to hit on the other ways that people can use their garden to live healthier lifestyles, so we'll definitely hit on all those aspects, but before we dive in, in case someone doesn't know you, or missed episode 87, could you tell everybody a little bit about what it is that you do?

Shawna: Yes, absolutely, so you can find me at shawnacoronado.com, and years ago, I really started out as a garden writer, where I talked about gardening, and gave simple tips, and that sort of thing, and then over time, people kept saying, "Listen lady, you're teaching me how to grow the food, but you're not teaching me how to eat it," and so that's where the connection between the growing,

and the eating, and consuming more nutritious things really comes together. What I do, is I travel around the world, speaking on stages. I do television, and media.

I have a very strong YouTube channel where I have several million views, and people are very active with me there, and my whole goal, my whole dream really, is to inspire people to do good in their lives, and to find health, and that's my evil master plan, to take over the world, is to have more people eating, living, and feeling better. Now, along those lines, I have to tell you what happened to me that triggered the writing of this book, "The Wellness Garden."

Theresa: Yes, let's hear that.

Shawna: Okay, in 2015, I was diagnosed with severe degenerative osteoarthritis of the spine. I lost two and a half inches in height, and I was in extreme pain, I could barely walk, and I planted my front lawn vegetable garden, and it was the most pain I have ever been in, in my life. It was 3000 vegetables in the ground, and no sleep for more than 30 days, I was in so much pain. I went to a doctor who is a sports expert, and I expected him to tell me that I had muscle problems, and what he said instead, was that I had osteoarthritis, and that there was no cure, and what he recommended, was, "Pain therapy."

If you know what that is ...

Theresa: Yes.

Shawna: I'm like, "No, I'm not doing pain therapy." Well, he's more than six foot four, he's this very imposing person, he's a kind man, but I mean he's like, "No, no, this is your only choice," and that was devastating to me. I'm like, "No, this cannot be, this can't be the truth that everyone must go on opioids when they're diagnosed with osteo." He's like, "Well, you have a severe form of it." I'm like, "I will find another answer." He started me, that's what really was the beginning of a whole journey.

He started me walking every day, it's like, "You must walk every day, whether it be outdoors, or indoors, I don't really care, I want you to walk one hour, for every day of your life, for the rest of your life," and that was devastating by itself, who has the time to walk an hour every day, right?

Theresa: Right, right.

Shawna: Then it became, he's like, "We'll put you in physical therapy, but we don't think it's really going to help," and physical therapy was okay, but one of those days while I was doing my walk, I was walking around a track, that's an indoor track, a very level surface, so it helped me, and I could barely make 1000 steps in an hour, and now I'm about 6000 just to tell you the difference.

Theresa: Wow.

Shawna: I'm crying, I'm sobbing on the track, and I remembered a nutritionist that I had met, and she had told me that if everyone in the world was on an anti-inflammatory diet, we would have no diabetes, no heart disease, no asthma, all of these things that are triggered by inflammation, we would have less of, or people would not be suffering. I remembered the commentary, I called her from the track crying, she canceled all her appointments for the day, and invited me to come in, and she said, "I'm gonna change your life," and she absolutely changed me for the rest of my life.

Within four days of going on the diet she recommended, which was no grain, no dairy, and no sugar, my pain went down 40%, and I started once again being able to sleep. It was a miracle in my mind, and then the next level of that, was I stayed on the ... It's really, although it's an anti-inflammatory diet, it's really an elimination diet, where you are eliminating foods, and then you're trying to find out what can you reintroduce gradually to fit back in your diet. I stayed on the diet for 30 days, and at the end of the 30 days, I had been on blood pressure meds for 20 years, I no longer had high blood pressure in the first 30 days.

Then after that, it just got better and better. I had been diagnosed menopausal, my menopause reversed, of course that's not permanent, but amazing, it blew me away, and then it just continued. Now, I've been on this diet, and exercise plan for almost 3 years, and I went to my publisher, and said, "I feel better, I look better than I have in 20 years, and I absolutely must write a book about this, I must. I must encourage people to eat more nutritious food, figure out ways to grow it, to be outdoors in a green environment more often, and to walk every day of their lives," and it's been wonderful for me personally, and it gives me goosebumps, and I get all ...

