

INTRODUCTORY PRESENTATION MANUAL OF EARTH INSTITUTE DISCUSSION COURSES FOR PORTLAND, NW COMMUNITIES AND THE NATIONAL NETWORK 2008

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1 - BACKGROUND

The Northwest Earth Institute (NWEI) develops discussion courses for small groups and offers them throughout the United States and Canada. To share these courses and other programs with autonomous groups outside the Northwest, in 1997 NWEI created the National Earth Institute Network. The mission of the National Earth Institute Network is the same as that of NWEI:

Inspiring people to take responsibility for Earth.

This manual is a resource for course organizers and NWEI volunteer presenters who wish to share the work of the Earth Institute programs with others. When a group gathers to consider taking a discussion course, the presenter is the volunteer that leads the introductory meeting. Please use this manual as a guide in offering other presentations to groups who may be interested in the work of the Earth Institute. If you have suggestions for improving these materials, please contact NWEI at 503-227-2807 or contact@nwei.org.

To support offering the courses both locally and nationally, NWEI has an office and staff in Portland. To fund this effort, NWEI relies on contributions from individuals, foundation grants, and the donated time of many volunteers. Because the health of the Earth Institute Network depends on individual support, this manual includes information on how to invite participants to make a contribution to support the Network. If you are not comfortable inviting participants to contribute, you can disregard that portion of the manual since our singular goal is to be a resource for the Network and offer programs of deep value. If you are comfortable, we thank you for the effort.

2 - THE PURPOSE OF THE INTRODUCTORY MEETING

The people involved in an introductory presentation include:

(*Please note that a course can begin regardless of whether all of the following roles are present in your community. NWEI has created a process that can be entirely self-facilitated).

- The **sponsor** or **host** takes the initiative to start a discussion course. This person calls the meeting where the introductory presentation takes place.
- The **presenter** is the volunteer who comes to that meeting to introduce the course the sponsor is interested in.
- For each discussion class that gets started, there will be a **class coordinator**. In many cases, this will be the sponsor of the introductory meeting, but not always. A class coordinator is the continuing contact for the class.
- A **mentor** is the volunteer who facilitates the first regular session of a new class. The mentor's role is spelled out in a separate manual, and is not covered here.
- The **community coordinator** serves as the local contact for the Network for organizing courses, ordering course books, coordinating volunteers, etc.

The presenter has six goals for the meeting:

- ♦ Describe the purpose of the Earth Institute Network and background on local efforts.
- ♦ Describe the process involved in the discussion courses.
- ♦ Describe the content of the course being offered.
- ♦ Coordinate organization of the “classes” or discussion groups that form out of the introductory meeting.
- ♦ Let people know about the Home Eco-Party Program.
- ♦ Invite people to contribute to the National Earth Institute Network, or the local affiliate (if it is a 501(c)(3) organization), if you feel comfortable.

These goals are most likely to be achieved when the group has a good time, and the presentation is somewhat interactive. If the presenter is enthusiastic, the participants will be also. If the presenter is engaging and dynamic, the participants will also be engaged.

While accomplishing these goals, the presenter represents the greater work of the Northwest Earth Institute. By example, the presenter communicates the following values of the Network:

We are a resource, not a teacher or preacher. We believe that people will learn in a way that has the most profound impact through self-discovery and discussions with others.

We are inclusive and nonjudgmental. We reach out to all people, recognizing that each person has immense potential to become a better protector of the earth.

We work without expectations of others. The courses will impact people at different levels. Because each person is unique and has unique circumstances, the response to the course will vary greatly from person to person.

Having said this, diversity in presenters is absolutely encouraged. Each will have his or her unique style. The suggestions presented here are not intended to regiment the process. Rather, these guidelines document a process that has been successful, and provide the minimal structure needed to ensure the quality of presentations. The first rule of presenting is, “be yourself.” Handle each new situation in a way that is comfortable for you.

