

Discovering a Sense of Place

"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

DISCOVERING A SENSE OF PLACE IS A SEVEN-SESSION DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR THE WORKPLACE, COMMUNITY CENTER OR HOME.

PARTICIPANTS IN THIS DISCUSSION COURSE WILL:

Gain an understanding of the meaning of a bioregional perspective, and what it would mean to develop one

Consider the benefits of consciously developing an intimate relationship with your place

Explore what it might mean to protect the place we live.



INSPIRING PEOPLE TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR EARTH

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DISCOVERING A SENSE OF PLACE: DISCUSSION COURSE DESCRIPTION

SESSION THEME	DESCRIPTION	READINGS
A Sense of Place	Wendell Berry, America's best-known bioregionalist, says <i>if you don't know where you are, you don't know who you are</i> . 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?	"Living Where You Live" by Hannah Holmes "The Sense of Place" by Wallace Stegner "Everybody's Ditch" by Robert Pyle "The Spirit of Place" by Wade Davis "In Praise of Hometowns" by Mary Pipher "My Empty Lot" by Joseph Kastner
Responsibility to Place	There is a difference between living <i>on</i> the land and dwelling <i>in</i> it-understanding its rhythms, its potential, and its limits. Those who develop intimacy with a place over time tend to accept responsibility for it.	"The Land Ethic" by Aldo Leopold "Rediscovery of North America" by Barry Lopez "Homeplace" by Scott Russell Sanders "Notes on Living Simply in the City" by Marilyn Welker
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?	"Initiation" by Tom Jay "Where Currents Merge" by Steve Johnson "Valley of Long Grasses" by Peter Boag "Sauvie Island" by Florence Riddle "Geology of Portland" by Marshall Gannett
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.	"The Politics of Place" by Daniel Coleman "Speaking for Douglas Fir" by Gary Snyder "Crafting Nativeness" by Jeff Bickhart "Gardening at the Seam" by Judith Larner Lowry "There's No Specialization like Home" by John Bullard "Reweaving Our Soul Connection with Food" by Paul Conrad
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.	"Mapping the Biosphere" by Gene Marshall "Mapping the Sacred Places" by Jan DeBlieu "Raise the Gates!" by Sabrina Merlo
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.	"The Web of Life" by Scott Russell Sanders "Home is Other People" by Mary Pipher "A Watershed Runs Through You" by Freeman House "Community-Based Restoration" by Christine Schneider "A Green Architect Falls in Love... with FrogSong Cohousing" "Help Groups" by Steve Whitson
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?	"Making a Difference" by Katrina Shields "The Power of One" by Sharif Abdullah "Making the Connection" by Susan Cerulean "Push for Change" by Ann Sihler "Facts About Geese" by Angeles Arrien

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