

#UNIQUE GARDENING

Using Brown Sugar for Plant Health

Rooting new plants from cuttings can be challenging, but brown sugar and yeast powder offer a natural solution



Brown sugar, a common household ingredient, is not only useful in the kitchen but also has several surprising applications in gardening. When combined with other household ingredients like white vinegar, yeast powder, beer, and garlic, brown sugar can enhance soil health and support plant growth in various ways. From adjusting soil pH to promoting rooting, sprouting, and flowering, these combinations can offer eco-friendly and effective solutions for gardeners.

1. Brown Sugar + White Vinegar for Soil pH Adjustment
Soil pH is crucial for plant health, as it affects nutrient availability and microbial activity. Acid-loving plants, such as blueberries and azaleas, thrive in acidic soils. Brown sugar and white vinegar can be used to lower soil pH indirectly. Vinegar, being acidic, can lower the pH of the soil, while brown sugar provides food for soil microbes, promoting healthy microbial activity and accelerating the breakdown of organic matter.

2. Brown Sugar + Yeast Powder as a Rooting Agent
Rooting new plants from cuttings can be challenging, but brown sugar and yeast powder offer a natural solution. Brown sugar acts as a food source for yeast, which helps create a favorable environment for root development. The yeast produces carbon dioxide and alcohol, which can stimulate root growth in plant cuttings.

3. Brown Sugar + Beer for Encouraging Sprouting
Beer is often used in gardening for its nutrients, including yeast and carbohydrates, which support plant growth. When combined with brown sugar, beer becomes an excellent stimulant for seed germination and sprouting. The yeast and sugars provide energy for the seeds, while the slightly acidic nature of beer creates an optimal environment for sprouting.

4. Brown Sugar + Garlic for Flowering
Garlic is known for its antifungal properties, while brown sugar serves as a nutrient source for beneficial microbes. When combined, they help plants develop strong root systems, fight fungal infections, and support flowering. This mixture is especially beneficial for flowering plants that need extra support to bloom.



Most medical institutions impart good knowledge and sufficient skills deemed to be necessary to become efficient doctors. Yet, there is a variation amongst those who finally become 'good' doctors. Evidently, there must be something more that is not taught in medical colleges which finally decide who is 'good'. Some habits which are not taught in textbooks are expected to be learnt by emulating teachers. There are other things which the patients demand in their doctors. These somehow have not found place in the curriculum of Medical Colleges and have to be acquired the hard way.

For example, a curious nature or detective-like approach to a patient will often convert 'cases' into 'real people' with whom we can empathise. "To cure sometimes, to relieve often, to comfort always" is an important dictum in practicing medicine.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, in his *Case-Book of Sherlock Holmes* enunciated this dictum.

"When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth."

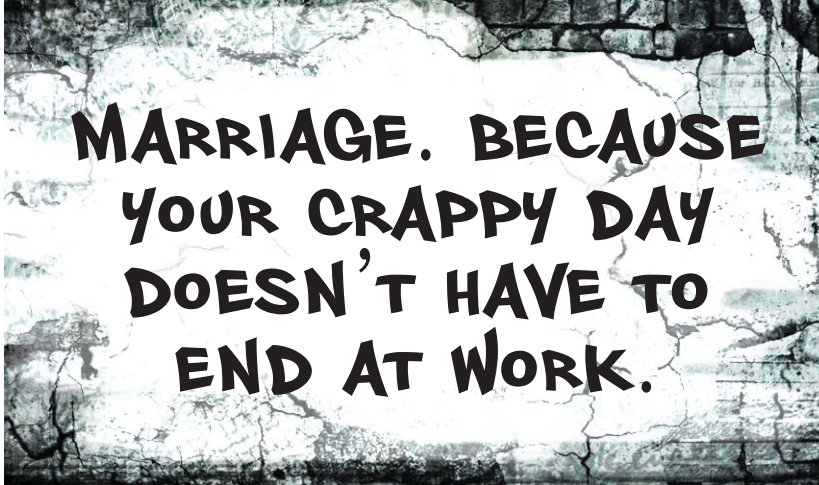
Early in my career, I had a 73-year-old patient, Ram Prasad, with confirmed heart failure. He was nearly blind from diabetes, so his semi-literate equally aged wife was in charge of his medicines.

After thoroughly testing and examining him, I gave him the appropriate prescriptions. However, I continued to have all sorts of problems with his heart failure. Neither did lab reports nor his clinical condition had stabilised.

I just couldn't seem to adjust his medications sufficiently to get him into the stable spot, no matter how often I changed my prescriptions. My team checked regularly that he was getting the correct medications

Mix 1 part white vinegar with 2 parts water and add a tablespoon of brown sugar. Water the soil around acid-loving plants with this mixture monthly. This helps maintain acidic conditions and promotes healthy soil life.

Crush 2 cloves of garlic and mix them with 1 tablespoon of brown sugar and 2 cups of water. Let the solution sit for 24 hours, then strain it. Water flowering plants with this mixture weekly to promote healthy blooms and prevent fungal diseases that could hinder flowering.



An Efficient Or A 'Good' Doctor!