3 - PREPARATION FOR THE MEETING; INTRODUCTIONS

**Some groups may choose to integrate the Introductory Presentation with the first session of the course. This volunteer may come to offer a presentation and also mentor the first session.*

Contact the meeting sponsor or host well in advance of the presentation. The best practice is to call that person as soon as you accept an assignment. Confirm the date, time, place and approximate size of the group. Find out if there will be a flipchart, white board or something similar in the room. If not, you may want to bring something with you to draw on.

Take the following materials with you to the presentation: 1) course books (if the group does not already have them), 2) course description flyers (for those that wish), 3) eco-party sign-up sheet (for those interested), 4) class organizing sign-up sheet, 5) contribution cards and envelopes.

Think about who you will be talking to. The content and tone of your presentation may vary a little, depending on your audience. A church group interested in *Voluntary Simplicity* might have different interests from a Sierra Club group interested in *Exploring Deep Ecology*. Consider what you know about the group in advance and also pay attention during introductions.

Arrive five minutes early. Greet each new arrival. Assume the meeting will begin on time, but take your cue from the host as to when to start.

Introduce yourself to the group. Say a sentence or two about how you came to be involved with the work of the Northwest Earth Institute or local affiliate. This is a good time to find out if any people have previously taken an Earth Institute course. In rare cases, people in a group may have attended a presentation before. You may want to modify your presentation to accommodate an “experienced” group.

Have a round of introductions. Unless the group attending the presentation is larger than about 25, start with introductions. Ask each person to say his/her name and answer one question that can be answered briefly. For larger groups, ask the question of the group but tell them you will be taking answers from only a few people. It is helpful to get people interacting with you and each other early on. The presentation will be more lively, and people will be more engaged. As people say their names, you might make a seating chart for yourself. You can then refer to people by name during the discussion.

Examples of questions that might be used include:

- ◆ “What brought you to this discussion today?”
- ◆ “Almost everyone is drawn to the notion of simplicity in some way. When you introduce yourself, let us know one aspect of your life where simplicity sounds attractive.”
- ◆ “Tell us about a place, person, experience, or event that helped you develop your love of nature.”
- ◆ “We will be talking today about ‘sustainability.’ In general, that means living in a way that gives great respect to future generations. When you introduce yourself, share a hope or concern, if you think of one, for future generations or for a child in your life.”
- ◆ “We will be talking today about discovering a sense of place. When you introduce yourself, tell us about a place that meant a great deal to you as a child if one comes to mind.”
- ◆ Globalization affects many aspects of our lives. When you introduce yourself, please share one way in which your life or local economy has been affected by globalization.
- ◆ Global Warming news is unavoidable in the media today. When you introduce yourself, please share one way in which you have noticed the effects of climate change on your community.

4 - DESCRIBE THE PURPOSE OF NWEI AND HOW YOUR AFFILIATE OR COMMUNITY EFFORT GOT STARTED

The audience appreciates knowing why the courses are being offered. This is a chance to tell who you are and why you do what you do. People feel more comfortable signing up for a discussion course after they know these things. Presenters should remember that they are a resource for people who would like to explore values and habits in a supportive setting. It is best for presenters to use friendly language and a tone that is encouraging to everyone present at the meeting.

History. When we tell our story, people get a better understanding of who we are. Give a short history of the earth institute programs, from the founding of NWEI in 1993 to the present. You might include a bit about Dick and Jeanne Roy, and something about our expansion from Portland throughout the northwest, the growing National Network, and the history of your local group. See the Illustrative Presenter’s Script at the end of this manual for details.

Contributions for NWEI. The introductory meeting is a good time to invite people to contribute to the National Earth Institute Network or to the affiliate if it is a 501(c)(3) membership organization. Many people welcome an opportunity to contribute to our work. While describing the Network, explain that we are largely supported by individual contributions. Hand out sample copies of a newsletter (if available) and pass around contribution cards. If they are going to pay for the course book, they might make a contribution at the same time to the “Earth Institute Network” or “EIN.”

