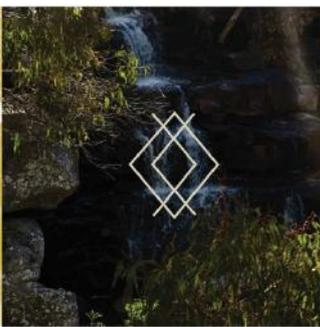




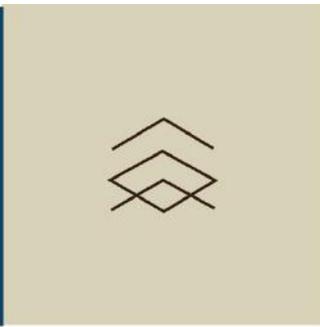
Nature's Apprentice and CERES present:

Nature Based Leadership Training 2021

Course Guide



A journey of
personal, social and
ecological change



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Overview

This immersive, nature-based leadership program is the first of its kind in Australia. Building from many years' experience delivering community learning that is grounded in the natural world, CERES and Nature's Apprentice are coming together to offer a 10-month program that will create the kind of earth-based leadership and resilience we and our communities will need in the coming decades.

This course recognises and builds on contributions from ecology, indigenous wisdom, environmental studies, eco-psychology, spiritual traditions, and place-based education, synthesizing and applying them to our local context.

Nature-based leadership draws on these and other disciplines to nurture leadership in all aspects of society, with the aim that people in all relationships—with themselves, others and the Earth itself—contribute to a healthy, peaceful and regenerative present and future.

Program Design

The course takes a hybrid approach to curriculum, including nature-based experiential activities in the outdoors, classroom discussions, online readings and commentary, and personalised projects.

Beginning and ending with nature immersion retreats outside Melbourne, as well as a mid-way winter residential, the program will cover six core modules that seek to explore both the philosophy and practice of nature-based leadership.

- 1. Tending the Wild**
- 2. Deep Nature Connection**
- 3. Village Building**
- 4. The Wider Story**
- 5. Leadership, Authenticity and Purpose**
- 6. Spirituality & Sacred Activism**

Each module will involve a set of recommended texts and readings, experiential processes and exploration of a broader context that embeds it into work for the world.

The modules will be woven together into the retreats, and studied in more detail during the twice monthly workshops and webinars.

Participants will be invited to reflect on their learnings in each module through an online platform, and during a monthly peer-to-peer mentoring call.

In the second half of the program, participants are invited to model and integrate the skills of nature-based leadership through creating a small project within their community.

As part of the final retreat, you will have the opportunity to enact a 24-hour Vision Quest to deepen and clarify your gifts and purpose going forth.

Time commitment

This is a 10-month program starting February 2021.

The program is centred around 3 nature-immersion retreats held across 2 semesters. These immersions are supported by fortnightly in-person classes (11 in total), online evening seminars (12 in total), and peer-to-peer mentoring and reflection sessions.

You will also have the opportunity to design and deliver a community project or activity of your choice, to integrate your learnings.

Retreats (locations TBC):

- February 18-21
- August 6-8
- Oct 29 - Nov 2

Each month:

- 2 x Friday Workshops
- 1 x Evening Webinar
- 1 x Evening Online Reflection Session

Semester break (June + July):

Deliver a small community activity or project.

22 contact hours per month, plus 3 x retreats in regional Victoria.

Outcomes

This course will take participants on a journey towards a more resilient and interconnected sense of self – rooted in the ecological, biological, sensory, emotional and rational dimensions. We call this learning through the ‘head, heart and hands.’

For the head:

- Understanding new possibilities for **systems change** on the personal, social and planetary levels
- Knowledge of contemporary **eco-psychology** philosophy and practice
- Understanding of the stories and narratives of our times

For the heart:

- A greater **sense of place and belonging**
- Greater clarity of personal **gifts** and **purpose**
- A greater depth of **spiritual practice**

For the hands:

- **Practical skills** of wildcrafting and rewilding
- Skills in **community-building** technologies, including the completion of a community project of your choice
- **Facilitation, mentoring and leadership** skills

Teachers and Facilitators

This program is designed and facilitated by Claire Dunn and Sieta Beckwith with support from guest presenters and mentors.



