

COURSE SYLLABUS
Lewis & Clark College
Graduate School of Education and Counseling

Course Name: Ecotherapy
Course Number: CPSY 597-01
Term: Fall 2013
Department: Counseling Psychology
Faculty Name: Patricia H. Hasbach, Ph.D.
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Course Calendar & Meeting Times:

Days: (Weekends) September 14 & 15 and October 12 & 13, 2013

Times: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Locations: York Graduate Center, Room 107

Course Description:

This course in Ecotherapy focuses on broadening and deepening the practice of psychotherapy by extending the psychotherapeutic context to include the natural world in which we live. We will survey research that supports the theoretical foundations of ecotherapy found in environmental and conservation psychology, ecopsychology, evolutionary psychology, and biophilia. Specific practices and methods that incorporate nature into the therapeutic process will be explored and students will have the opportunity to practice these techniques. We will explore topics such as environmental identity, restorative effects of direct contact with nature, a “sense of place,” the concepts of a Nature Language and Human Rewilding, and contemporary influences that affect the human-nature relationship. Ethical issues unique to the practice of ecotherapy will be discussed.

Course Structure:

- This two-credit course meets on two weekends and includes self-directed and on-line activities outside of the class sessions.
- During the weekend meetings, didactic presentations will be balanced by group exercises, role plays, outdoor activities, and video presentations.
- Course activities include readings from texts and current articles, written work, on-line dialog, reflection exercises, and in-class presentations.
- Each weekend will include classroom time and outdoor activities on campus. Students should dress appropriately for the weather.

Course Goals and Objectives:

The goals for the course include:

1. Gain a comprehensive understanding of the theoretical foundations of ecotherapy.
2. Develop a deeper understanding of the influence of the human-nature relationship on our mental health and well-being, and develop strategies to address this ecological context in the therapeutic process.

3. Gain a deeper understanding of ecotherapy methods and practices, and be able to identify ways to integrate this work into students' academic and professional development.

Key values include:

- Academic rigor: Students will be challenged to demonstrate the theoretical and empirical grounding of their work, use discipline in language (e.g., recognizing multiple meanings of commonly used terms such as "nature"), and recognize the opportunities and challenges of working in interdisciplinary modes.
- Theoretical and methodological pluralism: Coursework will recognize the value of diverse theoretical and practical applications within counseling psychology.
- Self reflection and collaboration: Students will have the opportunity to examine their personal and professional motivations regarding nature-focused therapy, and to explore collaboration with other therapeutic modalities.
- Effective application: The importance of practical and measurable outcomes when working with individuals and groups will be encouraged.
- Ethical thinking: Decision making will recognize the principles of counseling ethics as well as the limitations of existing ethics codes in providing guidance for ecotherapy practices.

Course Requirements:

1. Regular class attendance
2. Since this course is designed to be an interactive experiential exploration of Ecotherapy, students' participation in class discussions and activities are essential. If there are any questions or concerns regarding the participation in any particular experiential exercise, please notify the instructor. Class participation includes:
 - a. Informed discussion of reading assignments
 - b. Engagement in class role plays and activities
 - c. Personal reflections regarding in-class activities
 - d. Respectful and constructive feedback on peers oral and written work
3. Short personal description paper
4. Reflection/process paper for Weekend One (3 pages)
5. Self directed exercises and journal entries during the mid-course month including:
 - a. Place Bonding Exercise and sharing of journal entries in some creative way
 - b. Screen Time Exercise and sharing summary with class
 - c. Unassigned Chapter Report and sharing summary with class
6. Final paper (8 - 10 pages) integrating theoretical constructs of ecotherapy, a detailed discussion of an ecotherapeutic practice, counseling ethics, and reflection on how ecotherapy informs your current or future professional practice.

Personal Description Paper - due prior to first class – post by Thursday, 9/12/13

Short personal description (2-3 paragraphs): Describe yourself (e.g., background and academic focus), your interest in and/or experiences with ecotherapy or related areas, and any goals you have for this course.

Please email your personal description to the instructor as an attachment in a Word-compatible document.

Reflection/Process Paper - due Sunday, 9/22/13

Students will submit a 3- page reflection/process paper after the first weekend meeting. This paper should focus on the readings to date and at least one class activity. The paper should (1) summarize your observations of the reading material and exercises, (2) describe your intellectual

and emotional responses, (3) and describe how the content relates to your personal life and your academic or professional plans. Papers should be submitted in APA format.

Please email your paper to the instructor as an attachment in a Word-compatible document. Your paper with comments will be returned to you via email.