Mission. Describe the mission of the NWEI and how the courses fit within the mission. This allows the presenter to speak on behalf of the earth in a nonjudgmental, matter-of-fact

way. One way to present this information is that given in the Illustrative Presenter's Script. It has been used by successful presenters for several years. If you choose to take this approach, it is recommended that you practice the presentation using your own words. Make sure that the ideas, the words, and the diagrams you use are comfortable for you, and a genuine expression of your thought.

5 - DESCRIBE THE PROCESS AND THE COURSE CONTENT

Process. Normally, it is better to describe the process followed by participants in the course before describing the content. Explain the mechanics of the course, including cost, time required, and group size. Also describe how participants are involved in the course, the opening, facilitation, etc. See the sample script.

Content. Each introductory presentation will focus on one of the discussion courses. After describing the process, describe the course content in a very brief way. Hand out copies of the course outline. Go through it, and say a little something about each session. This is not a time to try to teach the ideas in the course. Your personal responses to the course will work best. You might mention one reading from each session that was important to you, and say something about it or its author. See the sample script.

6 – HOME ECO-PARTIES (if offered in your community)

In Portland, and other cities where they are offered, the introductory meeting is an opportunity to invite people to host a Home Eco-Party. Pass around a sign-up sheet and describe what the parties are like. If someone in the audience has attended one, ask that person to describe the experience. Emphasize the party aspect. These are non-judgmental, non-intrusive, and fun.

7 - ORGANIZE THE “CLASS(ES)”

Getting organized. Leave plenty of time for those who are interested to sign up for the course and for you or the sponsor to lead a discussion of how they will proceed after the meeting is over. At some introductory meetings this has been agreed to in advance. Participants know that they will be taking the course and when they will meet. Other times, you may need to get one or more groups organized. This can involve finding out who wants to participate, selecting a starting date and meeting place, and identifying a volunteer **class coordinator** for each group. If the sponsor or host of the meeting has these matters in hand, let them proceed. If not, you step in to facilitate the discussion.

If it is possible, have the details worked out by the end of the meeting. Anyone taking the course should have a book, know where and when to meet next, and know to read the materials for the first session. If any of these things are not completed, a class coordinator should take responsibility for completing them, including any necessary communication with the class participants. In a workplace, if sign up for the course is permitted after the

introductory meeting, those attending should be encouraged to talk with friends who might be interested.

Book payment. At some introductory meetings, the sponsor will already have arranged for book distribution and payment. This is ideal. If not, you will probably be handing out books and collecting money. People might give you cash, or checks. Sometimes you may choose to leave more books than you receive payment for. In that case ask the class coordinator to collect the rest of the money and send it to the community coordinator. Leave the class coordinator with a note or an invoice showing the number of books you left and the amount owed. The note or invoice should be enclosed with the payment for proper credit. The class coordinator can return any unsold books to the community coordinator.

8 - FOLLOW-UP WITH YOUR COMMUNITY COORDINATOR

After completing the introductory presentation you should phone the following information in to the coordinator in your community at your earliest convenience:

- ◆ **Number of people** signed up for the course.
- ◆ **The name, address, and phone number of the class coordinator(s).**
- ◆ **The date, time, and location chosen for the first session of each class.** (Sometimes total number in class and first class information will not be determined until later. With each **class coordinator's phone number**, the community coordinator will be able to follow up on these details.)

Any money you have collected for books should be mailed or brought to the community coordinator, along with information about any books that have not yet been paid for. Eco-party sign ups can be mailed to the person in your community who organizes eco-parties.

9 – ATTACHMENTS (SEPARATE SHEETS FOR INDIVIDUAL USE)

- a. Illustrative presenter's script (follows on pg. 8)
- b. Presenter's checklist
- c. Sign up sheet/Organizing List (one for workplaces, one for non-work places)
- d. Memo to class coordinator
- e. Memo on gifts to support the Network
- f. Network gift cards
- g. Home eco-party sign up sheet (if offered in your community)

ILLUSTRATIVE PRESENTER'S SCRIPT

Note: This guide is illustrative only. **It is not intended to be used as a script.** Each presenter should use her/his words so the message will fit the style and thoughts of the individual.

