

RSF quarterly

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1002 O'Reilly Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94129
415.561.3900



Self-discovery at The Esalen Institute
Photo Courtesy of Doug Ellis

What is the nature of education?

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LETTER FROM DON

A Personal Story of Spirituality

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year and best wishes from everyone here at RSF! We hope you enjoy our Winter season newsletter on Education & the Arts.

As I was reading Richard Louv's wonderful guest essay on becoming "nature smart", I found myself reflecting on a recent conversation with my wife Jennifer about how we would engage with our four-year-old daughter Sabine on the subject of spirit and spirituality. Sabine has begun asking questions like, "Papa, who is God?"



Sabine and Samuel Shaffer, ages 4 and 21 mos

We want for her to be on a path of lifelong discovery related to this highly personal and important question. So we decided to draw on our personal experiences to guide us in talking with her, and upon further conversation realized that much of our own spiritual development occurred in nature.

Jennifer grew up in upstate New York and I lived in rural New Jersey. Each of us spent extended periods of unstructured time outside as young children, exploring streams, forests, and fields, in a time (not so long ago) when the internet and mobile phones did not exist. Since then, we have found our strongest connection to each other, and with spirit, when we are hiking or otherwise enjoying beautiful natural places.

Jennifer and I decided we could distill three themes for Sabine from our own experiences, in no particular order:

1. God or spirit lives in everyone and everything, and we are all interconnected.
2. God or spirit can be found in what we cannot see, measure, or understand empirically, in what is "behind" the material world, in what shows up as intuition, serendipity, and seemingly magical experiences.

3. God or spirit reveals itself when we are sharing, when we are loving, and when we are thankful.

One of my favorite descriptions of spirit comes from Robert Greenleaf, who said, "Spirit is the animating force behind the urge to serve."

Each person's understanding of spirituality is as unique as they are, so this is not meant to be any kind of prescription. As her parents, it is the best we can do for Sabine at this moment in time. There is, of course, endless terrain to be explored on the subject. And we hope she will continue to ask hard questions in her seeking, throughout her life.

Along with expressing my gratitude to Richard for his contribution, I suggest that it is imperative for us to examine constantly as a culture, what kind of education we want to provide. "How do we define intelligence?" "How can we create the ideal conditions for creativity to be developed in young people?" "What is the role of nature-based or place-based education in a world that is increasingly virtual and urban?"

We look forward to hearing from you on these and many other subjects. Please be in touch! ☺

All my best,

Don Shaffer,
President & CEO



INSIGHTS

Developmental Disability as a Challenge to our Age

by Coleman Lyles

Over the past thirty-seven years I have frequently been asked: What do we/society have to learn from developmentally disabled people? In some ways it is an odd and demeaning question, filled as it is with unfounded assumptions and some mythology.

“We are much more sensitive to the fact that developmentally disabled people are first and foremost individuals.”

The awareness around these issues has changed over thirty years—and for the better. We are much more sensitive to the fact that developmentally disabled people are first and foremost individuals. Nevertheless, like a recurring dream the question persists, what do we have to learn from them as a group? For years the standard answer was they teach us patience, acceptance, understanding, compassion. This is an oversimplification and not particularly true. Anybody who is a parent learns these lessons. Life as such teaches them.

Once we abandon the well-traveled path, a more promising avenue of exploration begins with the question of intelligence. Most developmental disabilities involve cognitive deficits. Many developmental

disabled people have lower IQs than the norm, and are intellectually unsophisticated. But IQs, as we know, have very limited weight provided the broad range of intelligences. Nevertheless, developmentally disabled individuals are not considered to be as smart as most people, in an age when being smart is everything. It is this essential aspect of the developmental disability condition that challenges society. It challenges us to understand that there is more to being human than being smart. To the extent that we fail to grasp this we are in danger of missing a calling, a calling to become truly human.