Mid-course Exercise: Place Bonding – due Saturday, 10/12/13

During the four weeks between our class weekend meetings, I would like you to develop a relationship with some special place in nature. This place may be a site in wild nature, in a local park, on campus, in your own backyard or garden, or any outdoor space you are drawn to.

Please go there at least once/week for the next several weeks (minimum 4 visits). Go there at various times of the day and in different weather conditions. I would like you to write a journal entry each time you visit your special place. Here are a few suggestions for your journaling:

1. How do you feel in this place? What state of mind arises in you here?
2. What is the nature of your relationship with this place?
3. How do you experience, if at all, healing in this place?
4. What are some of the relationships you observe in this place?
5. What sensations do you notice when you are here?
6. What do you feel compelled to write about when you are in this special place?

Please bring your journal entries with you to our second weekend class meeting. You will be asked to read or share in some creative way, one entry with the class.

Please turn in a hard copy of all your journal entries to the instructor.

Mid-course Exercise: Screen Time – due Saturday, 10/12/13

During the period between our weekend meetings, I would like you to choose one week (7 days) and make a log to record the time you spent in front of a technological screen (TV, movie, computer, cell phone, iPad, iPod, tablet, etc.) Please record date, type of screen, activity, amount of time spent. Please bring your screen time log to our second weekend class meeting.

Please turn in a hard copy of your screen time log to the instructor.

Mid-course Assignment: Unassigned Chapter Summary – due Saturday, 10/12/13

Select one chapter from either text that you are particularly drawn to or curious about. Be sure that chapter is NOT one that has been assigned as a required reading. Prepare a brief summary report of the chapter and be prepared to present your chapter report to the class during our second weekend class meeting.

Please turn in a hard copy of your report to the instructor.

Final Paper - due Monday, 10/28/13

Students will submit an 8-10 page (excluding cover sheet) final paper with these four sections:

1. Theoretical foundations of ecotherapy – Discuss one theoretical construct of ecotherapy in detail (e.g., biophilia / evolutionary perspectives, ecological unconscious, phenomenology, interconnectedness of all beings, human rewilding, etc.). Your discussion should demonstrate a clear understanding of that construct and its application to the practice of ecotherapy.
2. Discuss in detail an application or eco-therapeutic practice that interests you and show how that application/ practice relates to or draws on the theoretical construct discussed in part one.

3. Review the American Counseling Association Ethics Code and identify at least one potential ethical goal or standard relevant to the eco-therapeutic practice discussed in part two.
4. Finally, discuss in a final paragraph how ecotherapy or an ecological perspective informs your current or future professional practice as a counselor/ therapist (e.g., through techniques you use, problems you address or populations or groups you work with).

Please email your final paper as an attachment in a Word-compatible document to the instructor. Your paper will be returned to you electronically with comments.

Evaluation and Assessment:

Written and oral presentations will be evaluated on the basis of their clarity, thoughtfulness, and integration of themes and issues discussed in the class. A grade of A will be given to papers and presentations that are clear, thoughtful, and tied to the themes of the course. B+ and B papers and presentations will be missing one or more of these elements. C papers and presentations will be returned for revision or a 2nd attempt. Course participation grading will also follow this format and students with unsatisfactory participation will be notified mid-course. The course may also be taken as a Credit/No Credit option.

Course Readings

The course has (2) required texts (available at the LC bookstore) and additional readings will be made available during the course.

Required texts:

Buzzell, L. & Chalquist, C. (Eds.) (2009). *Ecotherapy: Healing With Nature in Mind*. San Francisco, CA: Sierra Club Books.

Kahn, P. H., Jr. & Hasbach, P.H. (2012). *Ecopsychology: Science, Totems, and the Technological Species*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

The following schedule will help you organize your reading assignments for this course. Please come to class meetings prepared to discuss the readings assigned. Additional readings may be added by the instructor during the course.

Prior to the First Weekend Meeting:

From *Ecotherapy: Healing with Nature in Mind*:

Forward

Introduction: "Psyche and Nature in a Circle of Healing"

"Psychotherapy as if the World Mattered"

"A Psyche as Big as the Earth"

"Why and How Do Therapists Become Ecotherapists?"

Orr, D.

Buzzell & Chalquist

Robinson, L"

Roszak, T

Rust, M

From *Ecopsychology: Science, Totems, and the Technological Species*:

Introduction: "Ecopsychology: Science, Totems, and the Technological Species"

Afterword "Ecopsychology: Science, Totems, and the Technological Species"

Ch. 1 "The Topophilia Hypothesis: Ecopsychology Meets Evolutionary Psychology"

Ch. 11 "Sacred Geography"

Kahn & Hasbach

Kahn & Hasbach

Sampson, S.

