

# CHOICES FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVING

A NINE-SESSION COURSE FOR THE WORKPLACE, FAITH CENTER OR HOME

## PURPOSE

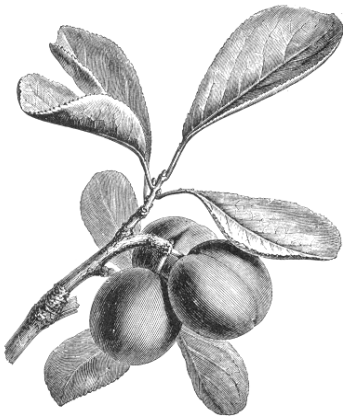
∞ To explore the meaning of sustainability.

∞ To consider the ties between lifestyle choices and their impact on the earth.

∞ To learn about steps that can be taken to move toward ecologically sustainable organizations, lifestyles, and communities.

*"I find that I think about things more – things I buy, things I eat, things I throw out. I see a much larger picture now, and I realize more than ever that I am a very important part of that picture."*

- Architect,  
Portland, Oregon



## SESSION THEMES

**A Call to Sustainability:** The goal of a sustainable society is popular, but difficult to define. How does the way our society functions affect the earth, and how can we be “a blessing to the planet”?

**Ecological Principles:** Some argue that the earth is the best teacher of sustainable practices. How can nature’s organizing principles be applied in design, production of goods, and everyday living?

**Sustainable Communities:** The more resources we use in the course of daily living, the larger our “ecological footprint” is. By looking at our actions within the framework of communities, we can learn to shrink that footprint—and gain a simpler, more balanced lifestyle.

**Sustainable Business and Economy:** Is a *growing* economy equivalent to a *healthy* economy? What are other ways of measuring success, and how can we encourage businesses to adopt sustainable practices and perspectives?

**Sustainable Food:** According to one author, our food travels an average of 1,300 miles before reaching our plates. How can we lessen our impact on the earth through choices about the way we eat?

**Sustainable Buying:** Daily messages tell us to buy, buy, buy. How can we escape from these cultural pressures, and instead only purchase what we truly need, from the most sustainable sources available?

**Sustainable Living:** The spaces and buildings we inhabit influence our lives and the earth. How can we build, work, and live together in greater harmony with the natural world?

**Visions of Sustainability:** Choices we make today are shaping the world of tomorrow. How can we create the most sustainable society for our future?

If you are interested in starting a discussion course, please contact NWEI:  
phone: (503) 227-2807 e-mail: [contact@nwei.org](mailto:contact@nwei.org) website: [www.nwei.org](http://www.nwei.org)  
NWEI 317 SW Alder St. Suite 1050 Portland, OR 97204

**Motivating individuals to examine and transform personal values and habits, to accept responsibility for the earth, and to act on that commitment.**



# VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY

AN EIGHT-SESSION COURSE FOR THE WORKPLACE, FAITH CENTER OR HOME

## PURPOSE

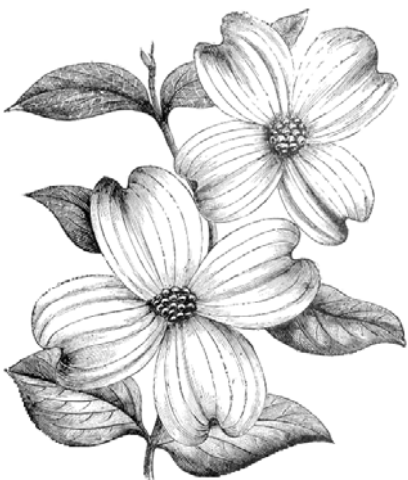
∞ To understand the meaning of voluntary simplicity.

∞ To explore the material and psychological distractions that prevent us from caring for the earth.

∞ To consider how life might be enriched through the practice of simplicity.

*"The course has given me a sense of hope and support for a happier, healthier, more balanced life."*

- Communications consultant, Portland, Oregon



## SESSION THEMES:

**The Meaning of Simplicity:** The concept of simplicity, as a religious practice or philosophy of life, has a long history. Inner simplicity and outer simplicity are both involved. What are some common misconceptions about a simple life?

**Living More with Less:** Accumulating material possessions 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?

**Your Money or Your Life:** A growing number of people wish 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?

**Do You Have the Time?:** In modern society, our minds are focused on the "busyness" of the day, our current problems, and our future challenges. Are there alternatives to the fast pace of mainstream culture?