To become truly human we have to know what the human being is in his spirit, soul, and physical totality. Here the developmental disability condition is a great aid because the arrested developmental stage is a window through which the whole can be perceived. Goethe observed this in nature and conceived the archetypal plant. Similarly, the encounter with human pathology can be a revelation of the human archetype. What you will see outwardly is a symptom of the person's condition. Inwardly the forces of sympathy, empathy, compassion, and antipathy are called forth as a reminder of our own human condition. It is this encounter that instructs us in what it means to be human. It is like a sounding bell calling us to self-knowledge. And like a sounding bell, its tone reverberates within long after the last tone can be heard. 🌀

COLEMAN LYLES

is the founding President of Camphill Communities California and serves on the executive committee of the Camphill Association of North America. He has been involved with Camphill for over 37 years. Prior to moving to California in 1998, he resided at Camphill Special Schools in southeast Pennsylvania where he and his wife, Katherine, worked as house managers, special educators, and administrators while raising their two children, Mark and Jessica.

Camphill is an Intentional Community Movement for developmentally disabled people inspired by concepts of education and social life outlined by Rudolf Steiner. Camphill communities are residential life-sharing communities for adults and children with learning disabilities and other special needs, which provide services and support for work, learning, and daily life. There are over 100 Camphill communities worldwide.



GUEST ESSAY

The Future Will Belong to the Nature Smart

by Richard Louv

For all of human history and prehistory, experience in the natural world has helped shape our species, including our brains. Yet, in recent decades, our society has looked everywhere *but* toward more natural environments for healthier brain development and the enhancement of intelligence and creativity. It's time to take a fresh look at our own backyards—at nature nearby and far.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, in a speech at Henry David Thoreau's funeral service, described his friend's many talents: "He was a good swimmer, runner, skater, boatman, and would probably out-walk most countrymen in a day's journey....The length of his walk uniformly made the length of his writing. If shut up in the house he did not write at all."

These walks not only stimulated his creativity, but had practical, day-to-day application: Thoreau's outdoor experiences made him a sought-after land surveyor; he could not only outline boundaries with exactitude, but could also explain the ecological workings of an area in great detail. An amateur stream-watcher and river-gazer, he knew the secrets of local waters long before professional hydrologists took their measures. When NPR commentator John

Hockenberry reported the research that revealed greater mental acuity after a nature walk, he pointed out that Albert Einstein and the math-

ematician and philosopher Kurt Gödel, "two of the most brilliant people who ever walked the face of the earth, used to famously, every single day, take walks in the woods on the Princeton campus."

Well, we're not all Einsteins. But we've all experienced that *eureka* moment when the brain is relaxed

and in a positive state. That can occur in a shower, indoors or outdoors, but in all of its complexity, with all of its "loose parts" and invisible connections, the natural world is an incubator of creativity.

BECOMING NATURE SMART

Creative genius is not the accumulation of knowledge; it is the ability to see patterns in the universe, to detect hidden links between what is and what could be. In 1977, the late Edith Cobb, a noted proponent of nature-based education, contended that geniuses share one trait: transcendent experience in nature in their early years. Environmental psychologist Louise Chawla of the University of Colorado offers a broader view. "Nature isn't only important to future geniuses," she says. Her work explores "ecstatic places." She uses the word *ecstatic* carefully. Rather than applying the contemporary definition of delight or rapture, she prefers the word's ancient Greek roots—*ekstasis*—meaning "outstanding" or "standing outside ourselves." These ecstatic moments are "radioactive jewels buried within us, emitting energy across the years of our lives," as Chawla puts it. Such moments are often experienced during our formative years. But,

because of the brain's plasticity, and individual sensitivities, they can happen throughout life. And they can happen for everyone, giving each of us the touch of genius.

Most studies of learning ability and creativity associated with the relationship between nature experiences and creativity involve children. In 2006, a Danish study found that outdoor kindergartens were better than indoor schools

at stimulating children's creativity. The researchers reported that 58 percent of children who were in close touch with nature often invented new games; just 16 percent of indoor kindergarten children did. One explanation, for adults as well as children, is suggested by the "loose parts theory" in education,

"Researchers suggest exposure to the natural world restores the brain's ability to pay attention. It not only restores us, but excites us, by stimulating all of the senses."

which holds that the more loose parts there are in an environment, the more creative the play. A computer game has plenty of loose parts, in the form of programming code, but the number and the interaction of those parts is limited by the mind of the human who created the game. In a tree, a woods, a field, a mountain, a ravine, a vacant lot, the number of loose parts is unlimited. It's possible, then, that exposure to the loose but related parts of nature can encourage a greater sensitivity to patterns that underlie all experience, all matter, and all that matters.