Davis, W.

Prior to the Second Weekend Meeting:

From *Ecotherapy: Healing with Nature in Mind*:

"Asking Different Questions: Therapy for the Human Animal"

"Ecotherapy Research and a Psychology of Homecoming"

"Beyond the Big Lie: How One Therapist Began to Wake Up"

"Tailoring Nature Therapy to the Client"

"Children and Nature: The Great Disconnect"

"Creating Restorative Ecotherapeutic Practices"

"The Greening of the Self"

"Healing and the Great Work"

"Gardens that Heal"

Buzzell, L

Chalquist, C

Harris, S

Scull, J

Louv, R

Watkins, M

Macy, J

de Boer, K

Diehl, E.

From *Ecopsychology: Science, Totems, and the Technological Species*:

Ch. 2 "A Nature Language"

Ch. 4 "Ecotherapy"

Ch. 5 "Building the Science Base: Ecopsychology Meets Clinical Epidemiology"

Ch. 10 "Beauty and the Brain"

Kahn, Ruckert, & Hasbach

Hasbach, P

Frumkin, H

Sewall, L

Additional Bibliography

The following titles are offered as additional resources for you. They are not required reading.

Abram, D. (1996). *The Spell of the Sensuous*. New York: Vintage Books.

Abram, D. (2010). *Becoming Animal: An Earthly Cosmology*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Adams, C. (ed.) (1996). *The Soul Unearthed: Celebrating Wildness and Personal Renewal Through Nature*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons.

Bechtel R. B. & Churchman, A. (Eds.) (2002) *Handbook of environmental psychology*. New York: Wiley.

Berry, Thomas (1998). *The dream of the earth*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books

Bronfenbrenner, Urie. (1979). *The ecology of human development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Chalquist, C. (2007). *Terrapsychology*. New Orleans, LA: Spring Journal Books.

Clayton, S. & Myers, G. (2009). *Conservation psychology*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.

Clayton, S., & Opatow, S. (2003). (Eds.) *Identity and the Natural Environment*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Clinebell, H. (1996). *Ecotherapy: Healing ourselves, healing the earth*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Cohen, M. J. (1995). *Well mind, well earth*. Roche Harbor, WA: World Peace University press

Dryzek, J. S. (1997). *The Politics of the Earth: Environmental Discourses*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Fisher, A. (2002). *Radical ecopsychology: Psychology in the service of life*. New York: State University of New York Press.

Gardner, P. & Stern, P. C. (2002). *Environmental problems and human behavior* (2nd Ed.). Boston: Pearson Custom Publishing.

Hillman, J. & Ventura, M. (1992). *We've had a hundred years of psychotherapy and the world's getting worse*. San Francisco: Harper Collins.

Hulme, M. (2009). *Why we disagree about climate change*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Kahn, P. (1999). *The Human Relationship with Nature: Development and Culture*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Kahn, P. (2011). *Technological Nature: Adaptation and the Future of Human Life*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

- Kahn, P.H., Jr. & Hasbach, P.H. (2013). *The Rediscovery of the Wild*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press
- Kidner, D. W. (2001). *Nature and psyche*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Macy J., & Brown, M. Y. (1998). *Coming back to life: Practices to reconnect our lives, our world*. Gabriola Island, British Columbia: New Society Publishers.
- Nicholsen, S. W. (2002). *The love of nature and the end of the world*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Louv, R. (2011). *The Nature Principle: Human restoration and the end of nature-deficit disorder*. Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill.
- Lundberg, A. (1998). *The environment and mental health: A guide for clinicians*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Orr, D. (1992). *Ecological literacy*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Plotkin, B. (2008). *Nature and the Human Soul*. Novato, CA: New World Library.
- Plotkin, B. (2013). *Wild Mind: A Field Guide to the Human Psyche*. Novato, CA: New World Library.
- Roszak, T., Gomes, M., Kanner, A. (1995). *Ecopsychology: Restoring the Earth, Healing the Mind*. San Francisco, CA: Sierra Club Books.
- Roszak, T. (1992, 2001). *The voice of the earth: An exploration of ecopsychology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Phanes Press.
- Thomashow, M. (2002). *Bringing the biosphere home: Learning to perceive global environmental change*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press
- Totton, N. (2011). *Wild Therapy: Undomesticating Inner and Outer Worlds*. Ross-on-Wye, UK: PCCS Books.