

No More “EVS” or Niche Fright by Connie Baird

Bless your heart. . Glenda graciously asked me to talk with you again and even invited me to help with her little rose meeting in August. I’m bringing my clippers!

Now, while I have this opportunity I want to talk with you discreetly about “EVS” (Empty Vase Syndrome) and Niche Fright.

The first time I had a bout of EVS, my best friend Althea found me standing in the kitchen with a bucket full of pink roses, staring at Aunt Berta’s Grecian Urn. Cousins Ida’s wedding flowers were due at the church that afternoon, and I must have been staring at that empty vase for 25 minutes. She found me with a glazed look and my clippers gripped in my hand. “Wilma” she shouted, “put a flower in the vase now!” She startled me so bad I stabbed myself with my own clippers. Gracious. I grabbed a flower, put it in that vase, and would you believe everything just went together after I put in that first flower. That arrangement was done in time for Ida’s wedding and it was glorious. Now Althea knew I was little embarrassed. I didn’t have any idea what came over me. Never, ever had I not been able to arrange. But she told me that I suffered from EVS, and at one time or another it happens to all arrangers. So, I thought it would be nice of me to give you a few ideas on how to overcome that disabling EVS should it happen to you.

Of course the “old stand by” is “put a flower in the vase now”. Don’t fret over where just get that first flower in the vase. You have to start to finish, usually. Always remember if you put it in and don’t like it, you can always take it back out. But I always say “You must get started to finish”. Trust me sweetie, after you get started everything will just fall into place. Your problem is really just the beginning. Once you get past that its over.

Now another little trick to get past EVS is color. I love color. Sometimes an occasion calls for a certain color. Like using yellow for a perky little party. What’s your favorite color? Use it when you can’t decide what to do. I adore red. Red fires me up. If I can’t think of what to do, honey, I put red in it.

Sometimes, if you are working with those weird modern designs, one of those odd shaped pieces of wood or metal, (those structural things) will give you a better idea instead of a plain old vase. (Keep in mind that weird stuff doesn’t work to well with church flowers but that’s a whole ‘nother story altogether). Also, a really curvy stick can start your imagination rolling.

Flower arranging books also help. It’s not copying, you know, because no two flower arrangements ever look the same. If you don’t believe me try doing church flowers. My Lord, Berta and I have been trying for decades to get matching arrangements on each side of the pulpit. Never happens.

Sometimes I put on my pedal pushers, grab the old sunbonnet and go for a walk. Just look at the way Nature arranges stuff, and she has a much bigger vase!

Try some of these ideas the next time you get that panicked feeling staring at an empty vase not knowing what to do!

Niche Fright . . No, it's not fear that your backdrop will fall over onto your arrangement. I have seen that happen and it's really such a sad thing. It just breaks your heart. However, what seems to worry most new arrangers is fear of putting the arrangement on the table (with or without a niche).

At one time or another we have all been a little afraid to place our creations on display, especially when you get to the show and realize that next to your spot is the Gold Medal Winner 3 years running. Now that's terrifying.

Sweetie, there is nothing I can say to make the anxiety go away. . but seriously, that same anxiety is what will help make you a better arranger. It means you care and skill will come with practice and experience. Make that arrangement. Enter it in the Rose Show and watch as the public passes through the show. No matter what any old judge thinks is first or honorable mention, what will give you the most confidence is when Mr. & Mrs. Public likes what you did. The best way to get over Niche Fright is to watch someone you never met, don't know, and will likely never see again, admire your creation. And if you use lovely fresh roses in your arrangement, it will be admired. Even if your skills in design are new and the rules seem a little strange, beautiful roses always save the day.

See you at the Rose Meeting . .

Wilma