

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

**Course Name:** Eco-therapy  
**Course Number:** CPSY 590  
**Term:** Spring 2010  
**Department:** Counseling Psychology  
**Faculty Name:** Thomas Joseph Doherty, Psy.D.  
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**Course Calendar & Meeting Times:**

**Days:** (Weekends) March 13 – 14, 2010 & April 17 – 18, 2010

**Times:** 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

**Locations:** SCCC 107

**Catalogue Description:**

This course will provide resources and techniques for mental health providers to utilize nature activities and metaphors in their therapeutic work, address environmental concerns they may encounter during the course of counseling, and harness individuals' sustainability values to foster therapeutic goals. We will review research and practices in ecopsychology, conservation psychology, and environmental psychology and explore topics such as environmental identity, grief and despair about environmental issues, restorative natural settings, green spaces and children, and the adoption of sustainable living practices.

**Course Structure:**

The course meets on two weekends and also includes self-directed and online activities outside of the class sessions. We will balance didactic presentations with exercises, role-plays, outdoor activities, and video presentations. Course activities include readings, written work, online dialog, personal exercises, and in-class presentations.

**Course Goals and Objectives:**

The goals for our course include providing students with:

- (1) An introduction to ecotherapy practices in counseling and a survey of related research-based approaches in environmental and conservation psychology
- (2) A personal and experiential sense of how this material relates to their life and identity
- (3) Ways to integrate this work into their academic and professional development.

Students will be guided toward self-reflection regarding their own ecological identity and motivations regarding integrating environmental approaches into counseling psychology. Key outcomes will be recognizing the diverse and sometimes competing environmental discourses and worldviews that coexist within an ecotherapy paradigm and accepting and learning from different social, political environmental viewpoints.

**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 pitfalls of working in interdisciplinary modes.
- Theoretical and methodological pluralism: Coursework will recognize the value of diverse theoretical and practical applications within counseling psychology and ecologically-focused psychology.
- Self reflection and collaboration: Students will be provided opportunities for examination of personal and professional motivations regarding ecologically-focused psychology and opportunities for collaboration across the value systems.
- Effective application: The importance of practical and measurable outcomes when working with individuals and the local community 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 ecologically- based action.

**Course Requirements:**

1. Regular class attendance
2. Class participation:
  - a. Informed discussion of readings
  - b. Engagement in class role plays and activities
  - c. Personal reflections regarding in-class exercises
  - d. Respectful and constructive feedback on peers oral and written work
3. Short personal description (50-75 words)
4. Reflection paper for weekend one -- Two pages maximum (500-1000 words).
5. Self directed exercises and journal entries during mid-course month
6. Final paper integrating constructs related to ecotherapy, counseling ethics, and counseling skills in an ecotherapy context.

**Personal Description Due: At first class weekend 3/14/10**

Short personal description (50-75 words): Describe yourself (e.g., background and academic focus), your interests or experiences with ecotherapy or related areas, and any goals you have for this course.

*\*Post this electronically to the course Moodle Site*

**Reflection Paper      Post to class website      Due 3/21/10**

Choose **two** of the readings and **one** class exercise and (1) briefly summarize each, (2) describe your intellectual and emotional responses, and (3) how the content relates to your personal life and your academic or professional plans. Two pages maximum (1000 – 1500 words). *\*Post this electronically to the course Moodle Site.*

**Moodle Dialog      Post to class website      Due 3/28/10**

Review at least one classmate’s Online Paper and provide substantive feedback (e.g., points of agreement, differing views, additional ideas).

**Final Papers Post to class website Due 5/1/10**

1. Speak to a core theme or specific construct of ecotherapy (e.g., biophilia / evolutionary perspectives, theoretical conceptions of ecological self). Discuss how this construct or theme relates to the practice of ecotherapy.
2. Review the American Counseling Association Ethics Code and identify at least three potential ethical goals or standards relevant to eco-therapy in practice. Chose three course readings and explain how they provide theoretical or empirical support for the ethics topics you have chosen.
3. Finally, discuss how ecotherapy or an ecological perspective informs your current or future professional practice as a counselor (e.g., through techniques you use, problems you address or populations or groups you serve).

Three pages maximum (1500-2000 words). Post this electronically to the course Moodle Site.