In my stomach, I get all tumbly thinking about that I've inspired people to do good, and that they feel better because of me, so I really want to continue with that, and that's my whole story, what I'm doing. Shawnacoronado.com the website, this season we'll be focused, and really pointed at good food, anti-inflammatory eating, outdoor exercise, and everything to do with what we've just discussed about finding your health.

Theresa: Wow, yeah, I know, because I witnessed it as your friend watching from the outside the whole shift. You've always been a gardener, you've always been inspiring people to grow their own food, and it's actually very inspiring to see you tie it all together with the wellness, so that's why was excited to have you come back, and talk about this. I would love to talk about so many aspects of this, I have a million questions, but I think starting off, let's back up a little bit, and let's talk first of all, for the people who maybe are just starting a garden, or maybe who are just getting into food gardening, let's start with the most

obvious, which is, growing your own food so that you can have, not only great flavor, but great nutrition.

What are some of the reasons that when we do start growing our own food, that we get better food than store-bought food?

Shawna: Oh, the number one reason, is when you pick something that is perfectly ripe, you have all the nutrition fully in that plant, and when plants are picked for the grocery store, they're actually harvested when they are not ripe, and so then they ripen on the shelves. That difference is a significant difference in vitamins. You get more vitamins from a freshly picked I should say plant, and I think a lot of people are very confused about organic, versus not organic, and they think that organic might have more nutrition.

The reality is, organic in my mind, to just simplify this, they are with less chemicals, so they are grown with less chemicals, which means that you're consuming less chemicals. That doesn't necessarily mean that the nutrition value is stronger, or lesser, or what have you. There are many arguments about that out there, but what I will say, that organic foods mean less chemicals, so if you consume less chemicals, that's better for you, and also nutrient rich food, which would be locally grown, or you're growing your own gardens, and then picking at the peak of ripeness, and then you're getting all the antioxidants, and vitamins, and more fiber, it's really, really important to pick fresh.

Theresa: Yes, absolutely, and I think that, that's one thing that people don't realize about the grocery store, and I love making sure that people know this, is that so much of the food in today's modern grocery stores have been shipped from really far away, or even out of the country, especially when we are eating out of season. I know when we're growing our own food, we are eating within the seasons, because the food is fresh at that particular time, and it's the same if you can't grow it, you can buy at the local farmers market.

It's so important, if you really want nutrition, and flavor, I mean the flavor's so much better too.

Shawna: So much better.

Theresa: Yeah, so you get the double whammy there, so it's a good thing on all fronts. Yeah, so I'm really glad that you are pushing that in your book about trying to get more people to grow some of their food, and buy it locally, so that they're getting the best nutrition.

Shawna: The other thing about nutrition, is I have a chart, one chart is on page 59. If you, for example, have a problem where you need higher fiber foods, you could go, and grow your own beans for instance, and you can go to my chart, and you can look up which beans, or lentils might have stronger fiber. For example, a green

lentil has 45 grams of fiber, that's unheard-of, it's an insane quantity of fiber, and a black soybean has 9.3 grams of fiber, that's a significant difference. If you were going to go to choose a bean, what bean would you choose to grow? This guide will help you make those choices, beans, and vegetables, and fruits, all there for someone to take a look see.

Theresa: Yeah, I loved that chart, I thought that was so awesome that you did that, because you broke down a lot of things, which ones are the highest in antioxidants, things like that, and it was so great, because if we are growing, and we only have a limited amount of space, this helps us in picking exactly ...

Shawna: Choose.

Theresa: Right, so we're getting the most bang for our buck basically, especially if you're not feeling well, you only have so much energy to put out there, so you want to grow the best things that you can, or buy locally also, you can do that too. I loved you had a section in there though where you talked about fast foods that we can grow, and I thought that was really cute, so let's talk about that, what are some of the things that grow quickly that are really good for us?

Shawna: The number one thing you can grow quickly, it has a super, super level of micronutrients, are your little sprouts, and you can grow them inside. It's winter now, right? You can grow it inside, you can grow them outside. How I learned that was actually from Rick Bayless. I went to his garden, and I've got photographs of his garden in the book, and we talk about, he's like, "Don't you know about micro greens?" I'm like, "What do you mean?" I'm like, "They're green, and they're food," and he's like, "No, no, they're really nutrient dense."