**How Much Is Enough?:** As a society, we engage in patterns of material consumption that are damaging the environment. How much do we *really* need?

**Swimming Against the Tide:** Our country's current guiding economic principles push growth, consumption, and technological advance as inextricable and desirable goals. In our efforts to live simply, we may feel like we are swimming against the tide.

**The Practice of Simplicity:** There are countless practical benefits in moving toward simplicity. What steps can be taken to move toward a life *simple in means, rich in ends*?

If you are interested in starting a discussion course, please contact NWEI:  
phone: (503) 227-2807 e-mail: [contact@nwei.org](mailto:contact@nwei.org) website: [www.nwei.org](http://www.nwei.org)  
NWEI 317 SW Alder St. Suite 1050 Portland, OR 97204

**Motivating individuals to examine and transform personal values and habits, to accept responsibility for the earth, and to act on that commitment.**



# EXPLORING DEEP ECOLOGY

A NINE-SESSION COURSE FOR THE WORKPLACE, FAITH CENTER OR HOME

## PURPOSE

∞ To clarify earth-related values through discussions about deep ecology and related topics.

∞ To discover how personal values affect the way we view and treat the earth.

∞ To explore what it means to take personal responsibility for the earth.

*"I really enjoyed the discussion style of the course. It was wonderful to hear everyone's different viewpoints and opinions...The diversity caused me to think a great deal about my own ideas and beliefs and in many cases was inspiring."*

- Deep Ecology participant



## SESSION THEMES

**Deep Ecology:** Human beings are one of many species, everything is interconnected, and sustainability should replace economic growth as our long-term goal. How do these underlying assumptions differ from current assumptions of our society?

**The Gaia Hypothesis:** In some ways, the earth functions like a living organism, maintaining conditions favorable to life. How do the biological and physical worlds interact to create a self-regulating process?

**Spirituality and the Earth:** Some environmentalists and theologians emphasize a spiritual dimension in our relationship with the earth. Some believe spirituality is the key to finding motivation to live on a sustainable basis with other species and the earth's finite resources.

**A New Story From Science:** Scientific discoveries in physics, biology and cosmology are challenging our assumptions about how the world works. What do these discoveries teach us about our relationship to the earth?

**Native American Wisdom:** Most Americans are far removed from the earth in their daily lives. What can be learned from the rich heritage of Native Americans and their relationship with Mother Earth?

**Ecopsychology:** Modern life tends to cut us off from our bond to the natural world. Could restoration of that bond help to heal both individuals and the planet?

**Simplicity:** With conveniences of modern life come distractions. What are the benefits and challenges of living a simple life in a society dominated by materialism and technology?

**Bioregionalism:** Each person lives in a unique geographical area with natural boundaries. Will a deeper understanding of our bioregion enable us to better care for the earth?

If you are interested in starting a discussion course, please contact NWEI:  
phone: (503) 227-2807 e-mail: [contact@nwei.org](mailto:contact@nwei.org) website: [www.nwei.org](http://www.nwei.org)  
NWEI 317 SW Alder St. Suite 1050 Portland, OR 97204



**Motivating individuals to examine and transform personal values and habits, to accept responsibility for the earth, and to act on that commitment.**

# DISCOVERING A SENSE OF PLACE

AN EIGHT-SESSION COURSE FOR THE WORKPLACE, FAITH CENTER OR HOME

## PURPOSE

∞ To understand the meaning of a bioregional perspective, and what it would mean to develop one.

∞ To consider the benefits of consciously developing an intimate relationship with your place.

∞ To explore what it might mean to protect the place we live.

*"I am amazed at the connections – internal and external – I am making as a result of taking this course... connecting with the land, with people and with myself."*

- participant,  
Columbus, Ohio



## SESSION THEMES

**A Sense of Place:** Wendell Berry, America's best-known bioregionalist, says *if you don't know where you are, you don't know who you are*. With a sense of place, your identity is defined— to a significant extent— by the natural features of the place you live. Without a sense of place, what will fill the void?

**Responsibility to Place:** There is a difference between living *on* the land and dwelling *in* it—understanding its rhythms, its potential, and its limits. Those who develop intimacy with a place over time tend to accept responsibility for it.

**Knowing Your Bioregion:** Your bioregion is a unique place with its own watershed, soils, climate, plants, animals, and history. How much do you know about it?