The tone of the meeting should be fairly light and interactive where possible. In particular, as you go through the early portion of the meeting, talking about stresses on the earth, you should be doing that **only** to describe why the Network was created. The goal is to inform the group about your motivation, but not to “teach” the group or talk in a manner that places expectations that anyone present should change.

Arrive early. Introduce yourself as class members arrive.

Start the meeting. “My name is _____, a volunteer with the group offering earth institute classes in this community. I’m here to talk with you about a discussion course called _____. I got involved as a volunteer after taking a discussion course in _____. Today I want to tell you a little about our local group and the Earth Institute Network, who we are, and why we do what we do. Then I’ll describe how the discussion courses work generally, and finally, I’ll give you some specific information about the _____ course. Have any of you taken an earth institute course before? (*Asked for purposes of tailoring the presentation.*)

Introductions. (*If there are more than 15 people, select about 10 volunteers to answer.*)

Exploring Deep Ecology. Let’s begin with introductions. As you go around the table, say your name. And also, tell just a very short piece of your eco-story. That story includes all of the places, people, experiences, and observations along the way that have given you your love for nature or concern for the earth. Since time is short, you should tell only one small part of your story. I will start. “My name is _____. When I was 10 years old,

[Everyone has a chance to speak.]

Voluntary Simplicity. Almost everyone is drawn to the notion of simplicity in some way. When you introduce yourself, let us know one aspect of your life where simplicity sounds attractive. I will start. “My name is _____. I was first attracted to simplicity when

[Everyone has a chance to speak.]

Choices for Sustainable Living. We will be talking today about sustainability. In general, this is living in a way that will allow future generations to have all of the opportunities that we have today. Let’s begin with introductions. When you introduce yourself, share either a concern you have about the future or a place that you enjoy today that you hope will be available for children of the future. I will start. My name is _____. One place I enjoy today is

[Everyone has a chance to speak.]

Discovering a Sense of Place. We will be talking today about discovering a sense of place. When you introduce yourself, tell us about a place that meant a great deal to you as a child if one comes to mind. My name is _____. My special place was a grove of trees in a wooded area near

[Everyone has a chance to speak.]

Menu for the Future. We will be talking today about food systems and their impacts on personal and ecological health. When you introduce yourself, tell us one thing you have noticed that has changed in where and how you get your food in your lifetime. I will start. My name is _____. One thing I have noticed about changes in food systems in my lifetime is...

Healthy Children-Healthy Planet: We will be talking today about how families can deal with our consumer oriented society. When you introduce yourself, tell us about the effects of consumerism on yourself, your child's or your family's life. I will start. My name is _____. One way consumerism affects me deeply is...

Global Warming: Changing CO2urse: We will be talking today about global warming. When you introduce yourself, share one thing you have noticed that has changed in the climate of your home community since you were a child. Feel free to share a memory of how the weather was when growing up. I will start. My name is _____. I remember when I was a child... And now I notice...

[Everyone has a chance to speak.]

About the Network. *Feel free to share a few words about the Earth Institute in your own words. The following is some background for your reference.

