

Ho'ōla 'Āina Pilipili: Accessible Community Garden and “Dementia-Friendly” Initiative

**University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
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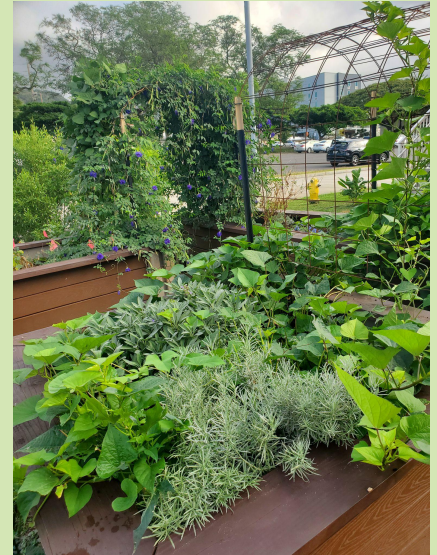
Agenda

1. Ho'okumu: Nā 'Aumākua
2. Intro to Ho'ōla 'Āina Pilipili
3. 'Āina-Based Learning & Impact
4. Design & Implementation
5. “Dementia-Friendly” Initiative & Memory Cafe
6. Native Hawaiian & Medicinal Plants
7. Q&A/Additional Resources



Learning Objectives

1. Learn about **‘āina-based education** and how it develops a sense of belonging and pilina (relationship) with land, culture, and people
2. Determine the **design & implementation** process for the Accessible Community Garden
3. Understand the importance of accessible gardens and **inclusive design for older adults** and people with disabilities, including “*dementia-specific*” components
4. Identify the **benefits and uses** of three medicinal/culinary plants that are included in the garden



Ho'okumu (Grounding & Foundation)

NĀ 'AUMĀKUA

(adapted from Hawaiian Antiquities by David Malo, p. 11)

Nā 'Aumākua mai ka lā hiki	Ancestors from the rising to the
a ka lā kau	setting sun
Mai ka ho'oku'i a ka hālāwai	From the zenith to the horizon
Nā 'Aumākua iā Kahinakua,	Ancestors who stand at our back
iā Kahina'alo	and front
iā ka'a 'ākau i ka lani	You who stand at our right hand
'O kīhā i ka lani	A breathing in the heavens
'Owē i ka lani	An utterance in the heavens
Nunulu i ka lani	A clear, ringing voice in the heavens
Kāholo i ka lani	A voice reverberating in the
Eia nā pulapula a 'oukou 'o	heavens
Mauna a Wākea	Here are your descendants, the
E mālama 'oukou iā mākou	light
E ulu i ka lani	Safeguard us
E ulu i ka honua	That we may flourish in the heavens
E ulu i ka pae 'āina o	That we may flourish on earth
Hawai'i E hō mai i ka 'ike	That we may flourish in the
E hō mai i ka Ikaika	Hawaiian Islands Grant us
E hō mai i ke akamai	knowledge Grant us strength
E hō mai i ka maopopo	Grant us intelligence
pono E hō mai i ka 'ike	Grant us understanding
pāpālua	Grant us insight
E hō mai i ka mana	Grant us power

Ho'ōla 'Āina Pilipili Accessible Community Garden



College of Education, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

E mau ke ea o ka 'āina i ka pono



Ho'ōla - to heal, to give life, to restore

'Āina - land, that which feeds

Pilipili - name of the 'ili (smaller land division) that the garden is located

Pili - close relationship

Former “Dead Zone”



‘Āina Momona Today



Purpose

All people regardless of age and ability must see themselves reflected in the healing space of a community garden.