Each month, she would receive the medicines. They all came in similar orange bottles. The number varied and she could not read the label. Her solution was to open them all up and tip them into a large cooking bowl. Then, she would stir them, like mixing ingredients in a recipe, so that they were well distributed. Then, each day, she would take an eighth-cup scoop and give them to him to take during the day. This chaotic way of giving medicine, although ingenious, was dangerous!

#DOCTORING



some point, you can put in much more effort and yet the output is the same. Further on, the output even starts to decrease. This is wisely put by the Chinese idiom, *wu ji bi fan*, which means that things turn into their opposites when they reach the extreme. So, it's important for us to not take things to exhausting end (Burn out). Remember to regroup, recharge and recover (3Rs). Too much work leads to too much stress, which leads to damage to your body, physically and mentally. So, remember, as a doctor, look after yourself properly, so that in return, you can look after your patients efficiently.

"Listen to your patient; he is telling you the diagnosis."

This means using all your senses and skills. Even after you set your ears, your eyes, your heart, your mind and your intuition, you will need to actively listen to your patient. I recommend you sit and face the patient while listening and note both their verbal and nonverbal language, avoiding any other distraction like perusing old records or medical reports. Give the patient 100% focus. They are more likely to follow your advice if they feel you have listened well to them.

An interesting case is about a man whose implantable loop recorder (that's a subcutaneous continuous electrocardiogram recording device) kept showing runs of ventricular tachycardia (irregular heartbeat) during early morning hours (400 AM to 600 AM) and none during the day. I noticed that he kept breaking my gaze when I was asking him if he was having nightmares or perhaps exercising during these early morning hours. I got the feeling there was more to this story. So, I gently probed. He finally confessed that he was having an affair and those episodes occurred when he was committing the act.

This taught me that an understanding of his nonverbal cues helped to correctly diagnose and manage his problem. Patients are more satisfied and more likely to follow advice if the physician spends an adequate amount of time with the person. It is essential to have a

good verbal and nonverbal indirect interpersonal communication and understand the demands of the patient. NEVER LET A PATIENT LEAVE YOUR CHAMBER WITH THE FEELING THAT ALL HAS NOT BEEN SAID AND HEARD.

"Your work is going to fill a large part of your life and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle FOR LESS." Steve Jobs

When I was 9 years old, I was over at my best friend's house. Unknown to me, they had just had their large glass entry doors that lead out to the backyard cleaned. In my eagerness to play outside, I ran right through a glass door, smashing it into pieces lacerating two inches of skin above my right knee. At the local doctor's office, to distract me while suturing, Dr. Chandra Prakash, let me listen to his heart with his stethoscope. This is when I heard the lub-dub for the first time! I was completely fascinated! From that moment, I loved all things medical. I have carried that passion with me. I love my patients, teaching, research and most importantly making a difference.

Such meaningful work, especially that falls at the intersection of one's values, passions and strengths appear to be the key for healthcare professionals to give their best. Additionally, those who are passionate about their work are less likely to burn out.

"A good physician treats the disease. The great physician treats the patient who has the disease." Sir William Osler

Sita was born in 1971. When she was 7 years old, she was hopeless at school, underperforming, frequently late and often fidgeting. She was rarely able to concentrate for long periods of time.

The teachers suspected that she had a learning disorder. So, they recommended her mother to take her to see a doctor. While Sita sat, he noticed that her hands and feet were



World Introvert Day: Celebrating Quiet Strength

World Introvert Day, observed on January 2, shines a spotlight on the power of solitude, reflection, and inner calm. It's a day that honours those who thrive in quieter spaces, valuing deep conversations over small talk and meaningful connections over crowds. The observance encourages people to understand and appreciate different personality types, promoting balance in a world that often rewards extroversion. Many introverts use the day to recharge, reading, journaling, spending time in nature, or simply enjoying peaceful moments at home. Ultimately, World Introvert Day is a reminder that quiet minds contribute immensely to creativity, empathy, and innovation.



as well as a strong social support network helps a lot. In addition, cognitive reframing, toughening up, grounding connections and work-life balance are essential.

RESILIENCE BUILDS STRATEGIES

The Buck stops with you. "I am not a product of my circumstances. I am a product of my decisions." Although there are many players in the current healthcare system, as a doctor, you will be the one that everyone else is looking up to, for a decision. If you have not already, you will encounter critical moments where every minute counts. During such situations, you will need a quick mind, extreme calmness, and most important of all, decisiveness.

Know that making no decision is a decision itself and has its consequences. Daring to decide during those critical moments may save a life.

I do not doubt that you will experience a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment from your daily work, but I'm afraid you will also experience frustrations and disappointments. During those moments of disappointments, remember, "You drown not by falling into the river, but by staying submerged in it."

And when one day, you are tired of all the routines as a doctor, remember John Rockefeller's words: "The secret of success is to do the common things uncommonly well."

I would like to think that you, as a doctor, are inspired by your life-saving mission in medicine. If you are spending your life chasing coin, you will miss out on counting your stars: the lives you have improved and saved already and the thousands of lives you are yet to touch. In other words, when you truly follow your passion as a physician, then, money and fame will be a by-product of your efforts. But if you chase money and fame in the first place, then, the true joy of being a doctor will elude you. It will be drudgery.