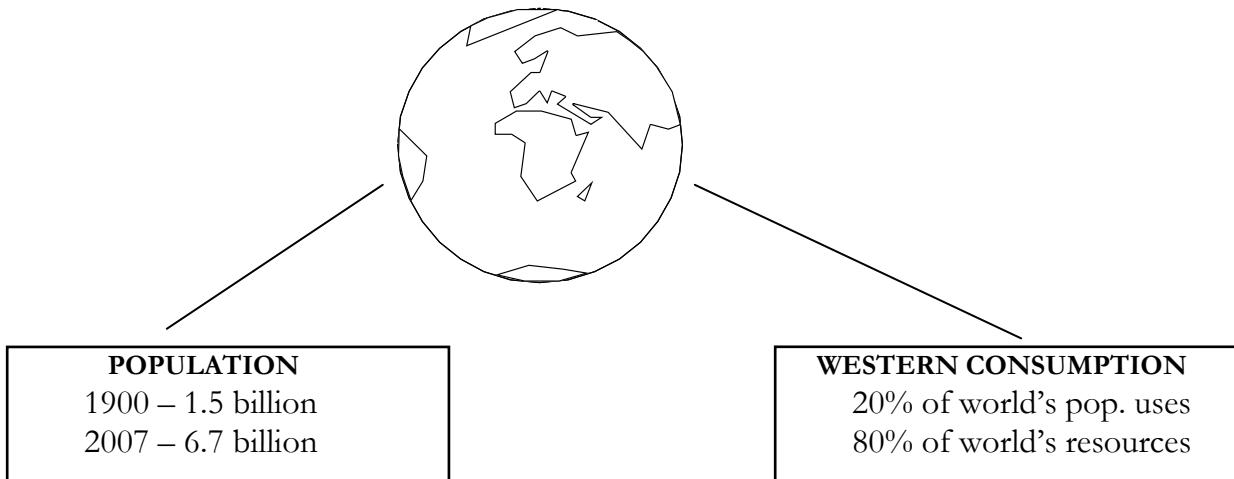
The Northwest Earth Institute was founded in Portland, Oregon in 1993 by Dick and Jeanne Roy. Jeanne is a long-time activist who founded Recycling Advocates and the Master Recycler Program in Portland. Dick was a partner in a large Portland law firm for 23 years. With the founding of NWEI, they both became full time volunteers for the earth. Dick and Jeanne retired from their roles at the Earth Institute in 2006 and currently lead a new non-profit, Center for Earth Leadership. NWEI's new Executive Director, Mike Mercer, has been involved with NWEI also since 1993 and has been a volunteer, board member and board chair before assuming his role as the director.

In 1997 NWEI formed the National Earth Institute Network as a way to share its programs with autonomous groups around the country. Since then, discussion courses have been offered in thousands of communities outside the Northwest. Twenty-one regional Earth Institutes and Affiliates have been formed to share the work of the Earth Institute across the country and also in British Columbia. To date, enrollment in our courses has totaled more than 80,000 known participants.

The mission of the Earth Institute Network is: *Inspiring people to take responsibility for Earth.*

Concepts: Graphic #1: **Please adapt to make this your own presentation. The information below is a possible guide to aid you.*

“The Earth Institute Network was founded out of concern for the earth (*you may wish to draw or use visual aids if helpful here*). One primary area of concern is human population growth and the effects of this on the planet. We started the last century with 1.5 billion people on the earth, and as of 2007 we have over 6.7 billion people on the planet. A second area of concern is in converting natural resources into human artifacts; particularly in the western or industrialized countries, where 20% of the earth’s population uses 80% of the earth’s resources. These characteristics of population growth and natural resource use, which allowed the species to survive and flourish, are now causing stresses on the earth.” (*Show these on the drawing.*)



Any questions thus far?

“The mission of the Network is to work within this area of western consumption. We see two sides to it:”

(WESTERN CONSUMPTION)

STRUCTURE

①

“We live in a society with a structure that has evolved over the past 10,000 years – road systems, legal systems, food production, etc. You and I didn’t create this very complex structure which makes it difficult for us to live without impacting the earth.”

PERSONAL CHOICE

②

“But, within this structure, we all have the power to exercise intentional lifestyle choices. That is why two people living in this society will have greatly different impacts, based on the choices they make each day. And the choices we make matter.

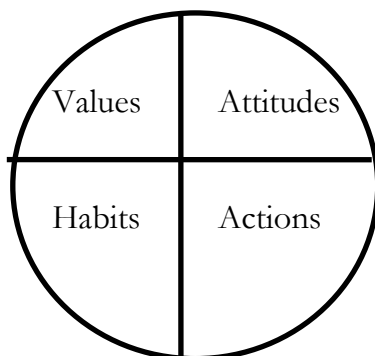
③

“For example, I may choose to buy only organic produce. That increases the demand (which has been rising at a rate of 25% a year for 10 years now.) That encourages more farmers to grow organic, and more grocers to carry it, and also lowers the price, all of which make it more available to more people, and makes it easier for others to make the same choice. As more individuals make conscious choices with earth systems in mind, we not only reduce our impact on the earth, we also begin to change the structure of our society.”