Accessible School & Community Garden Site



- Promotes 'āina-based learning
- Accessible & inclusive space
- Intergenerational learning, healing and equity (Mauli Ola Initiative)
- Access to plants for food, tea & medicine
- Promotes 'Ōiwi leadership
- Focuses on relationships & social interaction
- 'Dementia-friendly' garden research

‘Āina-Based Learning

- Deeply rooted in sense of place
- Kākana ‘Ōiwi sensibilities
- Mo‘olelo & wahi pana
- ‘Ike Maka
- Restoring the land
- Aloha ‘āina*



Aloha 'Āina Education

- Deep love, commitment, & responsibility to 'āina
- To protect and restore (mālama 'āina)
- Based on familial connection
- Hawaiian patriotism
- Undoing harm of settler colonialism
- Sovereignty



Aloha 'Āina Contributes to Health & Well-Being

- Access to 'āina & cultural practices
- Revitalizing land, culture, language
- Justice & equity-focused
- Access to food, medicine, practices, & community relationships



Design & Implementation of Ho'ōla 'Āina Pilipili



Reduce Barriers to Inclusion

Disability inclusion means understanding the relationship between the way people function and how they participate in society.

Attitudinal/Social

Communication

Policy

Programmatic

Physical

Transportation



What does an accessible garden mean to you?

“accessible as a community member, accessible as a senior”

“a garden that allows all individuals an opportunity to malama 'aina!”

“Creating a space of equality, community, welcoming to all people. Improving quality of life. Restoring personal connection to ‘āina.”

“Easy to reach and inclusive for all”

“...garden that allows for individuals of all abilities, ages, and contextual knowledge to engage with and connect to.”

“To me it means a lot of thought goes into planning and preparing for reach, safety, ease of use, aesthetically appealing, and organized design. It can be used by all peoples of all ages with all sorts of abilities, including wheelchair and / or dementia.”

Accessible Garden Priority Areas

Priority 1: Accessible Entrance

ADA-accessible Parking, accessible route to entrance, communication & signs

Priority 2: Accessible Garden Beds

Accessible pathways, ramps, raised garden beds & vertical gardening techniques

Priority 3: Safety

Remove obstacles, enclosed layout, accessible tools, avoid sharp & toxic plants

Priority 4: Sensory Elements

Hearing, Smell, Touch, Taste, Sight, Sense of self, community & place (‘āina)

