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BIG DREAMS, SMALL GARDEN

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A few key points to help you embrace your ordinary space.

VISUALIZE

- Don't look at the obstacles, look at the opportunities. Every obstacle will have several options for solving or remediating it.
- Creativity is about solving problems. Don't dismiss your creative ability – train your brain instead.
- Take elements from gardens you admire and implement them instead of getting lost in the whole picture.
- Figure out why something works...break it down, then copy it in a different way using those characteristics.
- Understand what your vision for the garden is, and create and maintain it with that in mind.

ACHIEVE

My top ten design tips for making the ordinary.... extraordinary:

1. Group plants, furniture & accessories to make more from less.
2. Consider foliage over flower – foliage lasts longer and usually requires less work.
3. Contrast separates good gardens from great gardens. Think in terms of color, shape, texture and height.
4. Look for opportunities to create treasure out of trash.
5. Outline beds with rope or hose to live with the shape for at least a week before you dig.

6. Use repetitive planting of one plant to create continuity, make a statement and unite smaller elements throughout a garden.
7. Gently curve paths to create anticipation and depth – particularly in a small garden with hidden views.
8. Keep dining areas convenient so you use them. Then set up other informal seating areas once a main area is established.
9. Be deliberate with your accessorizing and ornamentation. Go big when you can.
10. Force the visitor's eye towards the view you wish to emphasize with strategic planting and ornamentation.

MAINTAIN

- Don't maintain a project to reflect someone else's vision – you know what you have in mind and how you want it to look.
- Remember the Creation/Maintenance Equation as you take on new projects. Each act of creation gives birth to numerous maintenance tasks.
- Work towards 25% new projects, 75% old projects.

ENJOY

- Take time to connect with your garden every day – even in a very small way.
- Take photos of your garden space from all angles to remind you of what it looked like before and during a project. Look at them when you're feeling as if you're not making headway.
- Still life photos, slow motion videos and miraculous moments are always present in one's garden. Take time to find them and commit them to memory.
- If you have a hard time sitting still in your garden, bring others into it for a meal, a drink or just a tour. You'll find yourself slowing down and loving your creation.

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Tropical Plants and How to Love Them: Building a relationship with heat-loving plants when you don't live in the tropics Hardcover Cool Springs Press, April 2021 ISBN-10 0760368945

Big Dreams, Small Garden: Creating Something Extraordinary in Your Ordinary Space. Paperback. Skyhorse Publishing. March 2017 ISBN-10 1510709126

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