Any questions? *Use the section below if you choose to delve into values, attitudes, etc.

“Now let’s explore the notion of free will/personal choice just a bit. Why is it that two people operate so differently as they move through the day? One way to look at it is that we have four characteristics that can be quite different for good reason. We all have a different background and life experience. Those four characteristics might be displayed this way:

Graphic #2:



“So these four characteristics can make a big difference in how we act each day.

“Let’s try an exercise about attitudes, and select something that everyone has an attitude about ... say McDonalds, a golf course, or a mall. Which shall we choose for this exercise? The mall? OK. Now I’d like a volunteer to be an advocate for malls, telling us about all the wonderful things that come from them. And I’d like another person to be a mall detractor, and tell us how miserable they are. OK, who will volunteer to be the advocate? Thanks. And who will volunteer to be the detractor?? Thanks. OK, the advocate goes first. Lets hear it for the mall! [The two volunteers then state the pros and cons.]

“This exercise shows how attitudes influence conduct. One person might go to a mall regularly, while another would never set foot in a mall, depending on the individual’s attitude.

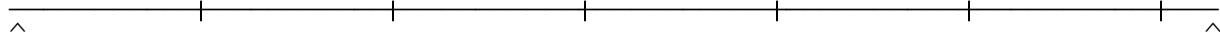
“Habits are patterns of behavior we bring to the day... Some, like taking a cloth bag to the store, tend to reduce our impact on the earth. Others tend to increase our impact.

“Finally, actions are often the most difficult. They may involve demands on others that they change their conduct. Opportunities for action arise almost every day. For example, if you go to the store to purchase screws, and you can only get them in a package of four with a cardboard backing and a plastic bubble, you have an opportunity to make a fuss. ‘I am unhappy that I must purchase all this packaging just to get four screws. May I speak to the manager?’

Any questions?

Graphic #3: “In offering our courses, we make a broad outreach to the public, recognizing that each person has the potential to take better care of the earth. The following spectrum is indicative of the continuum of possible responses in the face of ecological concerns. I’ve never seen anyone at either extreme, but they help to show the broad spectrum. At one end is the attitude of “I’m going to get as much as I can for me and use it up as fast as I can, since I don’t

know how long this good life might last” or the attitude of “To heck with it!” At the other end is ‘I Accept Personal Responsibility’ for the Earth. All of us are somewhere along this line. (*Put a mark on the line.*) Our goal is to create innovative programs that give people, no matter where they might be on the spectrum, the opportunity to move to the right, if they choose to do so.”



“To Heck With It”

I Accept Personal Responsibility

Any questions?

So that’s who we are, and why we do what we do. The Earth Institute discussion courses are offered in communities as opportunities for individuals to gather, build community and dialogue about issues of concern. Through discussion with others, we have a chance to examine and transform our personal values and habits, and choose actions that reflect personal responsibility for the Earth.

Invitation to contribute. NWEI maintains an office and a national outreach staff to support the Network. The Network and the national outreach exist because of individual contributions, foundation grants, and the donated time of many volunteers. If you would like to support the Network and help make these courses available to others around the country, we’d welcome your contributions. I will pass around contribution cards for those who would like them. Please take one if you would like to help.

Course Logistics. Let me tell you a little about how the discussion courses work. The optimal size for a class is eight to twelve people. Groups normally meet once a week, usually for about an hour. Each person has a copy of the course book, like this one. The book is divided into __ sessions, like chapters, with three or four short readings, about 45 minutes worth. Each person reads the week’s materials, and then the group meets to discuss it. In these discussions, consensus is not the goal. The point is to discuss, maybe clarify values, not to reach agreement.

Each class session has 2 parts: an Opening and the Discussion. The **Opening** is independent of the week’s topic. It serves 2 purposes. First, it provides a transition from daily activities into a focus on the discussion. Second, it gives each participant an opportunity to share a deep appreciation for nature with the group. Many people have found this to be their favorite part of the whole course.

