

# THE BONSAI JOURNEY

## WORDS OF WISDOM FROM KUSAMURA MEMBERS

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### **Jane I.**

*By joining Kusamura Bonsai Club, the world of bonsai opened up - having bonsai artists, teachers, members share their bonsai knowledge, bonsai shows/conventions and meeting people who are interested in BONSAI.*

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### **Charlene F.**

*My advice to those new to bonsai is to take a workshop and join a club. You can avoid many mistakes by doing workshops and classes.*

*As far as additional benefits that I've gained, I'd say that I started learning about bonsai in order to care for a family legacy, but the practice has turned into a really rewarding hobby for me; a hobby that I love doing and with people that I enjoy very much. Some friendships I've made have taught me so much more about life in general and opened my eyes to other perspectives and choices.*

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### **Hal J.**

*Many people look at the exquisite show trees and think that it must take a huge time commitment to adequately take care of a bonsai tree. My estimate is that it takes less than ten hours of work for each tree each year. This is in addition to watering, but represents all pruning, wiring, repotting, fertilizer and other such care. Thus having a couple of trees is little more than an hour or so a month, and even twenty trees don't take up all that much time. There are people with a couple of hundred or more trees, which is, in fact, a full time job, but this is the exception.*

*The problem with only having a couple of trees is that it can take a few growing seasons to see significant progress in the development of a single tree. With a somewhat larger number of trees, more overall improvement in the collection is evident over, say, a single growing season, and thus it is easier to see that actual progress is being made.*

*A side benefit of working on your trees is that this work is usually done outside, either in the sun or shade, depending on the season. It is great to be outside, enjoying the weather, working at your own pace, and not worrying, for the moment, on your job, the kids or in-laws, or other hassles of modern life.*

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### **Michael G.**

*Inspiration: Bonsai is a wonderful combination of horticulture and sculpture in a living medium: it is never done, and never perfect. Bonsai is best as a true partnership between the tree and the artist. For me, it has been recreational therapy from a busy stressful life.*

*Encouragement: My working definition of a Green Thumb: Someone who collects plants faster than they die. This definition is very scalable. Also, Bonsai people love to share with novices, and you will find this a very welcoming community. Most of us have not forgotten when we were new to the hobby.*

*Bonsai taught me a lot of patience over time and willingness to defer instant artistic gratification for a greater reward.*

*In general, it has been my observation that gardeners are exceptionally nice people, this applies extra to Bonsai.*

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**Diane C.**

*Trees die. Don't take personally! It happens to everyone.*

*You won't find a more congenial and helpful group of bonsai enthusiasts and experts.*

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**Mark O.**

*You don't need any knowledge of bonsai to recognize and appreciate a beautiful tree, so when you begin, you already have the most important ingredient of the art,*

*Working with bonsai gives you the opportunity to "leave town" for a while and enjoy a peaceful and calming connection with nature.*

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**Alison W.**

*I was given a bonsai tree, and I found bonsai is an amazing opportunity to look at trees really up close and personal, on a small scale, to appreciate how each species has differing needs, and to enjoy learning a new way of gardening which has its own culture.*

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**Christine W.**

*Creating bonsai brings pleasure, artistry and understanding of the natural world. My advice is not to wait till your life "quiets down" before joining a bonsai club. The creation of bonsai trees takes years, so join now and enjoy the process.*

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**Donna F.**

*Bonsai definitely changed how I view trees large and small. I find myself constantly scanning the landscape for the perfect specimen: taper, balance, flow, etc.*

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**Susan F.**

*I was looking to join a Succulent Gardening club close to home, but came across Kusamura Bonsai instead. My introduction to the club has been a lovely and a most enriching journey. The art of bonsai has broadened my perspective on training, patience, and beauty.*

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**Christoph D.**

*Don't be shy and ask for advice whenever you have doubts about a tree. Bonsai people always like to help people new to the hobby. Don't ask too much either! You might end up with more doubts than you had before.*

*With bonsai, you have to do the right thing at the right time. There is no way to push it beyond a certain point.*

*This is a great lesson in patience and changed my perspective of time. Planning bonsai training is a matter of at least years, often even decades. I find this deceleration very soothing in these overly hectic times.*

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**Lynne O.**

*Studying these miniature trees has given me a new appreciation of the same trees in nature. I am more observant and awed by how the slope of the land, sun direction, climatic elements, etc. affect the growth and demise of trees in their natural habitat. My hiking experience has a new dimension. I get so excited seeing that perfect "Jin." Thank you Bonsai!*

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