

Survive & Thrive



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Activity Name: Survive & Thrive

Ages: All ages.

Activity Energy: Low

Length of time: 30 minutes to 1 hour

Number of Participants: 1 - 30

Indoor/Outdoor: Outdoor

Concept: This therapy focused activity allows an individual to compare what it takes to survive versus what it takes to thrive by comparing it to the life of a plant.

Materials Required: Plant I.D. book (or cards), paper, pencils

Introduction:

Plants will survive in some of the most extreme situations but they may not thrive. This activity investigates the needs of a single plant and then compares its health in an ideal versus a non-ideal placement in nature. Participants are then encouraged to reflect upon their own needs to survive and thrive.

Methods:

1. Have the participant choose one plant that they are drawn to in a the nearby environment.
2. Have them investigate the needs of the plant in terms of ecology and habitat by looking through identification plant books or cards.
3. Try to find two plants of the same species in two different locations. Study and compare how they are growing in each scenario. Plants that are not growing in their ideal conditions tend to be less robust than one growing in an ideal condition. Have them focus on elements such as size, health (diseases), colouration, number of blossoms or berries.
4. Discuss their observations about the two plants. Explain that even though a plant may survive in non-ideal conditions, it may not thrive. It could be smaller, have less fruit or be less resilient.
5. In a quiet setting, have the participant think about what they need to survive. So instead of ecology and habitat, they will be looking at things such as food, water, shelter. Have them write this on one piece of paper in whatever fashion they choose ie. Words or symbols.
6. Then have them think about what they need to thrive. This may include items such as music, love, closeness to nature. Ask them to write this down on another piece of paper.

7. Ask them to think of themselves as a plant. What kind of conditions are they living in? Ideal? Extreme? What could they do differently in order to thrive? Ask them to reflect on what they have discovered through this activity by finding a quiet place to sit in silence for 10 minutes.

Tips for Teachers:

- This is a great activity for personal reflection. If you are not a therapist, allow the participant to draw their own conclusions rather than interpreting for them.