**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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

**Moodle Login Instructions**

*Note: Continuing Studies Students who are not registered Lewis & Clark students will be manually enrolled in the Moodle system by the IT Dept.*

1. Go to the Moodle course page at: <https://moodle.lclark.edu/course/view.php?id=1106>
2. When prompted, login to Moodle using your L&C login and password
3. Next you'll be prompted to enter the enrollment key for the course – use: eco

Once you've enrolled in the class, you can simply go to [moodle.lclark.edu](http://moodle.lclark.edu) and the Foundations of Ecopsychology course will be listed in your My Courses list. You can also find it in the Graduate School - Counseling Psychology section on the LC Moodle web page.

If you have problems enrolling, the IT can help at x7225 (Help Desk), x6195 (Damian Miller, Grad IT consultant) or email [consult@lclark.edu](mailto:consult@lclark.edu).

**Posting your personal description:**

1. Click on " Ecotherapy Spring 2010 Forum " on the top of the course will page.
2. Click "Add new discussion topic"
3. Create a title (e.g., " Thomas's personal description")
4. Type or paste your personal description in the message box
5. Click "post to the forum"

## **Course Readings**

The course has (2) required texts (available at the LC bookstore) and additional readings available on the Lewis & Clark Moodle Site.

### **Required texts:**

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

Roszak, T., Gomes M. E., & Kanner A. (Eds.). *Ecopsychology*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books

### **Text Readings**

#### *Ecotherapy: Healing With Nature in Mind*

Forward – Orr  
Introduction – Buzzell & Chalquist  
A psyche as big as the earth – Roszak  
Ecopsychology as radical praxis – Fisher  
Ecotherapy research & psychology of homecoming – Chalquist  
The path to happiness: integrating nature with therapy – Burns  
Opening to the other – Conn  
Tailoring nature therapy to the client – Scull  
Children and nature: the great disconnect – Louv  
Creating restorative ecotherapeutic practices – Watkins

#### *Ecopsychology*

Ecopsychology and the environmental revolution – Brown  
Where psyche meets Gaia – Roszak  
A psyche the size of the earth - Hillman  
The psychopathology of the human nature relationship – Metzner  
The all-consuming self – Kanner & Gomes  
Jungian psychology and the world unconscious – Aizenstat  
Ecological groundedness in gestalt therapy - Calahan

### **Moodle Readings:**

Anthony, K. H. & Watkins, N. J. (2002). Exploring pathology: Relationships between clinical and environmental psychology. In R. B. Bechtel & A. Churchman (Eds.). *Handbook of environmental psychology*. (pp. 129 – 148). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

American Psychological Association [APA] Task Force on the Interface Between Psychology and Global Climate Change (2009). *Psychology and Global Climate Change: Addressing a Multi-faceted Phenomenon and Set of Challenges*. <http://www.apa.org/science/climate-change/>. Retrieved 8/31/09.

Bragg, E. A. (1996). Towards the ecological self: Deep ecology meets constructionist self theory. *Journal of environmental psychology*, 16, 93-108.

Chawla, L. – Life Paths into Effective Environmental Action

Chawla, L. – Significant Life Experiences Revisited

- Connor, L., Albrecht, G., Nick Higginbotham, N., Sonia Freeman, S. & Smith, W. (2004). Environmental Change and Human Health in Upper Hunter Communities of New South Wales, Australia. *EcoHealth 1 (Suppl. 2)*, 47–58.
- Davis, J.L., Green, J. D. & Reed, A. (2009). Interdependence with the environment: Commitment, interconnectedness, and environmental behaviors. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 29*, 173–180
- Doherty, T. J. (2009). A peer reviewed journal for ecopsychology. *Ecopsychology, 1*. 1-7.
- Doherty, T, J. (2009). Shierry Weber Nichol森: The *Ecopsychology* Interview *Ecopsychology, 1*, 110-117.
- Edwards, S. A. & Buzzell, L. (2008). The waking up syndrome. *Hope Dance*. <http://www.hopedance.org/cms/content/view/413/106/>. Retrieved: 4/1/09
- Fritze, J. G., Blashki, G. A., Burke, S. and Wiseman, J. (2008). Hope, despair and transformation: Climate change and the promotion of mental health and wellbeing. *International Journal of Mental Health Systems, 2*.
- Kahn, P. – The Biophilia Hypothesis
- Kaplan & Kaplan – The Restorative Benefits of Nature
- Kaufman, L. (2010, January 17). Therapists Report Increase in Green Disputes. *The New York Times*.
- Kazdin, A. (2009). Psychological science’s contributions to a sustainable environment. *American Psychologist, 64*, 339-356
- Kempton, W. & Holland, D. C. (2003) Identity and sustained environmental practice. In S. Clayton & S. Opatow (Eds.). *Identity and the natural environment: The psychological significance of nature*. (pp. 317-341). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Kidner, D. (2007). Depression and the natural world: Towards a critical ecology of psychological distress. *The International Journal of Critical Psychology, 19*. 123-146.
- Leslie, E. & Cerin, E. (2008). Are perceptions of the local environment related to neighborhood satisfaction and mental health in adults? *Preventive Medicine, 47*, 273-278.
- Macy, J. – Coming Back to Life – Chapter 2
- Maiteny, P. T. (2002). Mind in the gap: Summary of research exploring “inner” influences on pro-sustainability learning and behavior. *Environmental Education Research, 8*, 299-306.
- MIND 2007 Report Ecotherapy: The green agenda for mental health. Available: [http://www.mind.org.uk/assets/0000/2138/ecotherapy\\_report.pdf](http://www.mind.org.uk/assets/0000/2138/ecotherapy_report.pdf)
- Opatow, S. & Brook, A. (2003). Identity and exclusion in rangeland conflict in S. Clayton & S. Opatow (Eds.). *Identity and the natural environment: The psychological significance of nature*. (pp. 249-271). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Orchin, I. – In Consultation: Taking Therapy Outdoors