Other research focuses on adults. In 2012, the University of Kansas News Service reported: "Research conducted at the University of Kansas concludes that people from all walks of life show startling cognitive improvement—for instance, a 50 percent boost in creativity—after living for a few days steeped in nature." "There's growing advantage over time to being in nature," said Ruth Ann Atchley, department chair and associate professor of cognitive/clinical psychology at the University of Kansas, when the results of the study were announced. "We think that it peaks after about three days of really getting away, turning off the cell phone, not hauling the iPad and not looking for internet coverage. It's when you have an extended period of time surrounded by that softly fascinating environment that you start seeing all kinds of positive effects in how your mind works."

Nature experiences stimulate learning and inspire creativity through ecstatic experience but also through the complexity of possibilities for play and learning, and through a kind of osmosis.

We need more research in this field, although we already know intuitively that nature stimulates the mind and soul, and our love of place, and that there is no electronic substitute, particularly for infants and young children. Harvard's professor E.O. Wilson's biophilia hypothesis holds that human beings are hard wired with an affiliation with the rest of nature. Researchers suggest exposure to the natural world restores the brain's ability to pay attention. It not only restores us, but excites us, by stimulating all of the senses.

“...we already know intuitively that nature stimulates the mind and soul and our love of place, and that there is no electronic substitute...”

These ideas are not new to Waldorf teachers or other nature-based educators. But, because of recent research and a growing movement to connect children to nature, a wider public is coming to that conclusion—even as children's daily experience is becoming more virtual.

THE HYBRID MIND

As of 2008, for the first time in history, more than half the world's population lives in towns and cities. The traditional ways that humans have experienced nature are vanishing along with biodiversity. At the same time, our culture's faith in technological immersion has no limits.

When my sons were growing up, they spent a lot of time outdoors, but they also played plenty of video games—more than I was comfortable with. Every now and then, Jason and Matthew would try to convince me that their generation was making an evolutionary leap; because they spent so much time texting, video-gaming, and so forth, they were wired differently. In response, I pointed out that my generation had said

something similar about drugs, and that didn't work out so well. Chances are, neither will electronic addiction, which is why the nature balance is so necessary. What's different now is not the presence of technology, but the pace of the change—the rapidity of the introduction of new media and adoption of new electronic devices.

That nearly total immersion may be clouding our senses and our ability to make sense of the world. Scientists who study human perception no longer assume we have only five senses: taste, touch, smell, sight, and hearing. The number now ranges from a conservative 10 to as many as 30, including blood-sugar levels, empty stomach, thirst, and proprioception (awareness of our body's position in space). As we spend more and more time in front of screens, we expend increased energy blocking out senses not required for visual learning. What are we not learning? What are we losing?

Gary Small, a neuroscientist at the University of California – Los Angeles, suggests that the pace of technological change is creating what he calls a “brain gap” between the generations. “Perhaps not since



IMPACT STORY

Pine Hill Waldorf School

by John Bloom, Senior Director of Organizational Culture

RSF made its first loan to Pine Hill Waldorf School, helping the influential elementary school recover from a schoolhouse fire by building one of the first schools in the U.S. designed for Waldorf education. We have remained partners, and RSF most recently provided funding for a model early childhood education center at Pine Hill that extends the school's impact into the community and beyond.

Fire is a defining element for Pine Hill Waldorf School—as both metaphor and history. In a sense that's true for RSF as well.

The old New Hampshire farmhouse the school had occupied since shortly after its founding in 1972 burned to the ground in 1983. Determined to rebuild, the school formed a fundraising team.

At the same time, in New York, six individuals had formed a Steiner study group which was trying to change how the world views and works with money. The group, which included Siegfried Finser, decided to put their philosophical discussions to practical use in the world through reviving the then dormant, Rudolf Steiner Foundation.