**Living in Place:** Living in place means consciously trying to satisfy your needs and find your pleasures in your local bioregion and working to assure the long-term health of the bioregion.

**Mapping Your Place:** Mapping can be learned by local groups and individuals to give a new sense of place. A typical map shows political subdivisions and transportation routes. A bioregional map delineates regions based on watersheds, climate, and plant types—and helps people relate to their natural surroundings.

**Building Local Community:** A bioregionalist assumes responsibility for the health and continuity of a place, not only its natural features, but also the social bonds of its people.

**Empowerment:** Knowing a place can inspire and empower one to take action to preserve it or take part in its restoration. How important is individual and group action in modern society?

If you are interested in starting a discussion course, please contact NWEI:  
phone: (503) 227-2807 e-mail: [contact@nwei.org](mailto:contact@nwei.org) website: [www.nwei.org](http://www.nwei.org)  
NWEI 317 SW Alder St. Suite 1050 Portland, OR 97204



Motivating individuals to examine and transform personal values and habits, to accept responsibility for the earth, and to act on that commitment.

# GLOBALIZATION AND ITS CRITICS

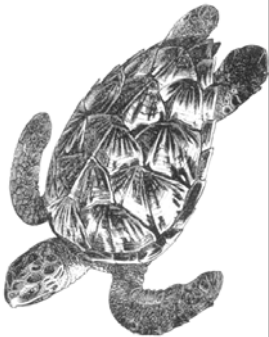
A NINE-SESSION COURSE FOR THE WORKPLACE, FAITH CENTER OR HOME

## PURPOSE

- ∞ To understand the institutions, processes and effects of globalization.
- ∞ To examine how personal choices affect globalization.
- ∞ To explore a variety of possible future visions and how they can be cultivated.

*"The conversations were amazing. We got deep into fascinating issues, and didn't want to stop. I had no idea I would learn so much."*

- Globalization course participant



08 / 09 / 2005

## SESSION THEMES

**Globalization Overview:** "Globalization" is a term that is frequently used but seldom defined. Since World War II, why has the global economy grown so rapidly? How is it affecting the environment, local economics, and social and cultural customs throughout the world?

**Questioning Free Trade:** "Free trade" proponents call for the elimination of all barriers to trade between countries (like tariffs) and for the World Trade Organization (WTO) to settle all trade disputes. The more exporting and importing the better. What are the positive and negative impacts of free trade?

**Transnational Corporations:** Globalization encourages the growth of transnational corporations that purchase or manufacture goods and sell them around the world. How does this affect workers, consumers, and communities?

**Food and the Global Marketplace:** The local grocery store is now a global marketplace. The products travel a great distance, and local growers and processors must compete with far away suppliers. What are the long-term consequences?

**Globalization and the Environment:** Some people argue that globalization disregards the needs of the natural systems on which it relies. Others believe that concern for the environment is not pertinent to trade. What are the implications of this latter approach?

**Social Equity:** Proponents say that globalization will "lift all boats." Critics argue that the gap between rich and poor is widening and the beneficiaries are the captains of industry and wealthy investors. Is social equity relevant to trade issues?

**Shaping Opinion:** Corporations seek to shape opinion through techniques that are invisible to most of us. What are the implications of school curriculum prepared by corporations, news reports prepared by public relations firms, and "educational" organizations set up by industry groups?

**Homogenization of Cultures:** Free trade, with its attendant introduction of western products and outlets, is changing local cultures throughout the world. What is gained and lost through the homogenization of cultures?

If you are interested in starting a discussion course, please contact NWEI:  
phone: (503) 227-2807 e-mail: [contact@nwei.org](mailto:contact@nwei.org) website: [www.nwei.org](http://www.nwei.org)  
NWEI 317 SW Alder St. Suite 1050 Portland, OR 97204

**Motivating individuals to examine and transform personal values and habits, to accept responsibility for the earth, and to act on that commitment.**



# HEALTHY CHILDREN – HEALTHY PLANET

AN EIGHT-SESSION COURSE FOR THE WORKPLACE, FAITH CENTER OR HOME

## PURPOSE

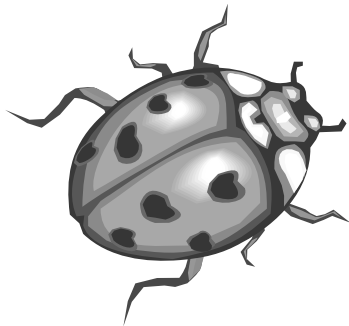
∞ To understand how the pervasive effects of advertising, media, and our consumer culture can influence a child's view of the world.

