

Supplementing the Discussion Course, *Discovering a Sense of Place*

1 – INTRODUCTION

Discovering a Sense of Place is one of a series of discussion courses developed by the Northwest Earth Institute, in Portland, Oregon. This course introduces the idea that by becoming knowledgeable about one's place, and exploring it in an intimate way, a person will be more motivated to restore and protect it and to strengthen the land-based human community. Because the course deals with sense of place, it has more impact if it includes local supplements specific to the area where it is offered.

2 – THE LOCAL COURSE SUPPLEMENTS

Discovering a Sense of Place is an eight-session course. Except for Session III, *Knowing Your Bioregion*, all the sessions are generic and work equally well anywhere. Because the course was developed in Portland, the materials in Session III refer to Portland and its Cascadia bioregion. For the course to be most useful to people in your community, a local volunteer group should prepare the following supplements for use by course participants:

1. A local version of Session III should be prepared. It might include four or five readings about the local area plus a brief introduction, local practical applications, and suggestions for further readings (see Session III of the course book for a model format). Ideally, the readings will address the following matters as they relate to the local bioregion:
 - ♦ geology and/or landforms
 - ♦ climate
 - ♦ native plants and animals
 - ♦ culture of indigenous peoples
2. A local answer sheet for the bioregional quiz contained in Session III. Appendix A of the course book lists the answers for Portland, Oregon, and can be used as a model.
3. A list of local resources that might be helpful to someone who would like to live in place more fully. See the Sense of Place Local Resources – Portland Area, attached here as an example of what the resource list might include.

3 – DEVELOPING THE LOCAL COURSE SUPPLEMENTS

THE TEST GROUP

Ideally, the supplements will be prepared by the first group in your area to take the discussion course. These 8 to 10 “pioneers” should be recruited for the course with the

supplements in mind. The group should include folks with a pre-existing interest in the subject. It should also include at least one of the leaders from the local earth institute group to help guide the process. See the attached agenda for an organizational meeting of the test group.

The test group can take the course and prepare the supplements concurrently. One approach would be to hold course discussions every two weeks, with team meetings to work on the supplements on alternate weeks. When the group takes the bioregional quiz, see how much of it can be answered from the group's collective knowledge. Then someone can be assigned to research the rest of the answers and prepare an answer sheet. After each session's discussion, the group can take a few minutes to brainstorm local resources appropriate to that session. Where additional resources are needed, or specific details such as phone numbers, someone can be assigned to research those.

THE READINGS

Everyone in the group may want to participate in the process of finding readings. When one person finds a piece to recommend, it is a good idea to make two or three copies of it; one for the files, and one or two to share. The person suggesting the article should also document the author, source, publisher, copyright date, and page numbers. If possible, include the publisher's address as well to ease the permissions process.

Recommended articles should be read by several members of the group, and assigned a rating by each. Readings can be rated "yes," "no," or "maybe," or they can be given a numerical rating on a scale of 1 to 5. Readings selected for the supplement should have broad appeal. Only those which receive consistently high ratings should be included.

Many available articles about your bioregion will be quite academic or technical in nature. Since the course is intended for the general public, it is better to choose articles that have a more conversational tone. Excerpt parts of articles that are too long. If you can't find an appropriate reading for a particular topic, consider asking a local writer to write an original one for you.

When completed, the supplements should not exceed about twenty pages in length. The readings for a typical session of a discussion course can be read in about an hour. If the group wants to include more material than this the readings can be divided into two sessions.

In searching for readings, the following resources may be helpful:

- Bioregional writers, journalists, and poets
- Local naturalists
- Historical societies, geographic societies, watershed councils, Audubon Society
- Government agencies such as department of natural resources, fish and wildlife service, soil conservation service

PERMISSIONS

NWEI obtains permissions for reproduction of the materials in the generic course book. The group should obtain permission for reproducing the readings in the supplement. This will be easiest if the group selects readings from local periodicals or local writers. Permissions from national publishing firms are more difficult to obtain. See the attached Sample Permission Form.

