



# Class Information

**Class # 37**

**September 30, 2001**

## Sweet Dreams

Growing flowers in containers is a simple and easy method of decorating your Sweet Dreams from the Garden

Traditionally cushions of dried, sweet smelling herbs have always been used to calm nerves, induce sleep and soothe aching heads. The little cushions now made small enough to take from room to room or when traveling, are the direct descendant of the herb-stuffed mattress. Herbs such as lavender and lady's bedstraw were in common use before the development of modern mattress fillings.

Sleep pillows are very similar to sachets. Instead of putting the herbs in a bag, they are put into a larger flat pillow made of anything from muslin to thin cotton voile. Insert this aromatic envelope inside your pillowcase and drift off to sleep!

To make the pillows, use a piece of muslin cut to size and sewn firmly around 3 sides ready to fill with herbs. Use crumbled, not powdered herbs and stuff the cushion as full as possible. Sew up the fourth side. For a sleep cushion add to the mixture a few drops of rose or lavender oil so that the herbs will not crackle inside. Make the outer cover as attractive as you wish in cotton, linen, silk or any other fine fabric through which the scents can pass. The advantage of a slip-cover is that it can easily be changed and laundered without disturbing the herb mixture.

If you wish to harvest herbs from your own plants, the timing will differ from plant to plant. Watch them carefully, in order not to miss the right moment. A constant factor is the weather. The day of picking must be dry. Gather herbs in the morning, after the dew has dried, but before the heat of the sun has fallen upon them. Herbs should also be picked just before they flower, when the buds have begun to form but before they actually start to open. Herbs can be dried by tying in small bunches and hung to allow air to flow freely around them. They can also be laid out in a single layer, and covered with a sheet of thin muslin to keep dust off. Place herbs after preparing in a warm, airy place – never in the sun – and left for about 24 hours or more. When ready they will be totally dry and brittle, but still green. Be sure to store in airtight containers and place in a dark area.

## Herb Characteristics:

### *Lavender:*

Cooling, relaxing scent; restorative when mentally or physically exhausted; effective against insomnia, jet lag, sunburn, athlete's foot, neck tension, headaches, and migraines.

Truly a sight to behold are the lavender fields in southern France, spread for miles are the fragrant fields with a pale blue color painting the horizon. These fields are harvested mainly for perfume production.

### *Rose:*

Relaxing. Antidepressant; rejuvenating tonic effect on dry, sensitive, or aging skin.

It was the Greek colonists who first brought the rose to southern Italy, beginning the long European history with this beautiful and fragrant plant. William Penn returned to America with 18 rose bushes in 1699, and John Adams planted the first bushes in the rose garden at the White House. Native Americans used roses for ornamentation and medicinal uses. Roses, known as the queen of flowers have a history of medicinal use and legends surrounding their romantic powers for more than 3,000 years.

### *Chamomile:*

Calming; effective against depression, insomnia. For centuries both varieties of chamomiles have been noted for their gentle healing properties. The great herbalist Pliny recommended baths and headrests to relieve headaches and sleep disturbances. Remember Peter Rabbit, after his escapades in the garden his mother soothed his headache and tummy ills with a warm cup of chamomile tea.

**Anise: halts nightmares**

**Bay: pleasant dreams**

**Eucalyptus: healing**

**Hops: sleep, healing**

**Mugwort: dreams, phisic dreams'**

**Peppermint: if used fresh, it induces sleep**

**Thyme: happiness, eases depression**

**Verbena: aphrodisiac**

**Yarrow: dreams of loved ones**

### Sleep Pillow

½ cup hops

½ cup marjoram

- ¼ cup lime flowers (linden)**
- ¼ cup bergamot leaves and flowers**
- ¼ cup lavender**
- ¼ cup chamomile**

Mix all ingredients together, crushing the leaves and flowers to eliminate any big pieces. Cut two pieces of fabric 61/2 inches by 81/2 inches. With right sides together, stitch around three and a half sides, allowing a ¼ inch seam. Turn pillow right side out. Fill with the sleep herbs and whip-stitch the opening closed.

### **Headache Cushion**

Use equal quantities of peppermint, spearmint and eau-de-cologne mint with bergamot and 1 tablespoon of crushed orris root as the fixative. Fill the muslin bag (cheesecloth) and use a slip cover of a soft green printed cotton to enhance by its color the soothing nature of the cushion

### **Hop**

A simple cushion of hop cones sprinkled with a few drops of vodka makes an effective little pillow for those who cannot sleep or who suffer from asthma.

## **Ten Tips for a good night's sleep:**

- 1. Follow a weekly aerobic exercise routine - This will help relieve stress and keep your body healthy.**
- 2. Drink plenty of water- having enough fluids will keep your body in balance and keep toxins from building up.**
- 3. Set aside 10 minutes every night before bed to relax quietly - Make a conscious effort to let all the anxieties and distractions of the day leave your mind.**
- 4. Keep a regular sleep schedule- Go to bed and wake at the same time everyday.**
- 5. Evaluate your bedroom - Keep your room dark, quiet and the temperature cool. This type of Environment promotes the best sleep habits.**
- 6. Examine your diet- A balanced diet will improve your overall health and help with your sleeping difficulties.**
- 7. Sleep disturbance is often directly related to your ability to relax- Use deep breathing exercises through the course of the day if you feel stressed.**
- 8. If you nap during the day- Realize you may need to reduce the amount of time you sleep at night. Some people only need 6-7 hours of sleep a night.**
- 9. Don't use your bedroom for work or watching TV- these activities should be done in another room.**

**Adopt a twenty minute time period- If you can't sleep, get up and do something quiet for twenty minutes before returning to bed.**