Claire Dunn

Claire Dunn is a writer, speaker, barefoot explorer, rewilding facilitator and founder of Nature's Apprentice. Claire is passionate about human rewilding and believes that a reclaiming of our ecological selves and belonging is key to regenerating wildness on the planet. For the last 15 years, Claire has been facilitating individuals to dive deeply into the mysteries of nature and psyche through the pathways of deep nature connection, ancestral earth skills, deep ecology, ecopsychology, soulcentric nature-based practice, village building, dance, ceremony and contemporary wilderness rites-of-passage. Claire is the author of memoir *My Year Without Matches*, which tells the story of her year living wild. Her soon to be released memoir *Rewilding the Urban Soul* explores how we might embody wild consciousness within a modern city context. Claire lives in Melbourne where she lovingly tends her garden, community and her own wild heart.



Sieta Beckwith

Over the past 15 years, Sieta has worked in strategic communications roles in social enterprise, for-profit and non-profit organisations, assisting to discover, share and live the deeper mission and vision of the places she works. Through her work as Narrative Director at CERES, Sieta is using stories centred on universal human values, to articulate the potential power of bringing people together across divides to take action for the Earth. Inspired by the work of *Emergence Magazine* (US), since 2014 Sieta has been actively engaged in the emerging Spiritual Ecology movement, which seeks to explore what is the role of spirituality in social, economic, political and ecological change. She has found joy in bringing together small groups of humans from all ages and backgrounds to explore heart-centred practice, and learning to live from a place of love and compassion for all beings. Sieta also loves supporting millennials to creatively explore new ways of thinking and being together, in a time of significant challenge. Sieta was born on Noongar country but has made her home on Wurundjeri land and loves to rockclimb, dance, weave baskets and have conversations with trees.

Guest Facilitators



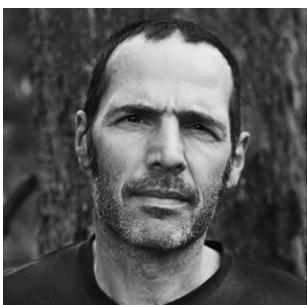
Maya Ward

Maya is passionate about deepening the connections between body, ecology and culture through writing, dancing and tending the earth. Her PhD explored shamanistic and somatic metaphysics, and she runs workshops on the role of embodiment in facilitating ecological and spiritual connection. Her memoir *The Comfort of Water: A River Pilgrimage* detailed her walk from the sea to the source of the Yarra following the length of an ancient Wurundjeri Songline. Maya lives in Warburton where she co-creates pilgrimage-based ritual, runs contact improvisation dance classes, and grows food and replants forest.



Beth Hill

Beth studies and writes about the relationship between humans and the more-than-human-world, questioning the categories of 'nature' and 'culture'. Her research is concerned with the cultural and psychological dimensions of climate change: beyond adaptation and mitigation, in the possibility for transformation that climate change represents. Beth also designs and facilitates workshops for those coming to terms with the complex alchemy of hope and despair in these times of climate crisis.



Patrick Jones

Dr Patrick Jones currently works at the School of Applied Neopeasantry, Tree Elbow University, Dja Dja Wurrung country, Australia. Patrick teaches permaculture living courses (PLCs) and does research in Permaculture, Sociobiology and Applied Ecology. His most recent publication is his chapter, 'Reclaiming accountability from hypertechnocivility, to grow again the flowering Earth' (in *Perma/Culture*, Routledge 2017)



Gilbert Rochecouste

Gilbert is recognised locally and Internationally as a leading voice in Placemaking and the creation of vibrant, resilient and loved places. He is a sought after speaker and skilled facilitator for community and stakeholder engagement activities and has worked with over 1000 cities, towns, mainstreets and communities over the past 25 years. Gilbert co-founded the EPOCH Foundation promoting the adoption of business ethics. He has been on the boards of Ross House, Donkey Wheel House Trust and Hub Australia. Gilbert leads a multi-disciplinary team of Placemakers, researchers and designers.