I went out, and looked at all the studies on micro greens, and he's growing like 3000 pounds of micro greens a year, or something insane for his restaurant, and what he does, is he harvests them with scissors, and then they top all of their dishes with these beautiful little micro greens, so they look pretty, but the truth is, is he's secretly giving his customers a shot of vitamins, because micro greens have ... It depends on the specific micro green, but it's three to five times more nutrients than a standard like bean sprout, it's much stronger than a bean plant itself.

The micro greens, you must do, and you can get micro greens, and the seeds, and oh my goodness, you can grow cabbage micro greens, or beet micro greens. They're so cute little pink beets, I just love them, and so my number one recommendation for fast food, for growing faster, would certainly be to grow your own micro greens, and nutrient dense without a doubt.

Theresa: Yeah, actually they're so easy to grow, because they grow so fast, so it's basically what you're doing, is you're planting the seeds, and as soon as the sprouts come up, you are harvesting. You're not having to nurture a plant for

three, four months to get the vegetable from it. You get it so quickly, and I like to use them in smoothies, so that's a great thing.

Shawna: Oh, delicious.

Theresa: Yeah.

Shawna: Yes.

Theresa: Just toss them in there, and it's extra stuff, so it's really good, and I know you talk in the book about you can do succession planting, is that what you usually recommend to do so you can keep harvesting all the time?

Shawna: You can, and I also recommend a way of cutting your greens, so we're talking about you can do this with beets, but you're not harvesting the root of the beet, you're harvesting the top of the beets, the greens part, so this applies to lettuce, herbs, all kinds of greens. What you do, is you have a plant, you cut one third of it at a time, and then you let that third grow back. You can go and cut a different third off, you let that third grow back, and you do that throughout the season, it's kind of success cutting if you will

Theresa: Okay.

Shawna: That way, you never lose the plant entirely, and it always looks beautiful, and that's worked very effectively in my living walls especially, because you want to save that plant, and have it still look beautiful the rest of the season.

Theresa: Sure, well, let's talk about that, because you have written an entire book about living walls, so I know that sometimes people feel like, "Well, I can't grow food, because I don't have a spot," and what are some of the places that people could actually start growing some of their own food?

Shawna: Oh my heavens, I've grown living walls everywhere, on my gates, if you have an entrance gate that's very tiny, even you can grow a small living wall on it on your fences, on your walls. People have sent me notes, and said, "Well, I can't drill into my walls, because I live in an apartment, I have a balcony." No problem, they now have standalone living walls, where they have little feet, and you can just rest it against the side of your wall so to speak, and it works really effectively. The real secret with both living walls, and elevated beds in my opinion, is the soil, well, isn't soil always the secret?

Theresa: Yeah, it's always the secret, yeah.

Shawna: It is always the secret for everything, but in this case, when you put something up, and it catches air, then it dries out more quickly, and I know that you live in Southern California, so you have a lot of heat, and drought.

Theresa: Yes.

Shawna: This soil mix that I'm about to give you, is the secret formula for keeping your planters moisture. I actually use it in all my container gardens, my living walls, and any of my ornamental raised beds, I find them very effective. What it is, is one part organic potting soil, I want worm castings in there if I can get it, if not, you should add a few extra worm castings.

Theresa: Okay.

Shawna: One part organic rotted composted manure, and then one part plain old compost.

Theresa: Okay.

Shawna: The manure is adding, even if it's been bagged, and heated, it's adding microorganisms that you won't find in the traditional soils. The compost also adds microorganisms, which is good, because most of the time, when we're potting a container in traditional potting soil, that potting soil is sterile, it has no organisms in it, and it's really quite often so fast draining that they're giving you a fast draining product, in order to not flood the root so to speak. Most of us are living in drought throughout the season, at least lately, so this is a good mix for anything that you might have, it helps you retain moisture, and really, really is a strong component of a living wall garden.

Theresa: Well, yeah, and with the manure in there, and the worm castings, you're going to get so much nutrition in there as well, so that will really help things grow. Oh, I love that, great, thanks for sharing your secret formula. Well, what about if someone has a shady spot? I know that's a question I get a lot, is, "Well, is there anything that can grow in partial shade, or maybe doesn't have the full amount of sun that we need?" What do you recommend for vegetables that people could grow?