For the first session only, a volunteer mentor will attend to demonstrate an opening and facilitate the discussion. For the remaining sessions, on a rotating basis, one member of your group will bring an opening and a second member will facilitate the discussions.

The course books are on average 100 pages long, and contain everything needed for the course, including introductory materials, suggestions for further reading and practical applications. They cost \$18 each. (*Price may be a little different outside Portland).

Whether they are held in workplaces, faith centers or homes, these discussion courses provide the opportunity to get to know people on a different level. People who have worked together for years find that their relationships change when they have the chance to talk about things that really matter to them. And, the discussions are invariably a lot of fun.

Course Description By Topics.

At this point, you could pass out the course description that lists the topics for each session. Be aware that the group will probably be inclined to read it quickly as you get started.

After each person has a copy, you should briefly describe the course, but not use the words in the sheet being handed out. The best approach is to give the group some idea of the content, by giving a glimpse of one reading or some other concept that comes through the session. It is best for you to prepare your own outline of how you would like to describe the course. Below is simply one illustration using readings. We do not attempt to summarize all the courses here. Voluntary Simplicity is used as an example.

THE MEANING OF SIMPLICITY: In the first session, we get right into the notions of inner simplicity, which might involve a sense of peace or alignment, and outer simplicity, which might involve distractions. One reading for this session is from *Gift of the Sea* by Anne Morrow Lindbergh. Written in 1955, the excerpt describes a Channeled Welk, or sea shell polished smooth by the sand. As the author holds the shell in her hand, she marvels at its elegance and simplicity and compares that with her complex life.

LIVING MORE WITH LESS: This session focuses on the Accumulation of material possessions that is part of the American Dream. For some, the dream has become a nightmare. When do material possessions add meaning to our lives and when do they detract? One reading in this session is “A Spirituality of Contentment” wherein Dee Dee Rischer writes about developing the habits of self-awareness and self-acceptance as a path to contentment.

YOUR MONEY OR YOUR LIFE: As the title of this session – taken from the book of the same title – implies, a growing number of people are trying to resolve the conflict between the desire to make and spend money and the desire for a simple life. Why is that so difficult in our culture? In an excerpt from *Your Money or Your Life*, Joe Dominguez and Vicki Robin suggest that we have allowed jobs to replace religion in our lives as the way we answer life's most basic questions, “Who am I?” “Why am I here?” “What's it all for?”

DO YOU HAVE THE TIME? In modern society, it is easy to be focused on the “busyness” of the day, our current problems, and our future challenges. This session considers alternatives to the fast pace of our mainstream culture. In a little piece called “Washing the Dishes,” Thich Nhat Hanh writes about the simple joy that can be had from washing dishes if we don't rush through it to get to the next thing.

HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH: Through advertising and the emphasis our society places on material things and new experiences, we learn at an early age to be consumers. How much do we *really* need? In a reading from his book, “How Much is ‘Enough’,” Alan Durning, formerly of the Worldwatch Institute and now with Northwest Environment Watch of Seattle looks at our habits of consumption and our lifestyle choices and their impact on the Earth.

SWIMMING AGAINST THE TIDE: In our country, economic growth, consumption, and technological advance are seen as inevitable and desirable goals. If we try to live simply, we may feel like we are “swimming against the tide” as the title of this session suggests. In one of the readings, “Growing up with Technology,” from his book *In the Absence of the Sacred*, Jerry Mander, invites us to rethink our assumptions about the benefits of technology.

THE PRACTICE OF SIMPLICITY: What are the practical benefits in moving toward simplicity? What steps can be taken to move toward a life *simple in means, rich in ends*? The final session offers several practical suggestions, and gives each participant the opportunity to create a personal action plan. Readings include “Conservation is Good Work” by Wendell Berry, “Know That What You Eat You Are” by Wendell Berry, and “Waste Reduction” by Recycling Advocates.

