



Knitting Therapy

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A while back I discovered a forgotten ball of yarn in the little box on my spinning wheel.

I'd spun it a year ago – badly – and the yarn looked lumpy--thin-lumpy--but the color took my breath away: variegated shades of indigo blue, deep ocean blue, violet-blue.

I decided to knit something with it because:

- a. It had been a long time since I'd knitted.
- b. I like knitting; unlike doing dishes or sweeping floors, the (much more) satisfying results last longer than a few hours, and
- c. I needed to slow down, relax, take a deep breath – preferably a string of them, and knitting is a good way to accomplish that.

I settled on knitting a scarf, which, along with ear warmer headbands, is all I know how to knit right now.

I'm knitting it for myself, since I've already given scarves to just about everyone else.

I enjoy knitting scarves because you don't need to worry about gauges or those complicated knitting codes. You just pick out your yarn and needles, decide how wide to make it, and knit (or purl). Easy. Make the scarf as long as you like, keep it going forever if you really want to and have enough yarn.

Knitting is more than a craft or hobby: It's a meditation, relaxation therapy, a creative right-brain exercise that breeds more creativity.

A psychologist I know, an avid knitter, teaches some of her teenage patients knitting to help them deal with anxiety. It's free, has no harmful side effects, and you can do it just about anywhere.

As I knit in the evening, the day's tensions and worries seep away. Fresh ideas swirl into my mind, like eddies in a creek – ideas for farm and craft projects, articles to write. Sometimes I think the creek has gone dry, but then it turns out all it needed was a creative cloudburst to start flowing again.

Anyone can learn to knit a scarf if I can.

In gradeschool, my daughter taught herself from a kid's knitting book in about half an hour. Then she taught me. If you lack a clever child teacher, but still want to learn, check out this site I found with how-to-knit videos: it's www.knittinghelp.com

What hobbies help you relax and enhance your creativity? I'd love to know.

~ Cherie