∞ To discover ways to create meaningful family times and healthful environments for children.

∞ To explore ways to develop a child's connection to nature, and to foster creativity.

*"My husband read the readings also. And for the first time in our married life we sat down and talked about our values."*

- Healthy Children – Healthy Planet course participant.



## SESSION THEMES

**Cultural Pressures:** A powerful fusion of pop culture and peer influence creates a *social smog* that has a strong influence on today's children, says author and doctor Ron Taffel. How should adults respond to these pressures?

**Family Rituals and Celebrations:** Meaningful family time can provide an antidote to cultural pressures of consumption. Explore how ritual can enrich a child's family experience and examine alternatives to elaborate celebrations and gifts.

**Advertising:** The average child sees an estimated 20,000 commercials every year. What are the effects on our children, and what steps can adults take to lessen the impact?

**Food and Health:** Many schools serve high-fat lunches, soda, and candy is readily available on school grounds. What is the link between diet and learning? How can adults encourage children to include healthy foods in their meals?

**Time and Creativity:** Today's children may have schedules that rival the busiest adults. How can adults help children find balance between activities and unstructured time, which is often the source of creativity?

**Technology and the Media:** Opinions differ on whether computers hinder or help the natural process of child development. Watching TV can displace more valuable experiences. What steps can adults take to create a healthy media environment at home?

**Exploring Nature:** Children have an affinity for the natural world and as Rachel Carson says, "an inborn sense of wonder." As children spend more time indoors, they connect less to the wild places in their neighborhood. How can we give children the opportunity to connect with the natural world?

For more information contact:

Northwest Earth Institute, 317 Alder, Suite 1050 Portland, OR 97204  
(503) 227-2807, [contact@nwei.org](mailto:contact@nwei.org), [www.nwei.org](http://www.nwei.org)

Motivating individuals to examine and transform personal values and habits, to accept responsibility for the earth, and to act on that commitment.



Motivating individuals to examine and transform personal values and habits,  
To accept responsibility for the earth, and to act on that commitment



# COURSE BOOK ORDER FORM

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**YES!** I would like to order course books and introductory materials.

They will be used in discussion groups, ideally with eight to twelve people (min of 6, max of 14).

Name/Org. \_\_\_\_\_

Address (Not a PO Box) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Home phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-

mail address \_\_\_\_\_ Fax ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Class Location (check one)  home  workplace  faith center  other: \_\_\_\_\_

Class Start Date \_\_\_\_\_ Three Week Delivery \_\_\_\_\_ Eight Business Days Delivery \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Deep Ecology @ \$15 each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Voluntary Simplicity @ \$15 each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Choices for Sus Living @ \$15 each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Discovering Sense of Place @ \$15 each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Globalization and Its Critics @ \$15 each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Healthy Children @ \$15 each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Guide for the Local Organizer\* = \$ 3.00

*\*Required if this is your first course.*

Shipping and handling charges = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NWEI Membership: Starts at \$35 \*\* = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Donation to National Network \*\* = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total** = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Shipping/Handling

#### **Three week delivery**

under 13 books = \$15.00

13-30 books = \$22.00

31-60 books = \$31.00

#### **Eight business days delivery**

under 13 books = \$25.00

13-30 books = \$40.00

31-60 books = \$70.00

\*\* Optional - Become a member or just show support and receive our quarterly newsletter, *EarthMatters*.

### **NWEI NEEDS PAYMENT PRIOR TO SENDING OUT COURSE BOOKS.**

**If you have questions or need assistance, please call.** Phone: (503) 227-2807; Fax: (503) 227-2917

Send order form and credit card information or check payable to:

“NWEI” / Attn: National Outreach Coordinator / 317 SW Alder Street, Suite 1050/ Portland, OR 97204

Visa/Mastercard # \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration date \_\_\_\_\_

Name as it appears on credit card \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that course books and related materials developed by NWEI can only be used in connection with course offerings and cannot be distributed individually to those who do not take an NWEI course. In addition, I will not charge participants a fee for participation in the course, nor will I charge more for the course books than the actual cost of \$15 plus a share of the shipping and handling costs listed.

**The Northwest Earth Institute appreciates your efforts to offer courses in your community.**