When the Pine Hill team approached Siegfried, RSF's first tangible assignment was brought to life. Pine Hill needed \$500,000 but RSF only had \$6,000 in the bank. So the group began to fundraise on behalf of Pine Hill, sharing their story with the larger Rudolf Steiner community and eventually gathering enough support to provide the school with a \$500,000 loan.

This early loan was made possible by a model very similar to what we still employ today—money in from investors and out to borrowers.

“Our situation ignited the rebirth of RSF,” says Arthur Auer, then a Pine Hill teacher and now director of the Antioch Waldorf Teacher Training program, located during the summer on Pine Hill grounds. “Forces and people coalesced and created a comprehensive school master plan and one of the most striking examples of Waldorf school architecture in the U.S.”

INSPIRATION

“I saw an education for children where their whole beings were tended to and cared for—bodies, minds, spirits—and people coming together who all wanted that,” recalls Sherry Jennings, who has been a Pine Hill teacher from the beginning. “I was very inspired to tend that flame.”

She notes that Pine Hill was at the forefront of a surge of interest in Waldorf schools, which numbered only about a dozen at the time, most of them started in the 1940s. “Parents were looking for a new kind of school community, where they could be part of it and have connections with other adults who shared similar values.”

A similar “hunger” arising again today gives the school fresh inspiration, she says. “We’re coming full circle, in a way. I see that parents are really longing for deep connections.”



Pine Hill started in 1972 with 19 students. Today the school has 182 students in Nursery through 8th grade.

Photo courtesy of Tom Kershaw

INNOVATION

That intense parent connection to the school was an important aspect of an innovative \$1.1 million rebuilding package that included \$500,000 in pledge loans and loan guarantees through the newly minted RSF and an innovative parent bond program. To spread costs, parents of new students were required to purchase a \$1,000 bond that could be redeemed upon graduation; at that point many opted to donate their bond to the school, producing an ongoing asset-building stream.

With Pine Hill as a model, RSF has continued to support Waldorf schools, not only by providing capital but also by helping them to build communities willing to commit financial and other resources to a project's success.

At Pine Hill, the school community also was integral to designing the new building. The architect interviewed teachers, friends, parents and children, and the children drew pictures of what they thought the building should look like. The result was a building that appears to emerge from the land itself.

"We wanted the building to arise out of a sense of place in the forest, on that granite hilltop," Auer says, "and we wanted it to be not just environmentally friendly but also to fit into the environment. Its main gesture is a big heart of an auditorium in the center and two classroom wings embracing the children as they stream into the building."

The auditorium was completed several years later in a second building phase, and unbelievably, a second fire struck as the last coat of finish on the stage was drying. It destroyed the auditorium and damaged both classroom wings. Insurance covered the cost of rebuilding, but "that fire was extremely painful," says Auer. "That building was built with love by a whole team of parents."

Now Pine Hill is building again, and again with help from RSF. The Children's Village, an early childhood education center that fulfills the school's master plan, is taking shape on campus. For the first time in the school's history, all Pine Hill early education programs—kindergarten, nursery, parent-child classes, and a family center with parent education programs—will be housed in a dedicated space. The new center will feature two green, energy efficient buildings and a

beautiful sunny acre for playgrounds, gardens, and outdoor play.

The center will also contribute to the broader community by offering publicly accessible parent education classes covering all aspects of raising a family, such as holistic parenting, mother-infant yoga, music classes, gardening and sustainable food practices, and more.

"We're really excited about The Children's Village," says Jennings. "This is a space where we can protect and honor the needs of the really young child."



At The Children's Village, teachers welcome students into days filled with imaginative play, joyful work, and fun-filled activities based on Waldorf Early Childhood Education.

Photo courtesy of Tom Kershaw

IMPACT

"Without RSF we would not have been able to develop as full a master plan and model school," says Auer, adding that the impact is not just local: The Children's Village speaks to other Waldorf schools about the value of establishing their own early childhood education centers.