IDENTIFICATION OF LOCAL SUPPLEMENTS

The local supplements should comprise a separate document, not incorporated into the course book, and clearly labeled so that readers will know that the course book was prepared by NWEI and the supplements were prepared by the local group. There is no need for the supplements to have the format or appearance of the course book. Photocopied pages, stapled together are perfectly adequate.

TESTING THE SUPPLEMENTS

Before you finalize the supplements, you may want to try them out on two or three test groups. Feedback from these groups will help you know if you have selected appropriate readings. Some very informative articles are not easy and fun to read. What appears to be the best information won't be the best if people don't read it.

SEND US A COPY

Once you have completed your supplements, please send a copy to NWEI, which maintains an archive of local supplements. You might also send along a brief description of how you went about developing the supplements. Your experience can be helpful to other "pioneers" as they embark on the process.

EXAMPLE

A SENSE OF PLACE LOCAL RESOURCES - PORTLAND AREA

Session II..... Responsibility to Place

- To find the name of an organization working to protect the natural features of your place (such as Friends of Fanno Creek), call the Tualatin RiverKeepers, 590-5813, or the City of Portland, 823-5524.

Session III.....Knowing Your Bioregion

- Every Wednesday morning between March and May at 7 a.m., Portland Audubon naturalists lead bird song walks. Call 292-6855.
- Visit Leach Botanical Gardens in Southeast Portland. It has native plant tours and a library.
- Ask for a copy of “Metro Green Scene” from Metro Greenspaces, 797-1870. It contains a calendar of tours, hikes, and classes.
- For workshops and presentations about how to identify edible native plants, call John Kallas at Wild Food Adventures, 775-3828.
- Just north of Portland near the confluence of the Columbia and Willamette Rivers is a remnant of the wetlands that once covered the area -- Smith and Bybee Lakes. A 19-minute video about the site can be checked out from Metro, 797-1515.

FURTHER READING

-- *Wildflowers of the Columbia Gorge* by Russ Jolley

-- Leaflets on Portland area creeks with maps and descriptions (Fanno, Johnson, Fairview, Kellogg, Mt. Scott, and the Tualatin River), Portland Audubon Society, 292-6855

SESSION IV LIVING IN PLACE

- Farmers' markets are generally open on Saturdays from June through October in various locations. (See list below.)
- Check out from the library *Gardening with Native Plants of the Pacific Northwest* by Arthur Kruckelberg (1982), a comprehensive listing with descriptions and pictures.
- For information on composting in the Portland area, visit one of Metro's home compost sites where you can observe many different systems. Better yet, sign up for a workshop by calling the Recycling Information Center at 234-3000. A “Compost at Home” brochure is also available.

Session V..... Mapping Your Bioregion

- Visit the Nature of the Northwest Information Center, 731-4444. The center has a large collection of maps, as well as books and leaflets.

Session VI.....Community

- Participate in seasonal celebrations where you live, or start your own. Portlanders celebrate the return of the Chinook salmon to the Sandy River in late September and the blooming of the trillium at Tryon Creek Park in early April.
- Do you have a desire to live in closer cooperation with a group of people? In the Portland area, call Cascadia Commons CoHousing, 650-7169, or Trillium Hollow, 297-1696.

Session VII..... Empowerment

- To turn your yard into a balanced ecosystem, gather some of the following information:
 - * “Naturescaping For Clean Rivers,” City of Portland, 261-9566
 - * “Backyard Wildlife Habitat,” National Wildlife Federation, Beth Stout at 230-0421 or Stout@NWF.org
 - * “Invite Birds to Your Home,” U.S. Soil Conservation Service, 414-3250
 - * “Alien Plant Invaders” and “Great Butterfly Plants,” Berry Botanic Garden, 636-4112
- Get a copy of *50 Simple Ways to Make Your Portland Better* from Powell’s in Beaverton.