About this course

We live in times of significant challenge; individually, collectively and ecologically. These challenges have the capacity to help us remember the interconnection between all life, and draw on both ancient and contemporary wisdom to understand more fully how we can embody our greatest potential as well as meet the needs of the times.

This training is a pioneering learning experience - a deep dive into the most pressing questions of our times; how we can live personally and collectively from a new story based on interconnectedness, reverence, compassion, reciprocal responsibility and service.

A response to the needs of our time

Often our well-intentioned efforts to repair the world are treating symptoms rather than causes. While this healing work is important, fundamental causes at the heart of Western culture remain unchanged - causes arising from a story of separation which holds that we are separate individuals competing for scarce resources, separate even from the earth that is in essence our larger body.

Compare this to the millennia in which humans held a very different myth - one of connection and intimacy with their environment. This story formed the centre of spiritual and community life and governed a regenerative relationship with the more-than-human-world.

The legacy of the myth of separation includes greed, dispossession of country, environmental destruction, profits over people and nature, loss of meaning, and the epidemic of isolation and disconnection that characterises modern life.

An imperative of our times is to understand and address this destructive story, and begin to live and create a different one based on both ancient and modern wisdom, and a renewed awareness of our interdependence with Earth.

This program seeks to meet this need; to decolonise and deconstruct the old story and instead, experience together the emergence of a new story based on cooperation, interrelationship and belonging; strengthening our relationship to self, community and to the living earth.

More than ever we need the support and inspiration of a heart-centred community, as well as fresh conceptual pathways that offer us a new story based on an abiding sense of belonging to the natural world.

Together we will explore the myths and narratives of the past and present that may serve the emergence of a new story, and seek to not just *know* them but *live* them; pioneering together a re-writing of the contemporary myth of our times.

The Learning Environment

The educational container of this program aims to support multiple modes of learning: intellectual enquiry, embodiment and activity, as well as multiple measures of knowledge: community resilience, ecological awareness and spiritual depth.

Learning and education is primarily emergent and experiential, and guided by the collective direction the group takes. Our classrooms are equally the wild world, the circle of community we gather with, and our own personal inquiry.

Holistic learning will take place through the tripod of the head, heart and hands.

The head engages our intellect. Here we read, discuss and reflect on ideas and concepts that are both guiding and blocking our new story; both our own and the latest in pioneering philosophers and thinkers.

The heart is what really motivates us to act. This is where we open up to greater connection to ourselves, to the more-than-human-world, and to each other. This is where we dive into our passions and gifts and find true commitment to our values within a supportive heart-centred village.

With our hands we embody what we know. Here learning happens through physical engagement. We sit in circle around the fire. We listen. We develop real skills of earth living: carving a fire kit or weaving a basket. Here we open our senses to the wilder world, build ecological literacy of place and sink our roots into where we live and work.

Core Curriculum

The curriculum is structured around six modules that will guide participants toward a deeper connection with self, community, and the natural world.

Each topic could be explored and studied deeply in its own right, and we will offer insights from some of the leading thinkers and pioneers in each area, grounded in our own experiences as facilitators. Participants may wish to further explore some areas after the program, and we expect each person will bring knowledge and experience to share of their own.

