

## **Eco-Art Therapy course 2012**

### **Lesson 1**

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1. Before I started to read the research article "Merging Art Therapy and Applied Ecopsychology" by Dr. Theresa Sweeney my first sense was: "Oeps, a lot of reading again!" First I was expecting to start with Art making from the beginning!

But after a while of reading and the words where become so familiar to me, I came also in the text and meanings. Especially what made it clear to me was and I was attracted to was: *"We never see the shape of anything – a shell, a disk, a rock, a pet more than when we are drawing it".*

It makes complete to be connected with the inside and outside of us. I remembered when I was drawing a shell ones on holiday I discovered so much more, like texture, colors, shape and the fine perfection how the circle goes inside (or outside) of the shell. That it felt I became the shell, with his own sound and shape of exsistance. I forgot all around me and become one with the shell.

If we see with our eyes in an other perspective, the perspective of being re-connected, we'll become the object where we are looking at. And at the same time other senses will be awaken.

#### **What I learned from it and reflections on insights I gained:**

To learn about Eco-Art, I had to read a lot first to come into it. I have to understand it before I can expierence it, otherwise I got lost. It felt it become a 3D course for me. Or even 4D if I count the 2 word languages included! ☺ So to learn is for me; read (to understand what the writer means) – expierence (by activity) – re-read (to integrate and find my own truth in it) – and write it down (it will come in my system). Being active also with written text made me connected with the meaning of it.

I was surprised to read that the Bible is full of references that show people using both the Art and Nature for healing purposes! Sometimes I read a part in a Bible, when I visit a Hotel, where always is one. But the text is not attractive to me, so after a short reading I put it away. I didn't grow up with any religion, my parents let me discover my own. What I did a few years ago: "I believe it God, just spell it Nature"

#### **What I learned from it and reflections on insights I gained:**

Writers has also to tell something! There is a lot of knowledge out there what I don't know. Especially what I didn't read myself or expierenced myself. Sometimes people told me about the Bible. Mostly it was negative or pushed. I believe, it was not the right time for me than. Now I am busy with writing myself ( a real struggle to find the right words!)a book about my expierences with clients in Nature and Art, but still saw it dis-connected from each other. (Earth-Art) I learned that also information from others can give you more possibilities to discover and being inspired and creative! But only when I am attracted to it! That doesn't changed anymore since I followed the courses about Nature-connection. For m e now will be my statement in one word: eARTh so simple, so connected!

I love old symbolic drawings in rocks. During my travel last year, 3 months through the VS and Canada I was so inspired by the 'News Rock' in the Canyon Lands. Communication by drawings makes things so much more clear than words ever can do, and it save space!

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I always has problems to find the right words, and not only in an other language. It reminds me how small my vocibal is. When I want to come to the essence of my thoughts. Art helps me with that, what I can't say, I can expresse on canvas or paper!

### **What I learned from it and reflections on insights I gained:**

The connection between Art and Nature I think I start to understand now. Like both are universal languages and both they giving reflection without words. Even in spoken words, people sometimes don't understand each other. In Art and Nature there is only truth to see, to hear and to feel. Sometimes it comes with a confrontation with your own issues, sometimes it comes so clear that it is hard to write it down with a little of words. It is what the person who look at it, sees. Like a part of the memory is become awaken. This give me more self confidence, because like I said before writing words is not so easy for me, I changed my way of working with that and look at the picture first, than the words will come by itself.

### **Do you agree that adding an art element to nature-reconnecting activities would increase your ability to let Nature teach? Why or why not?**

Yes, I agree!

Both has an universal language, and to be connected with both through activities I will become whole in a language I understand. I only have to do my best to translate it in 'normal' words. If I think back, this happened a few times when I was outdoor with my clients, I couldn't put the link yet with both! For example this little story:

A client had problems to accept her sexuality as lesbiene. During a walk in Nature, we arrived by a bunker and the gravity words on the bunker where: Girlpower! She asked if I have done that. No, I was never there before. Even it was a word, the colors where outstanding, you couldn't miss it.

I also believe the opposite, to adding a Nature element into Art. To give the painting more dept, and not only dimensional dept, but meaning dept. It is a wonderful and playfull journey I like to discover.