"One could become very anxious about taking such a risk in a recession," Auer says. "But I think The Children's Village is the right decision, to have the courage to go outward and serve the community. Others might say this is not the time to do it, but we are not doubting. Having gone through two fires has proven that Pine Hill has a strong body of life forces. I always have had confidence that those forces will prevail and bring us through to another new phase." 🌀



CLIENTS IN CONVERSATION

A Journey of Transformational Education

Interview with Marta Abel, Communications Associate

At RSF, we see education and life-long learning as central to the renewal of culture. The Esalen Institute and Hollyhock Learning Centre offer unique opportunities to cultivate deep change in self and society. Here, Dana Bass Solomon, Hollyhock CEO and RSF investor, and Tricia McEntee, Esalen CEO (an RSF borrower), discuss how individual change can flourish to create better enterprises, movements, and a healthier world.

Marta: How did each of you come to be involved with your organizations?

Tricia: I came from the business world. I'm a CPA and had held Chief Financial Officer positions in both for-profit and in non-profit organizations through my career.

I came to Esalen in February of 2006 for a weekend workshop with Brother David Steindl-Rast called "The Noble Cause of Business." At that time I had been following quite a contemplative spiritual path in my personal life.

I just fell in love with Esalen—it just felt like home. It spoke to me on a personal spiritual level, and with the beautiful physical environment here in Big Sur, I was just swept away.

Dana: My story involves a bit of magic and a bit of practicality. I first heard about Hollyhock over 20 years ago when I lived in a little mountain town in Colorado. I met two of the founders who had just acquired the land which was to become Hollyhock. It sounded like an extraordinary place.

Fast forward several years. I was the general manager of a hot springs property in California when I heard from a colleague that she was coming to Hollyhock to participate in "Spirit and Business," a precursor conference to Social Venture Institute. I made arrangements to join her.

Tricia: It's interesting that we both came to these places for similar workshops—to explore the idea of spirituality and business, and how much impact it could have on our world if we really had noble businesses.

Dana: Yes it is. Hollyhock was founded on the idea of positive change for a better world. One of our founders was involved in the founding of Greenpeace. We have always been focused on providing lifelong learning programs and inspiring people to create just and healthy organizations, communities, and cultures.



Hollyhock programs focus on well being, wisdom teachings, arts and culture, and social innovation.

Photo courtesy of Hollyhock

Hollyhock's leadership programs and conferences often include personal and professional skill development. We think about personal development as a key factor in building successful individuals, enterprises, organizations, and campaigns.

The individual is where the growth begins. Learning how to be more skillful human beings, then taking that out into the world helps support successful enterprises and organizations. I think that that is what we're all doing through various methodologies, both at Hollyhock and Esalen.

Tricia: Yes it is. Our terminology for it is "From Me to We."

I think there's a sense of urgency to take our personal growth out into the world to make positive change. We don't have a lot of time to waste so we're trying to put a lot more emphasis on that.

Marta: How has the work at Hollyhock or Esalen, contributed to your own personal development?

Dana: It's re-enlivened my hope for the future. It's about hope for me and being part of advancing humankind. Over this last decade and a half, our demographic has shifted away from mostly middle-aged women. We've grown the conferences as a gateway to include more young people.

The growth is generative. Emerging young leaders who care about the future are gathering and creating initiatives that are stunning. I feel most fortunate to engage with, and share life with these inspiring people. I have real hope that there's a future for a better world.

Tricia: We have about 20,000 people a year that come to Esalen. In talking to these people I often hear, "You know, coming to Esalen has changed my life."

There was an article recently in the *San Francisco Chronicle* about Esalen's 50th anniversary that said the ideas that came from Esalen during those early years have just changed everything about our culture—how we think, how we pray, how we eat, how we work.

A lot of times people are in a hard moment, they're in a transition in life. I think Esalen offers that respite, a renewal time. It has a very personal impact. People are discovering great things about themselves that were already there, but after the experience here it just shines out to the rest of the world.

We see people become better parents. They're better spouses. They're better teachers. They find their purpose, their calling in life. I see that over and over again. Anytime I get personally down or in a negative space, I just sit down and talk to the people that are there. And I say "Well, what workshop are you taking? How's it going?" And I just hear how much of an impact we're having on people's lives. That's all it takes.