	<h3>1. Tending the Wild</h3> <p><i>What does “wildness” mean as an inner and outer experience? Why is it important and how do we access it when living in urban or suburban areas?</i></p> <p>The wilds of both our inner and outer landscapes have been paved over and domesticated by western culture. Our relationship with the wild is a source of aliveness, vitality and inspiration. In this component we will learn earth-skills and practices to court and cultivate the wild back into ourselves and our lives including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earth-living skills and wildcrafting: shelter, water, fire, fibre, basketry • Edible and medicinal food plants • Indigenous perspectives and earth intimacy • Rewilding philosophy and practice • Caretaker and stewardship • Cultivating a ‘wild mind’ <p>Pioneers: Tom Brown Jr, Robin Wall Kimmerer, Arthur Haines, Derrick Jenson, Gary Snyder.</p>
	<h3>2. Deep Nature Connection</h3> <p><i>How do we cultivate a deeper sense of belonging, right where we are? How do we start to develop an ecological literacy of place?</i></p> <p>Our natural inheritance is to feel a deep sense of belonging. Learning and applying the core routines of deep nature connection will build strong ropes of connection between us and the places where we live. By connecting deeply to nature around us, we also start to awaken our ‘naturalness’ - our unique genius.</p> <p>The purpose of this module is to explore how nature-based practice can be a support for embodying our belonging as members of the wider Earth community:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn and practice the core routines of intimacy with the natural world • Expand sensory awareness • Reading the landscape: holistic tracking, pattern recognition and nature observation • Nature journaling and cultivating ecological literacy of place • Exploring bird language • Develop daily sit spot practices • The Art of Wandering <p>Pioneers: Jon Young, Richard Louv, Julia Butterfly Hill, Josh Lane, David Abram, Mark Coleman</p>
	<h3>3. The Wider Story: Old Stories and New</h3> <p><i>How does telling stories change anything? How do stories shape our lives, and what do the great myths have to say about the times we find ourselves in?</i></p> <p>The old story of separation is fast being replaced by a new story of connection and interrelationship. Pioneering thinkers and conceptual pathways offer a different way of locating ourselves and our work in the world: a shift from ego-centric to ecocentric:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narratives to re-imagine the world such as eco-psychology, deep ecology, sacred economics, ecological identity, systems theory, complexity theory and spiritual ecology. • Embed yourself in the new story of interrelationship. • Explore ancient myths for modern times • Learn ecocentric approaches to human development and identity. • Gain an understanding into the philosophical and historical underpinnings of disconnection and separation from nature. <p>Pioneers: Joanna Macy, Charles Eisenstein, John Seed, Thomas Berry, Tyson Yunkaporta, Martin Shaw, Bill Plotkin.</p>
	<h3>4. Village Building</h3> <p><i>How do we cultivate community resilience for the changes ahead? How do we form strong anchoring relationships that create a foundation of connections for our lives?</i></p> <p>One of the main roles of culture is to connect, yet the dominant culture is one of disconnection. A village-builder learns to see and support the big picture of what's happening in their community. They can recognise needs, gifts, strengths and possibilities for greater peace, responsibility and connection in their people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immerse in an empowering regenerative culture • Learn the technologies of village building and how to embed them into your region, project or organisation.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore song, storytelling, earth-art and creative expression • Experience and understand the role of grief in community connection • Explore the role of ceremony in community and ecological cohesion • Learn peacemaking practices • Learn cultural mentoring models for developing nature-connected communities • Explore community resilience in the context of deep adaptation such as neo-peasantry and community sufficiency • Grow capacity to give and receive feedback <p>Pioneers: Jon Young, Starhawk, Francis Weller, Tokopa Turner, Glen Ochre</p>
	<h3>5. Leadership, Authenticity and Purpose</h3> <p><i>What are the qualities of a leader and what does nature tell us about the kind of leadership the world needs at this time? How do we become the leadership that is required?</i></p> <p>Leadership, in essence, can be seen as the courage and humility to follow our deepest authenticity. This module explores how to “be the change we want to see in the world” and move forward with our visions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop mentoring and group facilitation skills and experience • Learn about patterns of power, privilege and oppression • Systems thinking: from separation to interrelationship • Explore your ‘ecological niche’: your unique purpose and appropriate delivery systems • ‘Inner Tracking’ of personal obstacles and opportunities • Embedding our work in the context of the Anthropocene • Initiation and Rites-of-Passage as cultural tools <p>Pioneers: Charles Eisenstein, Carol Sanford, Bill Plotkin, Margaret Wheatley, Bayo Akomolafe</p>
	<h3>6. Spirituality & Sacred Activism</h3> <p><i>What’s the relationship between our spiritual practices and our world work? How do we weave back together the threads of ecology, culture and spirituality?</i></p> <p>For much of our story as a people, the wider sensuous world was seen as an opening to something larger than ourselves. In this module, we will learn about different spiritual traditions and how they intersect with nature-based practices, and explore how to reconnect the spiritual with the material in our lives and work.</p> <p>This module is suitable for all belief systems. It will include the opportunity for a 24-hour solo ‘Vision Quest’ on the land.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore sacred activism, spiritual ecology and compassionate action