Shawna: Heck yeah, any leafy herb will grow in shade, and sometimes even complete shade, and I'll give you more of a list, but the issue with it, is that they won't grow as large as they would in a sunny spot. That means that, if you go out for example, and you get some vegetative plantings instead of seed, and you plant them, plant them a little closer together, and you'll still have production. They won't produce as strongly, and my favorite is basil. Basil, out of all of the herbs that, and leafy herbs, basil I found will grow tall, and leggy in shade, but every single inch of that stem is filled with leaf, and that's not so true with other plants that get leggy, so I really love traditional basil.

Any green, so arugula, collard greens, endive, kale, all of those sorts of things, and then one of my, really mustard greens, oh, so tasty thinking about this, but

one of my other favorite, is radishes. Here's what you do, you plant a radish seed in the shade, and you'll look at it, it looks pitiful. It looks like a micro green, and has not fully developed, but when you pull it out of the ground, when you're ready to harvest it, or out of your container soil, it'll be a little miniature radish.

I rinse it off, and I place the entire thing on top of a salad like as an ornamental ...

Theresa: Oh, that's great.

Shawna: It's so cute.

Theresa: Yeah.

Shawna: It's adorable to have this little miniature radish, so it doesn't get fat like it would in the sunshine, but it really does produce something that's interesting, and flavorful that you can use in a salad. Anything leafy you must do, it's a great solution for shade.

Theresa: Yeah, absolutely, I love that, and it still would taste great, so it doesn't matter if it's a little stunted, it would still work, it totally would still work, and also lettuces, you probably said that in your list, but I do a lot of lettuces in my shady spot, and it's something that you can ... There's such a huge variety of lettuce that you can grow, and things that you just can't find anywhere else, and it's a lot of fun, because each lettuce, each type, and style has different kind of flavor. Some are more bitter, and some are not, and so that's another great thing that people can grow in shade absolutely.

Shawna: Yum.

Theresa: Yeah, well I know that if you can't grow all this food yourself, one of the things that you like to talk about, is doing locally sourced. What do you usually suggest for people, like if they say, "Well, I just can't grow food in my own backyard." Do you just recommend going to farmers markets, or what do you recommend?

Shawna: Well, here's the issue about farmers markets. Some of the farmers markets are not locally grown, you must absolutely, when you go into a farmers market, and you find a vendor, ask them, because what we've had in our region, is people will come up from very far south, and they're not locally grown, and they just hit all of the farmers markets, and that's a concern, because that's misrepresentation. If you go to a farmers market, make sure that you ask all the right questions about where this food is coming from.

The other thing is, CSA, go to your local farms that have a CSA program, and if you don't know, a CSA is a club if you will that you can join, and you can then

get weekly food boxed up. You go and pick it up, sometimes they even have delivery, and it's fresh, and it's seasonal, so you can put in a request at the beginning of the year for the types of food you want often. I really love CSA's, I think that's a smart local movement where you can go.

Theresa: Yeah, it also is totally supporting the farm, which is what we want to do, because we want to keep those local farms, and also you're getting things again that you just can't get anywhere else, especially if they grow something, and they have an abundance of it, they'll tuck in little extra things sometimes that you're not even expecting, that's maybe a new vegetable that you've never tried before. When I was part of a CSA, I really, my whole repertoire of vegetables really expanded, because I got some things I'd never purchased, or never eaten before, and a lot of times they include recipes, or they have recipes on their website, because they want you to eat that stuff.

Shawna: Right.

Theresa: You can learn a lot.

Shawna: Excellent idea.

Theresa: Yeah, fantastic, well, so let's talk about another one of the things that you really like to teach people, and that is about movement in the garden. I think people usually think, "Okay, yeah, exercise, and I'm getting a little exercise when I'm gardening," but there's a lot of other things we can do in the garden to get movement, and movement is such an important part of your recovery, so what kind of things do you suggest?

Shawna: It was so, so important. First of all I want to talk about stretching, because we in the United States, as children, were misinformed. I read about a dozen studies on stretching to improve performance for runners, and it is scientifically proven now that it is evidentiary. They've done all of these studies to say that stretching does not improve your performance, but what stretching does do, is it feels good, and it expands your range of motion. If you're a person who's like me, who has arthritis, and I have a limited motion, or movement that I'm able to do, then stretching can help you if you do it every day expand your range.