Priority 5: Dementia-Specific Components

Priority 1 - Accessible Entrance

Accessible Parking Spaces

Close to public transportation/route

Access to restroom facilities

Sidewalks and curb cuts exist

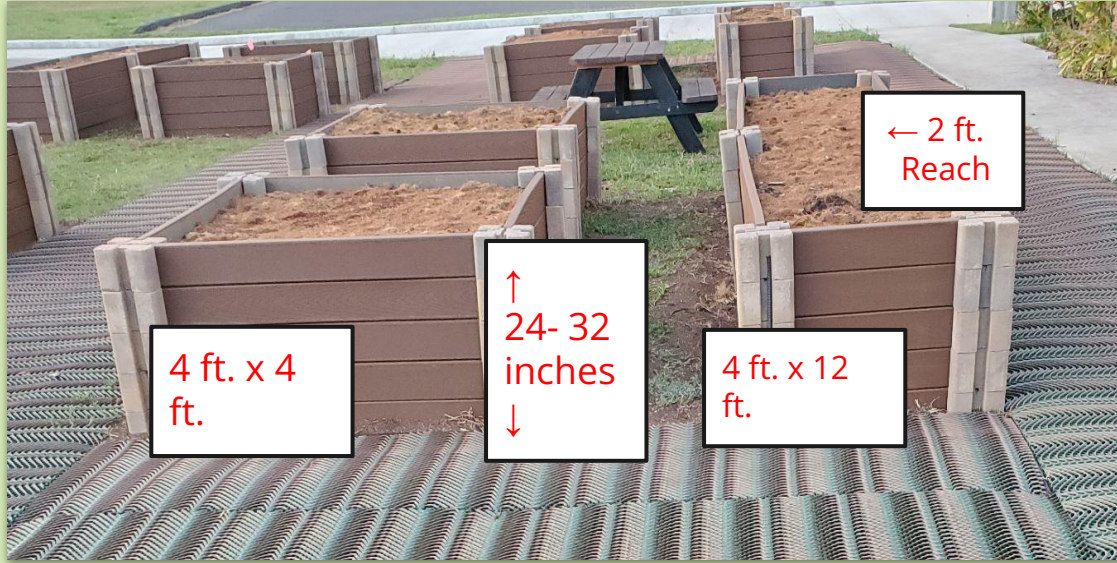


If there are stairs, there is a ramp or accessible alternative

All signs are clearly marked

If there is fencing, or a gate, there is an accessible entryway

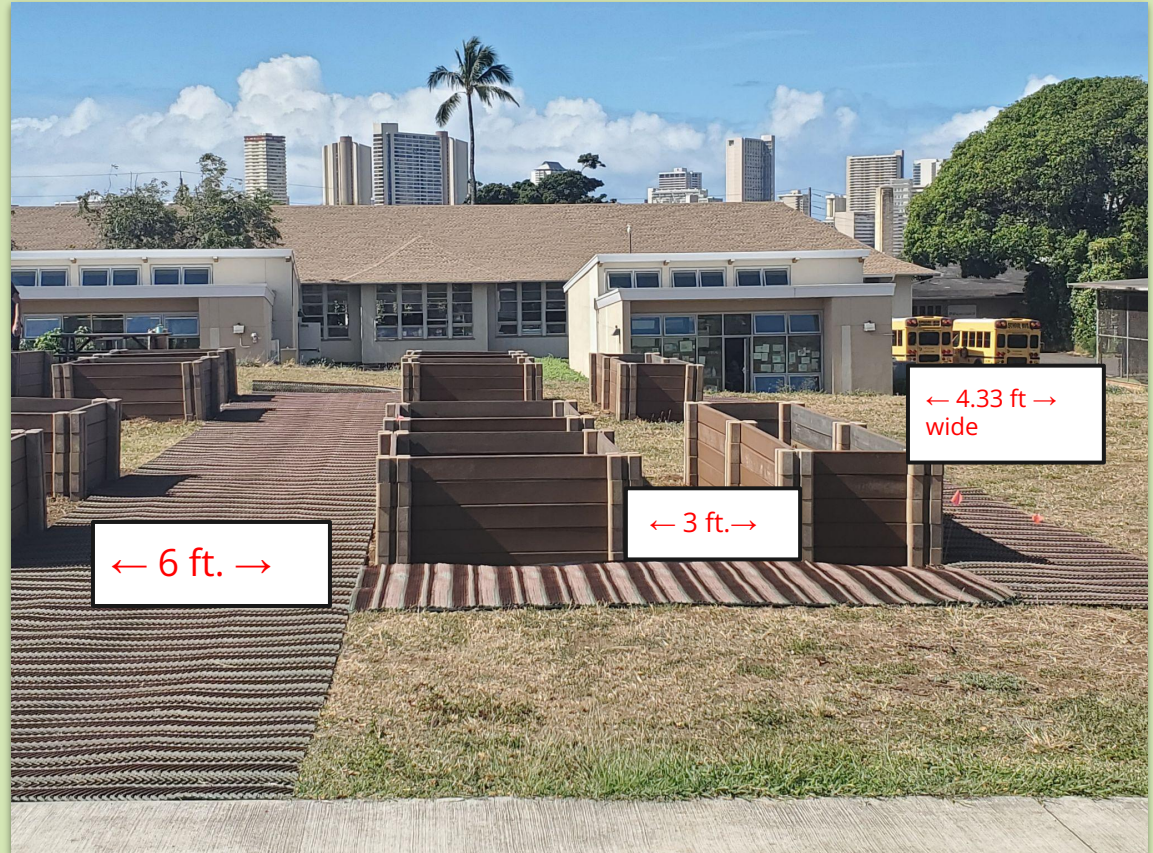
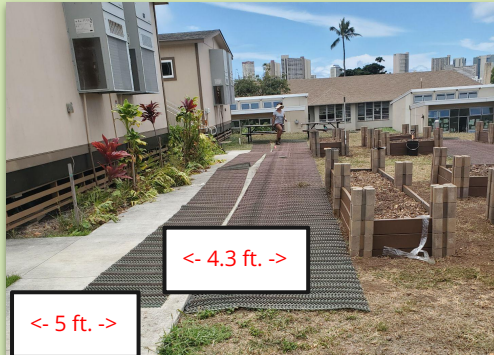
Priority 2 - Accessible Garden Beds