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deepen your own personal spiritual practice ● Expand ecological consciousness ● Deepen a practice of earth-based spirituality ● Expand the possibilities for authentic action in the word ● Explore the different spheres of activism ● Learn how to develop work that is ecological and relational <p>Pioneers: Emmanuel Vaughan-Lee, David Abram, Joanna Macy, Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann, Andrew Harvey, Chogyam Trungpa</p>
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Who this program is for

People from all backgrounds and experiences who wish to live from their purpose, and be of service to their community and the Earth at this time of great change.

Anyone who feels called to deepen their experience of connection and belonging to self, earth and community; who wants to enquire with a group of others into the largest questions of our times; who feels passionate about creative pathways of change and holds a desire to serve the world from a place that is empowered, eco-centric and community-oriented.

Schedule

FEB	Retreat 1: Welcome, Introduction, Nature Connection	4 DAYS: THU 18 - SUN 21 FEB			
	SEMESTER 1	WEBINAR	WORKSHOP	REFLECTION	WORKSHOP
MAR	Tending the Wild	3/3/21	12/3/21	17/3/21	26/3/21
APR	Deep Nature Connection	7/4/21	16/4/21	21/4/21	30/4/21
MAY	The Wider Story: Old Stories and New	12/5/21	7/5/21	26/5/21	21/5/21
JUN + JUL	Semester Break				
AUG	RETREAT 2: Going in. Deepening & reflecting.	3 DAYS: FRI 6 - SUN 8 AUGUST			
	SEMESTER 2	WEBINAR	WORKSHOP	REFLECTION	WORKSHOP
AUG	Village Building	11/8/21	20/8/21	25/8/21	3/9/21
SEP	Leadership, Authenticity and Purpose	8/9/21	17/9/21	22/9/21	1/10/21
OCT	Spirituality and Sacred Activism	6/10/21	15/10/21	20/10/21	-
NOV	RETREAT 3: Initiation, celebration & integration	5 DAYS: FRI 29 OCT - TUE 2 NOV			

Three main components:

1. **3 x Retreats:** 1 x 4 days, 1 x 3 days, 1 x 5 days. Modules are woven together and will be an opportunity to immerse ourselves in nature and connection.
2. **11 x in-person day classes on Fridays** in spring and autumn. Every fortnight for each semester, combining theory and practice for each module.
3. **6 x evening public webinars on Wednesdays:** 1 webinar on each topic, presenting an overview and introducing key ideas and thinkers in each field.
4. **6 x online evening sessions for peer-to-peer mentoring and reflection**
5. **Support to plan and initiate your own community project** in the second half of the year.

Each month:

- 1 x Webinar (2 hours)
- 2 x Fridays (8 hours each)
- 1 x Reflection Session (2 hours)

Cost

Tuition includes in-person workshops, online seminars, camping and catering on retreats, program supplies and admission to all special events.

Corporate rate / pay it forward

\$7,500

(or 2 x \$3,800 / 4 x \$1,900)

Full price

\$6,300

(or 2 x \$3,200 / 4 x \$1,600)

Student and low income

\$5,800

(or 2 x \$2,950 / 4 x \$1,475)

A limited number of scholarships are available (including for First Nations). Please get in touch with Sieta Beckwith: sieta@ceres.org.au

*Please enquire about sponsoring a young person to participate.