

SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS AT WORK
A FIVE SESSION DISCUSSION GUIDE

“At the end of the day, the role of business is to generate prosperity and a better quality of life for everyone” —Ray Anderson

Five sessions of discussion where one can:

- *Evaluate the current economic model and consider the case for change*
- *Examine the concept of sustainability from an organizational perspective*
- *Evaluate principles and frameworks for guiding a vision*
- *Identify tools and strategies for implementing a framework*
- *Develop an action plan to advance organizational change*

SESSION 1..... SEEING THE BIG PICTURE

Session One gives an overview of the emerging shift toward a more sustainable way of doing business. The readings describe the challenges and opportunities organizations will face as they confront the realities of a finite Earth.

SESSION 2..... TAKING A CLOSER LOOK

As more organizations attempt to become “green,” how do we evaluate their efforts? Session Two delves into the complexities of sustainability, exploring its meaning, challenges, and opportunities.

SESSION 3.....FRAMING SUSTAINABILITY

Having considered the global challenges and the complexities of sustainability, Session Three then moves into frameworks and strategies. The three which are considered in depth are: the triple bottom line, The Natural Step, and the natural capitalism approach.

SESSION 4.....SEEING IT THROUGH

Session Four provides advice, both practical and philosophical, on making the transition to sustainability a reality. The readings offer ideas, examples, and inspiration for change whether you are a business leader, an employee or a member of a green team.

SESSION 5.....FOCUSING ON ACTION

Session Five provides a time and structure for identifying and clarifying your group’s priorities and setting realistic goals for your organization.

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NORTHWEST EARTH INSTITUTE DISCUSSION COURSES

VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY (2008)

This course explores the personal and environmental benefits of simplicity. Topics covered include: *The Meaning of Simplicity* ♦ *Living With Less* ♦ *Making a Living* ♦ *Do You Have the Time?* ♦ *Living Simply on Earth* ♦ *Celebration & Call to Action*

DISCOVERING A SENSE OF PLACE (2007)

This course considers the potential benefits of knowing and protecting our place. Will a commitment to the local bioregion affect our willingness to accept responsibility to care for the Earth? Topics covered include: *A Sense of Place* ♦ *Responsibility to Place* ♦ *Knowing Your Bioregion* ♦ *Living in Place* ♦ *Mapping Your Place* ♦ *Building Local Community* ♦ *Empowerment* ♦ *Celebration & Call to Action*

CHOICES FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVING (2009)

Each of us makes choices that have an impact on the Earth. In this course, learn about which options are more sustainable than others. Topics covered include: *A Call to Sustainability* ♦ *Ecological Principles* ♦ *Food* ♦ *Buying* ♦ *Communities* ♦ *Business and Economy* ♦ *Visions of Sustainability* ♦ *Celebration & Call to Action*

MENU FOR THE FUTURE (2009)

This course explores food systems and their impacts on culture, society and ecological systems. Participants will gain insight into agricultural and individual practices that promote personal and ecological well-being. Topics covered include: *What's Eating America* ♦ *Anonymous Food* ♦ *Farming for the Future* ♦ *You Are What You Eat* ♦ *Towards a Just Food System* ♦ *Choices for Change* ♦ *Celebration & Call to Action*

HEALTHY CHILDREN—HEALTHY PLANET (2006)

This course explores the influence our fast-paced, consumer-oriented society has on children, and how families can deal with these influences. Topics covered include: *Cultural Pressures* ♦ *Family Rituals and Celebrations* ♦ *Advertising* ♦ *Food and Health* ♦ *Time and Creativity* ♦ *Technology and the Media* ♦ *Exploring Nature* ♦ *Celebration & Call to Action*

GLOBAL WARMING: CHANGING CO₂URSE (2008)

Learn more about the history and science of global warming. Explore personal values and habits as they relate to climate change and consider actions to curb global warming. Topics covered include: *Off Course* ♦ *Collision Course* ♦ *Changing Course* ♦ *Setting a New Course* ♦ *Celebration & Call to Action*

SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS AT WORK (2009)

This five session course for the workplace is designed to further organizational sustainability initiatives. Session topics include: *Seeing the Big Picture* ♦ *Taking a Closer Look* ♦ *Framing Sustainability* ♦ *Seeing It Through* ♦ *Focusing on Action*

EXPLORING DEEP ECOLOGY

This course, which explores how personal values affect the way an individual views and treats the Earth is currently unavailable due to revision.

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