Vertical Garden Design



Priority 2 - Accessible Pathways



Priority 3 - Safety Components



- ☐ Seating
- ☐ Shade
- ☐ Layout of Pathway
- ☐ Adapted Tools
- ☐ Access to Water, storage, shed
- ☐ Remove barriers & obstacles
- ☐ Community Integration



Priority 4- Sensory Elements

- ❑ Plant flowers, herbs and vegetables with a variety of **colors, scents, textures and flavors**
- ❑ Distribute **scent** in the garden at various locations
- ❑ Use **sound makers**, such as wind chimes, water features and a bird feeder to attract winged friends
- ❑ **Familiar items** may be set up in the garden for memory
- ❑ **Adapt garden activities** for inclusive participation
- ❑ Include **seating and shade** in the layout for a safe place to rest and promote **social interaction**

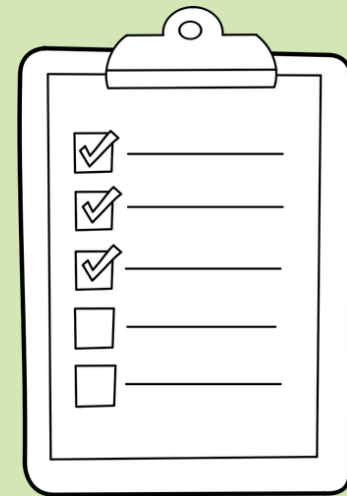


Priority 5- “Dementia-Friendly”

“For those living with a neurological condition such as **dementia**, plants and gardens provide a connection with the natural world. Gardens offer carers much-needed respite and people living with dementia a safe space to socialise and maintain their physical and mental wellbeing.”

Dementia-specific component items include:

- ☐ Inclusive & accessible design
- ☐ Multi-sensory experience
- ☐ Plants to support brain & memory health
- ☐ Seating with back and arm support
- ☐ Simple layout to support orientation
- ☐ Landmarkers



What is a 'dementia-friendly' garden?

A ***dementia-friendly garden*** is designed to provide stimulating sensory and therapeutic benefits for people living with dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

The plants and features in the garden are carefully chosen to ***support cognitive function and provide positive experiences.***



Global Call to Action (WHO, 2015):

Create new, innovative, and integrated models of care to address the complex needs of dementia patients that can also address/support the well-being and quality of life of their caregivers.

Resources:



- [Alzheimer's Garden Audit Tool](#) (Clare Cooper Marcus, 2007)
- ['Dementia-friendly garden' Checklist](#) (Melody Halzel, 2024)

What is a Memory Café?

A Memory Café is a social gathering for **people living with memory loss and their care partner**, including family, friends, or professional caregivers. These events offer a welcoming and supportive space to connect with others, share experiences, and engage in meaningful activities.

The **Cultivating Care: Memory Café** will take place in an accessible garden site at Ho‘ōla ‘Āina Pilipili. They are not a form of respite care or therapy, but rather a place for social interaction and building community. Each monthly event will be supported by trained student volunteers who help create a safe, inclusive, and engaging environment.