Marta: What's on the horizon for your organizations?

Dana: The next edge for Hollyhock is to scale up our ability to reach more people so that we can have

more impact. Our Vancouver programs are accessible, affordable and high impact.

These last few years we've developed partnerships with universities, the Dalai Lama Center for Peace, Power of Hope, and other progressive institutions, seeing what we can do together to broaden our reach and to share skills and stories.

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DANA BASS SOLOMON

has been involved with Hollyhock since 2000. She brings over 20 years of experience in the hospitality and social business arena, as well as a deep love and passion for Hollyhock. Dana was instrumental in guiding Hollyhock and its programs to charitable status. Her current work includes leading Hollyhock's finance, fundraising, and collaborative partnering. Dana is a mother of four adult children and grandmother of one. She is an investor of the RSF Social Investment Fund. www.hollyhock.ca

Photo courtesy: Jamie Kowal

TRICIA MCENTEE

joined the Esalen family in 2006, bringing both her laudable skill set and a spirited dedication to the community to the position of CFO, before moving into the position of CEO in 2010. Tricia spent her early career as a certified public accountant and auditor with Ernst and Young Accounting Firm, later holding multiple CFO positions in various for-profit and non-profit organizations. Tricia is a mother of four grown children and a recent grandmother of a beautiful baby girl. Esalen is an RSF borrower.

www.esalen.org

> “The Future Will Belong to the Nature Smart”
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early man first discovered how to use a tool has the human brain been affected so quickly and so dramatically,” he writes in his book, *iBrain: Surviving the Technological Alteration of the Modern Mind*.

If Small is right, then my response to my sons—that evolution doesn’t work that fast—may be overstated.

One view is that people who experience too much technology in the formative years will stunt the maturation of normal frontal lobe development, “ultimately freezing them in teen brain mode,” as the Canadian magazine *Macleans* puts it. “Are we developing a generation with underdeveloped frontal lobes, unable to learn, remember, feel, control impulses?” Small writes, “Or will they develop new advanced skills that poise them for extraordinary experiences?”

Optimistic researchers suggest that all this multitasking and texting is creating the smartest generation ever, freed from the limitations of geography, weather, and distance—all those pesky inconveniences of the physical world. But Mark Bauerlein, an English professor at Emory University, in his book, *The Dumbest Generation*, reels out studies comparing this generation of students with prior generations, finding that “they don’t know any more history or civics, economics or science, literature or current events,” despite all that available information.

Here is a third possibility, the emergence of what I call the *hybrid mind*.

The ultimate multitasking will be to live simultaneously in both the digital and physical world, using computers to maximize our powers to process intellectual data and natural environments to ignite all of our senses and accelerate our ability to learn and to feel; in this way, we could combine the “primitive” powers of our ancestors with the digital speed of our teenagers. Evolution may (or may not) be out of our hands, but as individuals we can accept and celebrate our technological skills at the same time that we seek the gifts of nature essential for the realization of our full intellectual and spiritual potential.

The best preparation for the twenty-first century, therefore, may be a combination of natural and virtual experience. An instructor who trains young people to become the pilots of cruise ships describes “two kinds of students, those who are good at video games, who are terrific with the electronic steering; and those who grew up outside—they’re far better at having a special sense of where the ship is. We tend

to get one or the other kind.” The first kind of student, he says, has a talent he prizes. “We have a lot of electronics on the ship.” The second kind of student has another talent he needs. That student, using a wider range of senses, “actually knows where the ship is.” The ideal pilot, he says, is the person who has a balance of high-tech and natural knowledge: “We need people who have both ways of knowing the world.” In other words, a hybrid mind.

Achieving that state of balance will be a worthy goal for business and social entrepreneurs, for educators and physicians, architects and urban planners, for parents and policy-makers. In *The Nature Principle*, I make the case that the future will belong to the nature-smart—those individuals, employers, and political leaders who develop a deeper understanding of nature and balance the virtual with the real.