Local Food Growers

FARMERS’ MARKETS

Hollywood Farmers’ Market
Sat., 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
On NE Hancock between
44th & 45th

**People’s All Organic
Farmers’ Market**
Wed., 2:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
3029 SE 21st Ave., Portland

Portland Farmers’ Market
Sat., 8:00 a. m. – 1:00 p.m.
SW Broadway at Montgomery

Milwaukie Farmer’s Market
Sun., 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Main St. at Harrison

CEDAR MILL
Sat., 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
NW Cornell at Saltzman

Beaverton Farmers’ Market
Sat., 8:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Washington between 3rd & 5th

Tigard Farmers’ Market
Sat., 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Hall Blvd. & Greenburg Rd.

Gresham Farmers’ Market
Sat., 8:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
On Roberts between 2nd & 5th

Hillsboro Farmers’ Market
Sat., 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
E Main St. & 2nd

FOREST GROVE
Sat., 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
19th & Ash St.

CSA FARMS

ArborEden Gardens
Corbett – 695-5801

Deep Roots Farm
Hillsboro – 693-7779

47th Avenue Farm
SE Portland – 777-4213

*Grinning Goat & Dancing
Roots*
SE Portland – 297-6328

Morning Star Farm
Forest Grove – 357-7886

Natural Harvest Farms
Canby – 263-8392

Pumpkin Ridge Gardens
Cornelius – 647-5023

Sauvie Island Organics
Portland – 621-6921

Urban Bounty Farm
Portland – 282-4245

**COMMUNITY GARDEN
PROGRAMS**

In Portland, call 823-1612.

U-PICKS

Watch for the “Tri-County
Farm Fresh Produce Guide” in
the *Oregonian* Food Day in
May, or contact the County
Extension Service in your area
for a copy.

EXAMPLE PERMISSIONS LETTER

December 3, 1999

Ms. Magazine
Liberty Media for Women
LLC 20 Exchange Place
New York, NY 10005

Dear Madam/Sir:

We request permission from you to reproduce, without cost, the following excerpt for use in an earth-centered discussion course offered by volunteers to individuals in homes, centers of faith, and workplaces. The excerpt will be one of a series of about 4 short readings to be included in a local supplement to a discussion course manual entitled Discovering a Sense of Place.

“Living Where You Live” by Hannah Holmes from Ms., Sept./Oct. 1993.

One of our primary goals is to give credit to the publication and exposure to the author. Unless you prefer another form of acknowledgment, the following credit line will be included:

“Living Where You Live” by Hannah Holmes from Ms., Sept./Oct. 1993.
Reprinted by permission of Liberty Media for Women.

Thank you very much. Enclosed is a self-addressed, stamped envelope. If you have any questions, please call at 503/227-1807 or e-mail to dick@nwei.org.

Very truly yours,

Richard E. Roy
Executive Director

Consent is granted subject to the conditions set forth above.

by _____ Date _____

**SAMPLE AGENDA FOR AN ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING OF A
DISCOVERING A SENSE OF PLACE TEST GROUP**

1. Introductions—“Say your name and tell something you love about this place.”
2. Describe the history of the Earth Institute Network, and your local affiliate.
3. State and explain the mission of the Network. (See *A Manual for Introductory Presenters of Earth Institute Discussion Courses*.)
4. Describe the course logistics.
5. Describe the course content. Hand out course books.
6. Describe the local supplements:
 - ♦ Local readings for Session III
 - ♦ A local answer sheet for the bioregional quiz
 - ♦ A list of local resources
7. Assign tasks:
 - ♦ Find readings (everyone?)
 - ♦ Research answers to the bioregional quiz
 - ♦ Research local resources
 - ♦ Obtain permissions to reproduce the selected readings
 - ♦ Write an introduction and discussion questions for the new Session III
8. Set up a schedule of meetings. For example, the group might meet weekly and hold course discussions and business meetings for the supplements on alternate weeks.
9. Remind everyone to read Session I for the next meeting.