Visit our website: [Ho‘ōla ‘Āina Pilipili - Cultivating Care: A Memory Café](https://go.hawaii.edu/rSH)

<https://go.hawaii.edu/rSH>

What to Expect:

- Welcome table for sign-in and to help get oriented
- Trained University Student Volunteers on site for support
- 'Āina-based (garden) activities with different levels of engagement
- Comfortable seating in a shaded, natural environment
- Get to know the community, talk story, share ideas and resources
- Fill out a brief feedback form before you go, to help us improve our programming
- Light refreshments, water & tea will be provided



How to Sign Up

Visit our website: [Ho'ōla 'Āina Pilipili - Cultivating Care: A Memory Café](https://go.hawaii.edu/rSH)

- <https://go.hawaii.edu/rSH>

Join Mailing List for event reminders and updates:

- <https://go.hawaii.edu/Kcn>

Scan QR Code:



View the Flyers for recruitment and outreach

For Community



**Ho'ola 'Āina Pilipili
Accessible Garden**

Cultivating Care: A Memory Café

Join us for monthly dementia-friendly community events at Ho'ola 'Āina Pilipili, an accessible and inclusive garden space.

What is a Memory Café? A Memory Café is a welcoming, informal gathering for people living with memory loss and their care partners, family, or friends. Join us for fun, creativity, connection, and time in nature — rooted in 'āina and community.

What to Expect:

- Monthly community events for people with memory loss and their care partners at Ho'ola 'Āina Pilipili
- **An inclusive space for people living with memory loss and their care partners to connect**
- 'Āina-based (nature-based) activities that encourage creativity and engagement
- Trained volunteers on-site to share resources and provide support
- **A comfortable garden with shade, seating, raised beds, accessible paths, and restrooms**
- Light refreshments will be available

How to Sign up:

**Open to the Public
Registration is Required**
Scan the QR code or visit:
<https://go.hawaii.edu/rsh>



For more information or help registering contact: Melody Halzel at mhalzel@hawaii.edu

Location:
Ho'ola 'Āina Pilipili
1776 University Ave., Honolulu, HI 96822

[Click the RSVP link to learn more!](#)

Fall 2025 Event Dates & Theme:
Monthly on Thursdays
from 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM

- **September 25** – Connection
- **October 16** – Communication
- **November 13** – Creation
- **December 11** – Cultivation



Student Volunteer Recruitment

Cultivating Care: A Memory Café

New dementia-friendly community program at Ho'ola 'Āina Pilipili, an accessible school and community garden

Now Recruiting Student Volunteers!

We are seeking compassionate students to support a *dementia-friendly* memory café through 'āina-based activities with kūpuna living with memory loss and their caregivers. This [program](#) provides a welcoming space for connection, resources, and support.

What you will do:

- Greet and assist kūpuna and caregivers at garden events
- Create a welcoming, inclusive space for connection
- Help with nature-based activities
- Support event setup, cleanup, and optional data collection.

Benefits:



Gain experience in memory care



Support kūpuna & their caregivers



Free CPR & First Aid Certification



Engage in 'āina-based activities and more!



Who Should Apply

- Students from UH Mānoa, KCC, and other local colleges
- Ideal for those studying Public Health, Social Work, Nursing, Occupational & Physical Therapy, or other related fields.
- All levels (undergraduate, graduate, certificate) welcome!

Requirements:

- Minimum 1 semester commitment (Beginning Fall 2025)
- Attend training & CPR/First Aid certification
- Support inclusion for kūpuna with memory loss & caregivers

How to Sign up:
Scan the QR code or visit:
<https://go.hawaii.edu/ysr>
Contact Melody Halzel at mhalzel@hawaii.edu



Location:
Ho'ola 'Āina Pilipili
1776 University Ave., Honolulu, HI 96822

Cultivating Care: Memory Café (Fall 2025)

Mālama i kekahi i kekahi, Take care of one another.



2025 Memory Café Dates & Themes

Monthly on Thursdays, 4:30–6:00 PM:

- September 25 – *Connection*
- October 16 – *Communication*
- November 13 – *Creation*
- December 11 – *Cultivation*

Will be continued in Spring 2026!