Organize a Class. Does anyone have any questions about this course and how it works? If not, let’s get organized. I will pass around a sign-up sheet for the class. How many of you would like to participate in this discussion course? That’s great, it looks like we’ll have two classes. As the sign up sheet comes around, please note the days of the week that will work best for you. We’ll need a class coordinator for each of the classes. If you would like to be a coordinator for your class, make a note of that as well. There are just a few duties, mostly having to do with maintaining communications with the class members. Do we have two volunteers? Good. Thank you.

Eco-Parties (if offered). While the sign up sheet is going around, let me come back to that special offer I mentioned earlier about home eco-parties. These are an opportunity for friends and neighbors to learn more about household sustainability. Have any of you been to one? No. Well let me tell you they are non-intrusive, non-judgmental, and a whole lot of fun. Eco parties were developed by Jeanne Roy, one of NWEI’s founders. A friend, who knew that Jeanne was an expert in household sustainability, asked her to come to her home and show her how she could reduce her use of energy, water, and toxic cleaners, reduce solid waste, etc. She also invited some neighbors to share the experience. They all had so much fun, that Jeanne developed the concept into a regular earth institute program.

I want to assure you that at an eco-party no one is going to look in your closets or under your sink, and cluck their tongue in disapproval. What does happen is that each person gets a checklist so they can look at their own household in advance. Then, everyone gathers together and learns about ways to live greener. I’m going to pass around a sign up sheet for home eco-parties. They’re informative, fun, and free. I hope you all sign up to host one. If you do, our local eco-party coordinator will call you to set up a time when one of our trained volunteers can join with you and your friends and neighbors to talk about green living.

Get the details down. Looking over the sign up sheets, it looks like the best times for people to meet are Tuesdays and Thursdays at noon. Is there anyone who can't come at one of those times? Good. Who prefers Tuesdays? Thursdays? Good, we're about evenly divided. Mark and JoAnn, you offered to be class coordinators. Can one of you take the Tuesday class and the other one Thursday? OK, I'll give you the sign-up sheet, and you can get the names of the people in your class. Do you want to start next week or the week after? Will you be meeting in this same room? Great. If I can get your two phone numbers, I will let the community coordinator know so she can arrange to have a mentor at your first meeting.

I'll also hand out the books for the course. The cost is \$18. [Or, check with your Community Coordinator for the local cost.] I can take cash or a check made out to _____. And if you would like to make a contribution to the National Earth Institute Network, I can take that now as well.

NOTE: Each class is different. Organizing classes is an interactive process. The example given here shows one way it might happen. Refer to the manual for more discussion.

Close on time. I want to thank you all for joining me today. I know that you are going to enjoy your class. Be sure to read the materials in your book for the first session. Your first meetings will be on the ... Meeting in _____ (coordinator) will send you an e-mail to remind you.

EARTH INSTITUTE INTRODUCTORY PRESENTER'S CHECKLIST

- _____ ***Take the following materials with you*** to the presentation: 1) course books, 2) course descriptions (one for everybody), 3) eco-party sign-up sheet (if offered), 4) class organizing sign-up sheet, 5) contribution cards and envelopes (10 of each)
- _____ Arrive five minutes early. Greet each person as he or she arrives.
- _____ Introduce yourself as a volunteer or community organizer for NWEI.
- _____ Have a round of introductions. Something personal. (Make a seating chart so you can remember names.)
- _____ Describe the history of the Earth Institute Network, and your local affiliate (if representing an affiliate).
- _____ State and explain the mission. Use graphics if desired.
- _____ Invite everyone to contribute. Hand out contribution cards.
- _____ Describe course logistics.
- _____ Describe the course content. Hand out course descriptions.
- _____ Organize one or more classes depending on number of participants. Check with meeting sponsor for your role here.
- _____ Identify class coordinator(s). Give that person a copy of "Instructions for the Class Coordinator." Take his or her name & phone number to give to your community coordinator or the mentor, if these roles exist in your community.
- _____ Pass out books. Collect book payments. Keep track. Collect contributions to the Network.
- _____ End on time.
- _____ Arrange for a mentor for the first class, if mentors are available.