In expanding your range, you reduce your pain, and so the stretching approach that I used to do was what I learned in high school that was a good 40 years ago, okay? What I learned in high school was not an appropriate way to stretch, and so I had to re-learn more about stretching, and that took me to yoga. I went to yoga classes, because I wanted to learn more. I understood that yoga was stretching, I didn't understand a lot about it, and I did a lot of research on that combination of yoga, and stretching, and how that works.

I went to a friend of ours, Jenny Nyboro Peterson, has an amazing garden, and

she actually has a yoga patio set up, and we went to her. She taught yoga, we all did yoga together, and then we had cocktails afterwards, so I'm just saying. I really went to all these yoga classes to understand this is an individual choice about what you should be stretching. It's a doctor's recommendation as well, so my arthritis might need a certain type of stretch, where someone else's physical condition might need a different type of stretch.

It was trying to put that together for myself, and so in the book, I talk about stretching, and I really recommend that someone go to physical therapy, or go to a yoga class for a little while, just to have that experience, that feeling of what it's like when you do stretch, but so, so important. Then of course I followed my doctors recommendation, the one who wanted me to go on opioids, I followed his recommendation for walking every day. It is not the diet alone that makes a difference for me, it is absolutely the combination of walking one hour every day, and eating properly.

When I don't walk regularly, and outdoors is always better, unless I'm having an allergy attack, and that has happened in the past, but being in the green so to speak, in a green environment, stimulates your brain. The light going into your eyes, when it's natural, and you'll note, if you remember all the daylight studies that they've shown how daylight really make a difference for people that live in the Arctic North like I do. It's the same effect as going outside, and being in the sunlight, essentially.

Really walking, stretching, and yoga was all pointing to what am I doing in gardening? How am I gardening? How do I put this all together? When you go outside, why there's so many people who are addicted to gardening, you're stretching, you're exercising, and moving, and you're in daylight, so your brain is stimulated in a positive way. If you feel depressive, this helps lift your mood, and gardening is that connection for me, bringing it all together. The question becomes, and this is the difficult one, if you have a physical condition, how do you garden, if you can't garden traditionally?

That became quite the challenge for me, I thought my gardening career was over when I was diagnosed, and what I found out, is that I can still garden, if I garden up. The living walls, the ornamental edible beds that I have that are waist high, that are really a raised bed, not the raised bed that's only a couple inches from the ground, it needs to be raised up much, much higher. All of those things are a part of movement, and continuing to move every single day, and keeping your body liquid.

Theresa: Ah, that's so good, yes, and I think this is really important, because if someone either has an injury, or has a long term, or lifelong term diagnosis, still figuring out a way that they can incorporate gardening can be so important, and not only from just the movement part, but from their mental state. I know that was a big part for you, so yeah.

Shawna: Oh my God, yeah.

Theresa: This is super, super important, so even if someone has some sort of diagnosis, or an injury, there are alternatives to maybe the way you were gardening before, and I know you talk about that on your website, I know you talk about that in your book, but the not stooping over part, having the raised beds really high I know is really important really for all of us. Being on our knees, our hands, and knees, and gardening is never really very good for our knees, or our back, or our neck, or anything else, so if we're able to raise our gardens up, I know that's good.

Shawna: It is good, and when you're using a long handled tool, like a shovel, or something like that, we tend to put it way out in front of us for some reason. It needs to be directly below us, so I've put the shovel into the ground, and I put my foot is right there, it's like right below my feet. When you're doing those long handled tool exercises out in the garden, make sure that you're right on top of it, because then your fulcrum, where you're pushing on it, is in a different spot, and it won't stress your back. It's a less stress on your hands, and it's 100% better for you.

Theresa: Ah, very good, very good. Well, the thing that you touched on there, I just wanted to talk a little bit about the stress relief, because you talked about that just briefly here for a second, where you were are talking about being outside, and out in nature. I think that people can't underestimate the power of just being outside, and that's such an important thing, so just having that connection is so, so good. You talk about that a lot too, even with breathing, and getting the fresh air, so I know that's an important part of the wellness garden as well.