Coming soon: AARP Community Challenge grant



U-shaped Wheelchair
Accessible Garden Bed



Standing Sensory/Activity
Table



Bench with Arms and Back
Support

End of Year Showcase (more details to come!)

What's Growing?



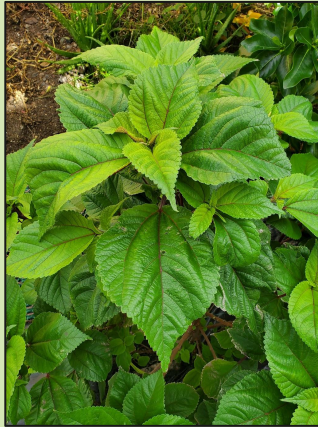
'Uala, Long beans, Chard, Liliko'i, Tomatoes, Cucumber, Lavender

Native Hawaiian and medicinal plants

‘Uhaloa



Māmaki



‘Olena (Turmeric)



Food, Tea and Medicine

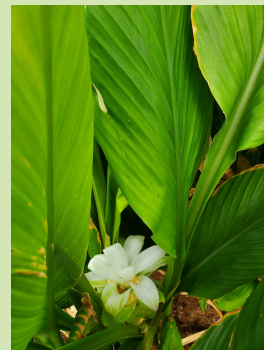


Pohe Kula



Ha'u'oi (Blue Vervain)

More Plants



Recipes from the Māla (garden)



Thai Basil & Palula Pesto

Mashed 'Uala with roasted garlic

Habanero hot sauce

Hawaiian chili pepper water

Kalo Croquettes

Roasted Beet Hummus



Roselle Hibiscus Iced tea



Get Involved!



[Sign up](#) to Join our Mailing List for updates on monthly community days, and upcoming workshops and events!

Join our Community Workdays every Second Saturday, 8:30 - 10:30 AM

(<https://go.hawaii.edu/nnx>)

<https://go.hawaii.edu/Kcn>

**Ho'ōla 'Āina Pilipili
at College of Education
UH Mānoa**

1776 University Ave.
Honolulu, HI 96822

Mahalo & Questions



Ho'ōla 'Āina Pilipili Additional Resources

Resources

Sign up for our mailing list & resources discussed in today's presentation:

<https://go.hawaii.edu/Kcn>

Visit our website:

<https://go.hawaii.edu/ULk>



Follow on instagram: hoolaaainapilipili



HO'ŌLA 'ĀINA PILIPILI SUPPLY & RESOURCE GUIDE

This guide outlines the supplies and resources used to create the garden space at Ho'ōla 'Āina Pilipili at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

WHAT IS INCLUDED:

- ✓ Raised Garden Beds
- ✓ Accessible Pathways
- ✓ Seating & Shade structures
- ✓ Additional Resources



Ho'ōla 'Āina Pilipili is the accessible school and community garden site for the Maui Ola Initiative, located at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa campus.

 <https://go.hawaii.edu/ULk>

Community Feedback

“I learned more about growing my own food. I also loved learning about ‘āina-based opportunities for kūpuna with dementia, especially the significance of having the sensory plot with vibrant colors and alluring scents! Pilina ‘āina = healing healing healing!”

I learned to make pesto from the basil and sage, chimichurri from the carrot tops, and we ate salad with the fresh carrots from the māla. It was quite an enriching experience! Mahalo for all you do.

“Watching the community come together to work on the garden was really beautiful!”

Mahalo for organizing another great work day! Appreciate the opportunity to build pilina with the space and others, eat yummy mea 'ai and huli!