The more high-tech we become, the more nature we will need. ♻

RICHARD LOUV

is the author of eight books, including *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder* and *The Nature Principle: Reconnecting with Life in a Virtual Age* (from which this essay was adapted). He is the recipient of the 2008 Audubon Medal. Past recipients have included Rachel Carson, E.O. Wilson and Jimmy Carter.

Richard is also Chairman Emeritus and co-founder of the Children & Nature Network (C&NN), a leading movement to connect all children, their families and communities to nature through innovative ideas, evidence-based resources and tools, broad-based collaboration and support of grassroots leadership. Learn more about C&NN at www.childrenandnature.org and more about his books at www.richardlouv.com

Photo courtesy: Robert Burroughs

> “Clients In Conversation”
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Tricia: There are two major themes leading the way forward at Esalen. First we will embrace our role in social transformation with greater intentionality—going from “Me to We.” We plan to do this by building on our distinguished track record of being a catalyst for collective and social change through private gatherings of thought leaders, spiritual teachers and progressive scholars. We plan to increase the topics and number of gatherings, and expand the impact of these private gatherings by disseminating the content on our new web site.



Esalen offers over 500 workshops and programs each year.
Photo courtesy of Doug Ellis

Second, we are seeking to diversify the people we serve, reach a broader audience and new generations of leaders. An example of this is the Esalen Integral Leadership Program that is currently underway and that seeks to bring future leaders to Esalen by partnering with universities who will offer college credit for taking our courses. Another priority for us is forging partnerships with social change organizations for public workshops and conferences that serve both our diversity and social impact goals.

We are also committed to the stewardship of our Big Sur property, to transform our aging structures into a model green educational village that will enhance the visitor and staff experience.

Dana: We launched a website this year called Hollyhock Life. It has several different focus areas, the main ones being Community, Food and Garden, and Big Ideas. Volunteers, interns, our presenters and guests are populating the site with new ideas and

content. People can actually interact on Hollyhock Life. They can post articles, or write reflections about their experiences and interests. It’s a really fabulous, interactive site that changes almost every day. That’s the cutting edge of where we are going.

Marta: We’re working with similar questions at RSF about how to scale when so much of the appeal of our work is about the personal transformative elements. How do you really do that in a way that’s meaningful for people?

Dana: That is what we’re all working towards—all three of our organizations. How do we remain relevant? But, not just relevant. How do we remain relevant, and interesting, and facilitate engagement within and outside of our communities? Is it through a deeply personal and collaborative experience?

Centers like Hollyhock and Esalen don’t consider ourselves competition. The more that we can offer to each other, the more we’ll be able to accomplish. We have, for many years, really been supportive of each other—through our program and operations departments. Collaboration is key to our collective future.

Tricia: I totally agree. Our mission is the same. The next question is how can we get this impact out in the world more effectively by partnering? It is absolutely something I would want to do so we’ll definitely need to connect to further the conversation. ☺

RSF REIMAGINE MONEY PODCAST

To hear more of this conversation, check out the RSF Reimagine Money podcast. Reimagine Money is a monthly investigation into the power of money to support social enterprises that are changing the fields of Food & Agriculture, Education & the Arts, and Ecological Stewardship. Hear the podcast at: rsfsocialfinance.org/newsroom/podcast or subscribe on iTunes.

Events

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WHAT'S AHEAD

The next *RSF Quarterly* will be published in April 2013 and will focus on Social Finance. We like hearing from you! Please send comments on this issue or ideas for the next to jillian.mccoy@rsfsocialfinance.org, call 415.561.6156 or



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ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS STATEMENT
of using post-consumer waste fiber vs. virgin fiber

RSF Social Finance saved the following resources by using 480 pounds of Reincarnation Matte (FSC) and 84 pounds of Reincarnation Matte (FSC), made with an average of 100% recycled fiber and an average of 60% post-consumer waste, processed chlorine free, designated Ancient Forest Friendly™ and manufactured with electricity that is offset with Green-e® certified renewable energy certificates.

trees	water	energy	solid waste	greenhouse gases
3.5 fully grown	1671 gallons	1.2 Million BTUs	101 pounds	347 pounds

Calculations based on research by Environmental Defense Fund and other members of the Paper Task Force.
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