Shawna: It is, and living mindfully. You hear that a lot in health and wellness discussions, but living mindfully in my mind means, I used to rush out, and garden fast. I'm like, "Okay, I've got five minutes, I'm out, I'm in, I'm done."

Theresa: Yeah.

Shawna: It was a goal to finish the gardening, the weeding, the whatever, it wasn't a goal to actually spend time outdoors, that was not my goal. That's reversed, so when I go outside, the first thing I do is take an enormously deep breath, and that's the beginning of spending some time outside, whether you're working hard physically or not, is not even the question, it's more about that I'm connecting with breathing fresh air, and being outdoors. It does stimulate memory loss, and depression, and some of the emotional things that happen, illnesses happen, when you incorporate outdoor activities, it often stimulates positive memory, and so again, there's been several studies on that, and that was a part of my interest in it.

I have a chapter in the book called, "Fragrance gardening," and the reason I did the fragrance garden is all about that health connection with memory. Often times, when you bring an Alzheimer's patient into the garden where they can smell roses for instance that might've been the same smell that their grandmother had, they remember their childhood since it makes them feel better, it makes them connect with nature, and sometimes they're even far more aware. These studies that they've done on fragrance with people that are suffering these type of conditions was very interesting to me, because when I cook on Thanksgiving day, I have Rosemary in my turkey pan.

It's not that the turkey tastes like Rosemary so much, it's what it does to the house. It smells so good, people are so ... It cheers you up, it makes you feel happy, it reminds you of family. Well, I wanted that same experience for people when they go out in the garden, so fragrance gardening for example, there's two different types of it. One is lightly scented. Lightly scented gardens would be for people who might be suffering from cancer, or have sensitive allergies, where strong smells are not good for them.

Then the other category of that, is very strongly scented things, for example, when you take a small child out into a garden, and you have a plant that smells awful, they love that plant as much as they love the ones that smell good, right? You're taking a kid for instance out into the world to experience scent in a new way that's stimulating, and exciting for them. Strong scented things also function, but in a different way. A heavily scented list, might be like Angels Trumpet, and Basil, Heliotrope, and Hyacinth.

All season long you could have different types of things growing that would be strongly scented, even a tomato. You know how a tomato plants smells?

Theresa: Oh, yeah, yeah.

Shawna: ... Which is very strong, and different than something else. Then a light scent might be a Pansy, or Parsley, or something that does ... Zenia, which does have a slight scent, but just a little one. You could choose between these two styles, and plant them in your garden for some really exciting experiences to encourage people to go outside.

Theresa: Yeah, I love that, I love that, and you really have made me think differently, because when I think of a fragrance garden, I always think of the strong scents, like Lavender, and Rosemary, and things like that, but definitely, if you are experiencing cancer, and having treatment for that, strong scents will make you nauseated, so definitely you have to think about that, and so I love that you can use lighter scents, that's really fantastic. The whole therapeutic side of fragrance is ... It really is fascinating, so I think that's fantastic.

Well, I can't thank you enough Shawna, this has really been a wonderful

exploration of different ways that we can use our garden for wellness, and I especially loved the part about just getting out there, because I think encouraging people to do that, and just getting a little more sunshine, a little more fresh air can be so therapeutic all on its own, even if you aren't growing something edible, that you can still do that. I just want to thank you for coming on, and thank you for writing this book, I think it's awesome.

Shawna: Absolutely, thank you so much, and it's a little more love from mother nature, and I think we all need that.

Theresa: Absolutely. Well, I hope you enjoyed that conversation with Shawna Coronado, the author of, "The Wellness Garden." Now, as I promised, I will have in the show notes for this episode, everything that we talked about, links to her website, and her books, and to get to that, you just go to livinghomegrown.com/130. That's it for this week, I hope that will encourage you just to make a little more time outside in the garden, and use your garden beyond just growing the vegetables. Until next time, just try to live a little more local, seasonal, and homegrown. Take care.

Announcer: That's all for this episode of the Living Homegrown Podcast. Visit livinghomegrown.com to download Theresa's free canning resource guide, and find more tips on how to live farm fresh without the farm. Be sure to join Theresa Loe next time on the Living Homegrown Podcast.