“...accessible community garden with children, kupuna, teens, young adults, individuals with disabilities. Garden is open to the community to mālama and harvest any time. “



Mauli Ola Initiative

1. **Community Building** = Monthly workdays at Ho'ōla 'Āina Pilipili, school visits, community group & partner visits, work share at partner locations
2. **Movement** = Virtual movement and wellbeing sessions with Pali Ke Kua Wellness
3. **Wellbeing** = Strategies for professional and relationship wellbeing with Infinite Wellness Empire
4. **Pilina**- Relationships, student support, integration, networking



Community Impact (Participation/Partnerships)

>900 participants



~50 comm. organizations



Community connections

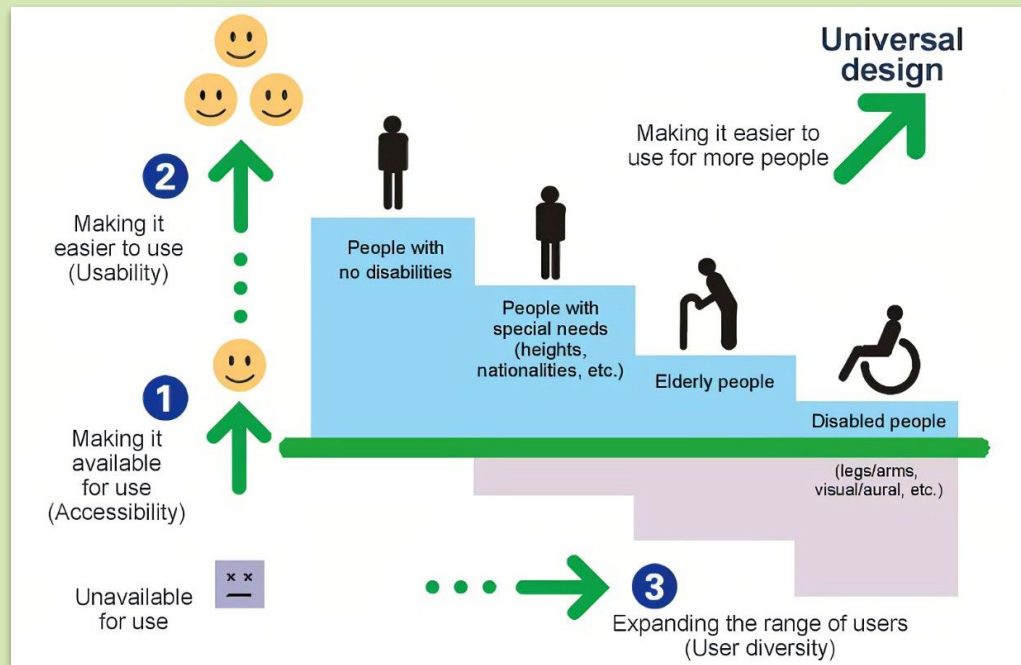


Kalanihiua Residential housing,
Punchbowl Community Housing
(3 locations on O'ahu)

Public Health Priority

In 2030, 24% of Hawai'i's population will be aged 65 or older, compared to 19% nationally

By 2040, 27% of Honolulu's population, more than 1 in 4 residents, will be over the age of 65



Antioxidants linked to slower memory decline

“Eating more flavonols, antioxidants found in many vegetables, fruits, tea and wine, may slow your rate of memory loss, a new study finds.”



Benefits of Gardening

Physical
Activity

Social
Interaction

Reduce
Stress

Overall
Mental
Well-being

Immunity
Booster

Access
to
plants,
herbs &
flowers

Nurture
Spirit



Inexpensive Vertical Garden Ideas



Pallet Garden

Hollow Tile & Lumber



T-Post Trellis

All about the ADA

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- A federal law, passed in 1990, that ***ensures equitable participation*** for people with disabilities by removing and reducing barriers and increasing access, and applies to all state and local governments, and private entities that are places of public accommodation.



ADA Guidelines for Accessible Design

The ADA guidelines provide a comprehensive list to support universal design, and can be followed to create a garden environment that is safe and accessible for people with dementia, their caregivers, family members and the community.