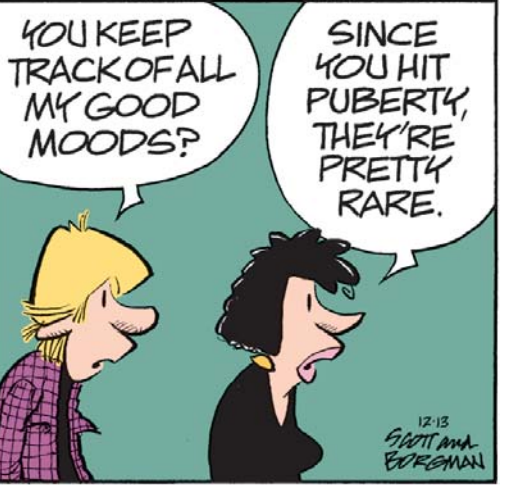
It's often the small gesture or little things said by the great physician that makes a big difference. Applying some of these tips will help you enhance your patient care and brighten your starry sky.

rajeshsharma1049@gmail.com



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



BABY BLUES



#HEAVENLY BEING OF BLISS

Kangiten and Lord Ganesha

The Shared Legacy of the Elephant-Headed Deity



From Public Celebration to Secret Devotion

One of the most striking differences between the two deities lies in the manner of worship.

In India: Ganesha's Public Presence

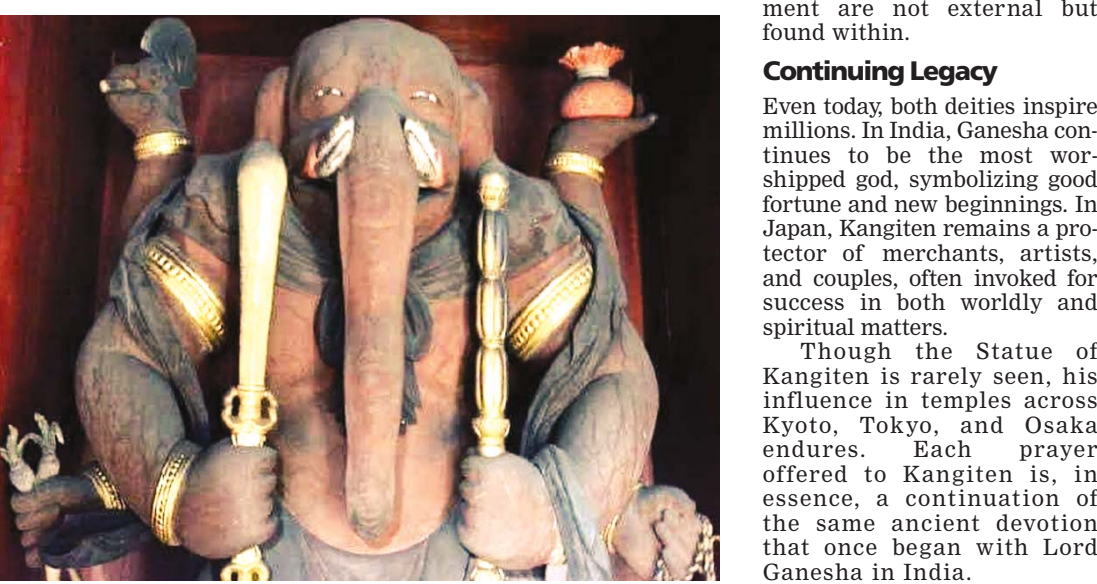
Lord Ganesha is among the most openly and joyfully worshipped deities in Hinduism. His festival, Ganesh Chaturthi, transforms entire cities into centers of music, light, and devotion. People install large idols, offer sweets, and pray for good fortune and success. Ganesha's image is visible everywhere, from temples to street shrines and homes.

When Buddhism spread eastward, first to Tibet and China and eventually to Japan, it carried with it a wide range of gods and symbols. Along this route, Ganesha's image transformed. In China, he was known as Vinayaka Tian. When these teachings reached Japan during the Heian period (8th-9th century CE), the deity was incorporated into Esoteric Buddhism and became known as Kangiten. Literally, 'Heavenly Being of Bliss.'

Thus, Kangiten represents a Japanese Buddhist reinterpretation of Lord Ganesha, maintaining his elephant head and benevolent nature, but gaining new layers of meaning within Buddhist philosophy.

Shared Iconography and Symbolism

Both Ganesha and Kangiten are elephant-headed deities representing joy, wisdom, and the harmony between opposing forces in the universe.



Continuing Legacy

Even today, both deities inspire millions. In India, Ganesha continues to be the most worshipped god, symbolizing good fortune and new beginnings. In Japan, Kangiten remains a protector of merchants, artists, and couples, often invoked for success in both worldly and spiritual matters.

Though the Statue of Kangiten is rarely seen, his influence in temples across Kyoto, Tokyo, and Osaka endures. Each prayer offered to Kangiten is, in essence, a continuation of the same ancient devotion that once began with Lord Ganesha in India.

By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman