



Social Dimension

The Social dimension of the EDE addresses vital aspects to human existence in the following five modules:

Module 1

Building Community and Embracing Diversity discusses the basics of building community, and teaches values and skills that help foster an atmosphere of trust.

Module 2

Communication Skills and Decision Making is a journey into learning the art of decision making, conflict management, and the effective facilitation of groups.

Module 3

Leadership and Empowerment offers lessons in distinguishing between 'power from within' and 'power over', and developing leadership skills as an important part of taking responsibility.

Module 4

Art, Ritual, and Social Transformation describes how communities and individuals can awaken their creative powers of celebration.

Module 5

Education, Personal Networks and Activism Takes a Look at the dimensions of knowledge and awareness that connect us to past and future generations, as well as to communities all around the globe.

Participants will learn to...

- create a common vision for a collective project linked to our bioregion
- improve our leadership skills and inclusive group membership processes
- make decisions that everyone can accept and support
- treat conflict and diversity as a source for ideas, beliefs and solutions
- create spontaneous and intentional rituals and celebrations



Ecological Dimension

Module 1

Green Building and Retrofitting begins the teaching of how to construct or retrofit healthier, more ecologically friendly and energy efficient environments with a distinctly vernacular, regional flair.

Module 2

Local Food and Nutrient Cycles makes participants aware of the need to grow food locally, for reasons of personal health and planetary well-being.

Module 3

Water, Energy and Infrastructure (appropriate technology) provides an overview of 'state-of-the-art' technologies with a realistic appraisal of their effectiveness.

Module 4

Nature and Urban Regeneration, and Disaster Recovery describes the many ways in which the ecovillage knowledge may be useful in restoring and regenerating the health of the local environment. An Integrated Ecovillage Design, then, is the most effective way to rebuild after human- and nature-caused disasters also recreating the social fabric.

Module 5

Whole Systems Approach to Design. This is an abbreviated and condensed introduction to the very holistic, systemic process by which designers integrate the ecovillage or the Transition Towns project into its local ecology, thus creating a human-scale microcosm of the macrocosm, a focalized holographic representation of the cosmic whole. This is the culmination of all previous Modules in the EDE series, in both concept and practice. The ecological/permaculture part of this is given special treatment.

Participants will learn to...

- design integrated systems: worldview, social, ecological, and economic
- design and/or participate in a local food production system or CSA
- design integrated infrastructures of water, energy, and mobility
- measure and design for carbon neutral ecological footprints
- to rebuild and restore nature and ecological settlements, urban and rural



Economical Dimension

Module 1

Shifting the Global Economy to Sustainability begins the Economic Dimension with an exploration of the forces and interests that shape the current global economy, and of the types of policies that are required to set it on a more sustainable course: this forms the basis of the first module - an analysis of global economics. While noting that structural changes are required at the global level, we also note that there is a need for the emergence of vibrant, locally based alternative economies - so that the shoots of the new burst forth, even as the old system crumbles in on itself. This is where ecovillages have a key role to play in researching, demonstrating and teaching new, alternative approaches to economic life.

Module 2

Right Livelihood looks at how current economic structures and incentives make it generally less profitable to produce on a small scale for local needs using local raw materials - exactly the kind of production systems required if we are to live within the Earth's carrying capacity. Until those structures and incentives begin to change, our economic behavior needs to be strongly informed by values-based choices: how much is enough? What is the relationship between levels of material consumption and human well-being? Is our wealth dependent on the poverty of others? Is our wealth dependent on the degradation of the other-than-human world? In what cases might one choose to consume less or to pay more than strictly necessary? Such values-based questions form the subject of our second module.

Module 3

Local Economies looks in particular at social entrepreneurship in a local context, which has greatly grown in significance in recent years. Social enterprises, a growing feature of many ecovillages, are engaged in providing employment to the marginalized and disadvantaged, restoring degraded ecosystems and providing for community needs, including child-care, care for the elderly and the supply of healthy, organic food while also making a reasonable profit. This module explores both the theory and practice of social entrepreneurship and helping course participants understand how, in practical ways, they may become more involved in creating or supporting such enterprises in their own communities. We will also look at the range of goods and services that appear to be appropriate for ecovillage enterprises.

Module 4

Community Banks and Currencies explores another principal dimension of nurturing the local economy: the role of money and wealth. Community banks have enabled communities to channel the savings of members and supporters into local enterprises and initiatives, while local currency systems have helped to retain money within the local economy rather than hemorrhaging out into the wider speculative economy.

Module 5

Legal and Financial Issues looks at the legal and financial aspects of creating ecovillages and social enterprises. This includes how we can create a climate of abundance and distinguish between different types of finance. Emphasis is laid on the importance of aligning the ownership and legal structures chosen for ecovillages and social enterprises with the types of finance to be mobilized to create and grow them.

Participants will learn to...

- recognize dominant patterns and activate leverage points for change
- design various elements of a resilient local economy
- design and utilize community currency systems suited to local contexts
- bring personal economic activities into alignment with ecological values
- identify socially responsible local legal structures and financial strategies



Worldview Dimension

The Worldview dimension of the EDE addresses vital aspects to human existence in the following five modules:

Module 1

Holistic Worldview is an articulation of the nature of the transition we are currently living through reintegrating science and spirituality as a new worldview is emerging

Module 2

Reconnecting with Nature is a guide for reconnecting human beings with the natural world, as a spiritual practice

Module 3

Transformation of Consciousness is a poetic account of the consequences of a commitment to the spiritual journey

Module 4

Personal and Planetary Health reminds us of the unity in the close link between planetary and personal health

Module 5

Socially Engaged Spirituality expounds on the view that a spiritual life well lived is a life of active social service, and in these times the two cannot be separated

Participants will learn to...

- benefit from a regular meditation practice (meditation, yoga, prayer...)
- keep a daily journal of our dreams, insights, and observations
- deepen our connection with Nature
- creatively draft clear paths to personal health
- be a change agent, a contributor to a new world