Plotkin, B. – The Wild Human

Plotkin, B. – Soulcraft Prologue

Randall, R. (2009). Loss and Climate Change: The Cost of Parallel Narratives  
*Ecopsychology, 1*, 118-129.

Roszak – Afterward: Ecopsychology Since 1982

Ryan, R.M., et al., (2009). Vitalizing effects of being outdoors and in nature, *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, \_\_

Saunders, C. – The Emerging Field of Conservation Psychology

Searles, H. (1972). Unconscious processes in relation to the environmental crisis. *Psychoanalytic Review, 59*, 361-374.

Schultz, P. W. (2009). The Moral Call of the Wild. *Scientific American*. Available online at:  
<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=moral-call-of-the-wild&print=true>

Schultz, P. W., & Tabanico, J. (2007). Self, identity, and the natural environment. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 37*, 1219-1247.

Smith, D. (2010, January 27). Is there an ecological unconscious? *The New York Times*.

Soule, M. – What is Conservation Biology?

Stern, P. (2000). Toward a Coherent Theory of Environmentally Significant Behavior. *Journal of Social Issues, Vol. 56*, 407-424

Stokols, D., Misra, S., Runnerstrom, M. G. & Hipp, A. (2009). Psychology in an age of ecological crisis. *American Psychologist, 64*, 181-193.

Tarnas, R. – The Great Initiation

## **Weekend # 1      March 13-14, 2010**

**Topics: See agenda**

**Experiential activities: See agenda**

**Video Presentations: See agenda**

- *Ecopsychology* video and discussion

### **Ecotherapy Demonstrations:**

- Pat Hasbach:
  - Intake session
  - Relaxation Exercises
  - Use of poetry and ritual
- Thomas Doherty:
  - Facilitating lifestyle changes
  - Group Therapy Activities

## **Mid-Course March – April 2010**

### **Mid-course Exercise: Place Bonding**

During the four weeks between our class meeting weekends, we 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. Go there at various times of the day and in different weather conditions. We 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 the relationships 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.

**See class and Moodle for additional activities**

## **Weekend # 2      April 17-18, 2010**

### **Experiential activities: See Agenda**

- Nature and self observation exercise
- Individual reflection and group discussion: Branding and media influences
- ACA Ethics Code exercise

### **Video Presentations: See Agenda**

- *A Sense of Place* video and discussion
- Joanna Macy video and discussion

### **Ecotherapy Demonstrations: See Agenda**

- Pat Hasbach: Outdoor relaxation exercise using restorative natural setting imagery
- Thomas Doherty: Diagnostic interview

## **Additional Ecotherapy Bibliography**

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

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

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

Cronon, W. (1995). The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong  
Nature. In W. Cronon (Ed.), *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*  
(pp. 69-90). New York: Norton

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* (2<sup>nd</sup> 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
- 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: MIT Press.
- Nordhaus, T. & Shellenberger, M. (2007). *Break through: From the death of environmentalism to the politics of possibility*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- 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.
- Thomashow, M. (2002). *Bringing the biosphere home: Learning to perceive global environmental change*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press