## **2. Below are some quotes about art and nature. Choose 10 and write a paragraph on each. Discuss your thoughts about it. Do you agree with the author? Why or why not?**

- a. *Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up.* ~Pablo Picasso

Agree: A child isn't to much conditioned than a adult. Soon if an adult found her/his innerly child and become curiouse, playfull and with trust she/he can be an Artist to, an artist of live.

- b. *Every artist dips his brush in his own soul, and paints his own nature into his pictures.* ~Henry Ward Beecher

Agree: There is where the soul is, in your own nature. The expression you can give with the brush on canvas, without any ruels gives the soul freedom to show herselfe.

- c. *I found I could say things with color and shapes that I couldn't say any other way - things I had no words for.* ~Georgia O'Keeffer

Agree: When I feel frustrated or sad, but also when I feel happy and clear, there is always the patient brush to let it come out. It heals during the activity. Especially when I work with a element of Nature; water! No control, just let it come out. I love it. ☺

- d. *Art is not a thing; it is a way.* ~Elbert Hubbard

Agree: I agree that Art is not a thing, but I would say it is a path to follow or a way of speaking.

- e. *Artistry is an innate distrust of the theory of reality concocted by the five senses.* ~Robert Brault.

Agree: As an artist you always look further and want to become to perfection of your work. If you only follow the 5 senses we learned instead of the 53 I learned, we get frustrated. To distrust theories is a good start to become an artist of Nature. Only the experimental activities and the experiences will teach you to find the connection between both. For me this statement fits with this course the best!

- f. *Art is Man's nature. Nature is God's art.* ~James Bailey

Agree: In every human person is Art a part of our Nature, and can only live and learn from Nature to come close as possible to perfection. **I don't agree:** I don't have much with the word God, I like to call it the Universal energy of live, who created Nature as it is and as it will change. The word God is created by people, I believe more in Nature and her energy herself.

- g. *The 'earth' without 'art' is 'eh'.* ~ Dr. Theresa Sweeney

Agree: What do we really know without any of them, we don't even exist!

Nature without Art will be: Nue ☺ Funny that a year ago I started to give a workshop called Earth-Art. And this morning I realized that you took the letters out, I put it separated and after all it is already in there; eARTH in English.

- h. *Art not only imitates nature, but also completes its deficiencies.* ~Aristotle

Agree: To understand Art, is seeing the reflection of Nature and no artist ever can imitates Nature, there will always be lessons to learn and Nature to understand. Nature is perfect. No artist is ever satisfied about his/her work and have to accept the process and path to perfection.

- i. *Art will never be able to exist without nature.* ~Pierre Bonnard

Agree: Because it is all Art with Nature, like the natural being of live.

Human call it Art, what is just a word. In everybody is Nature, so in everybody is Art. Not just a painting.

- j. *Keep your love of nature, for that is the true way to understand art more and more.* ~Vincent Van Gogh\

Agree: I love van Gogh! Nature was and is often use for paintings, even there is nobody who can copy it exactly how it is. Because Nature change, and when you follow the changes, you follow life as it is.

- k. *The aim of art is to represent not the outward appearance of things, but their inward significance.* ~Aristotle

Agree: Otherwise it would be a copy of something or someone else. And you will miss the message of inner truth.

- l. *All art is but imitation of nature.* ~Lucius Annaeus Seneca

Agree: It should! Like I said with K

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m. *Painting from nature is not copying the object; it is realizing one's sensations.* ~Paul Cezanne

Agree: exactly! Like I said before with K

n. *Art does not reproduce the visible; rather, it makes visible.* ~Paul Klee

Agree: During the process to make Art, people look most of the time that it has to be perfect. And looks like the same as some picture, whatever in their mind, or photo.

During this process they start to see with a different perspective and see what their process is about. Very beautiful to do and to experience with others.

o. *What is one to think of those fools who tell one that the artist is always subordinate to nature? Art is a harmony parallel with nature.* ~Paul Cezanne

I sense with this statement more a frustration of the writer self. I agree with "Art is a harmony parallel with Nature.

p. *Art is biologically adaptive. Art is an emergent property of human evolution. Art of all sorts, both in its making and sharing, has ecological function. The ecological function of art is to connect humans with the biosphere.* ~ John Caddy

Agree: Since I work with Art and integrate Nature in my work, I learn more about Nature. Also the ecological function of parts in Nature I have to deal with.