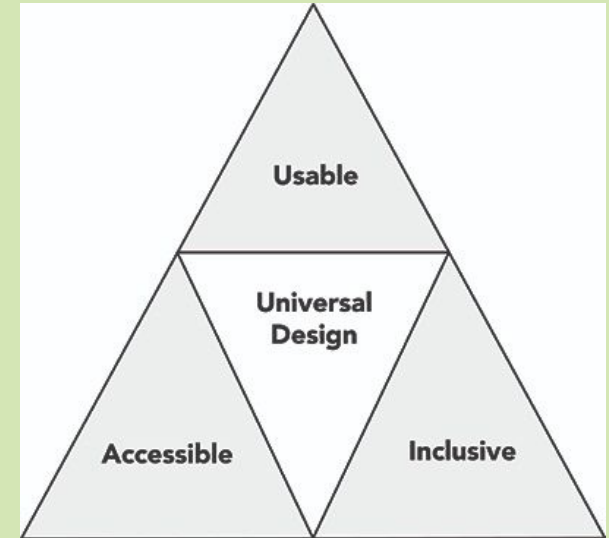
ADA Resources:

- [2010 ADA Standards ADA Regulations for Accessible Design](#)
- [ADA Checklist for Existing Facilities](#)
- [The Americans with Disabilities Act Checklist for Readily Achievable Barrier Removal](#)

Universal Design

A **universal design** approach provides an accessible, usable, friendly, inclusive garden following the principles of universal design.

- Designing for people of all abilities through products and environments that are usable by all
- Apply **universal design** in a garden space
 - Raised beds
 - Accessible pathways & ramps
 - Access to tools & water
 - Adequate sensory input





Specific design elements for accessible gardens

Sensory elements

Layout

Accessible Pathways

Seating area

Accessible tools

Shade

Vertical Garden Demonstration

Check out the vertical garden demo with this link:

- [Garden Demonstration Video - YouTube](#)



Future Research & Sustainability

- **Dissertation research:** The impact, design & implementation of accessible community gardens for people with dementia and their caregivers in Hawai'i.
- **Checklist** (evidence-based guidelines) organized by priority areas to observe community garden spaces for accessibility, safety, & sensory features that benefit PWD & their caregivers
- Identify the **barriers & enablers** to implementation
- **Mauli Ola Initiative-** support future ***workshops***, supplies & continued development of garden space with accessibility components
- **Memory Cafe** for people with Dementia & their Caregivers

Discussion Questions

- What are common challenges or barriers to inclusion to access garden sites for older adults and people with disabilities, such as dementia?
- What are strategies and enablers to modify or adapt a garden site to be accessible?
- Do you have any examples or experiences in gardens at your own organization/ care home sites?
- What would a successful 'Dementia-friendly' garden look like?
- How can we make these gardens available statewide?
- How would you ensure community use and support?

Herbal Iced Tea recipe

Step 1: Gather herbs such as [mamaki](#) leaves, [‘uhaloa](#), lemongrass, roselle hibiscus, mint leaves

Step 2: Thoroughly wash & clean herbs ([food safety!](#))

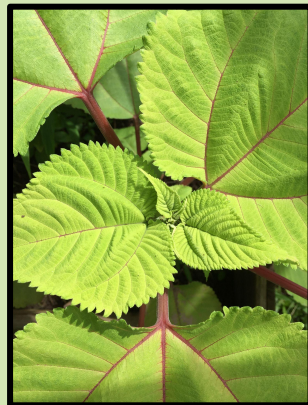
Step 3: Boil water in large pot, bring to rolling boil

Step 4: Turn Off the heat, and add herbs (leaves) to pot of boiling water

Step 5: Cover, and allow to steep for 15 minutes up to overnight (strength of tea)

Step 6: Strain and put into pitcher or glass jars. Let cool at room temperature

Step 7: Place in fridge, or serve over ice for a refreshing and healing beverage!



Mahalo!

Contact: Melody Halzel
mhalzel@hawaii.edu



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