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Experiential Earth Medicine

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Earth medicine in this paper means the intuitive connection we each have with the Earth which unites us with a spiritual essence that is healing for both ourselves and the Earth. The purpose of the workshop was fourfold:

1. To inspire each of the participants to trust in their own intuitive responses.
2. To encourage this awareness in their work as permaculture designers.
3. To encourage healing of the earth wherever they are and.
4. To use this awareness to revitalise themselves when not feeling well.

The workshop was experiential. We discussed 'connectedness' that unites us all with the Earth, with each other, and the consciousness of Spirit that heals and unifies and is sensed with the heart. We shared the importance of 'allowing' the experience of connectivity or intimacy to occur. Also removing doubts that we may have to being able to sense intimately the rhythms, the 'Dreaming,' the messages of the Earth. The importance of using these gifts wisely and to give of ourselves back to the Earth for healing – a two-way exchange.

We talked of the history of tribal consciousness. How those that have lived and still live relying on this connectedness for their survival, i.e. the indigenous people of the world, are often seen to have an intuitive harmony with the Earth. But this is not always the situation. The very nature of the evolving human soul is that we have all contributed to the weakening of the Earth, so obviously now in need of repair and regeneration for the good of all that dwell there upon.

This present global crisis is a great opportunity to encourage the changes needed in our consciousness. By being sensitive to the needs of the Earth and each other, we can join in understanding what the shamans, medicine (wo)men, sages and seers have shared before us. To encourage others to experience this awareness for themselves, and thereby help speed the recovery of an ailing planet and people.

This 'awakening' was likened to a sense of 'knowing.' Listening to and understanding our 'feeling mind.' Grounding and practical in its application and inspiring when communicated.

Recognising the body of Earth as a macrocosm of our own, body structure and energy were identified. The global brain being aware of every cell. The rivers and streams work as a circulatory system, swamps can be likened to kidneys and so on. There is a complex network of pathways that are like a nervous or meridian system, crossing and linking together at various places on the Earth's 'body.' These places can be utilised as healing centres, which work as major and minor points, harnessing energy in different ways like our own bodies' acupuncture points. Similar to Yogic 'Nadi' points and major and minor 'chakra' energy centres.

Earth has many 'bodies' within its overall structure, just as the earth itself is one cell in the Universe. These powerful energy centres of Earth are recognised by people past and present around the world as 'sacred places.' They can be used to heal and regenerate energy in many ways.

The pathways linking these sites are referred to as 'sacred pathways,' 'ley lines' or 'song lines,' and often located on natural travelling routes that animals and humans use. Being aware of Earth's need for this symbiosis of living with human and animal movement, plant growth and mineral distribution is just one small rewarding and awe-inspiring gift of Awareness. This stimulation of the planetary nervous system, assisting in keeping it strong, helps keep us stimulated and strong in the work we do as earth healers.

Being 'fine-tuned' to this nervous system we can read the impulses and better understand how a site can best be used, what it offers, and its needs, for example, regeneration. We get a feel for the 'big picture' and how our efforts in one small area can contribute to a greater good. It's a blueprint for living in harmony with the planet. This is the spirit of permaculture, the spirit of planning for a sustainable future. It's like seeing with an inner sight – like sonar vision. We need to trust in this interaction to teach us and better assist us in the work of caring for ourselves, each other and all that live together on this, our universal cell.

Soon after we gathered under the big trees on the oval for the workshop we took off our shoes and practised the 'rising breath' to help experience the energy flow of our own bodies. We then placed our feet together in a circle and lay down on our backs on the grass and practised 'Yoga Nidra' relaxation. Staying connected with our breath and the rhythm of our bodies we felt for the rhythm of Earth beneath us. Expanding our awareness through the sounds of the environment, the touch of the wind and 'reaching' for the inner sense of the ancient trees and the area itself, seeking the 'Dreaming' of the place.

We asked with open hearts and inwardly – "What was here in the past? How did it 'feel?' How does it 'feel' now? What does the area need to 'feel' better?" Most people felt a strong calling from the nearby trees. As a group we visited one of these old trees, circling it, and worked at intimately connecting with the tree's essence. Both giving and receiving energy, we felt for the roots within the earth and the upper branches above us. Feeling for its age and 'listening' to the message as to what was passed on from countless generations before, through its seed.

Many of us felt inundation of regular waters in the past. A wetland site rather than the oval we now stood upon. Some felt the presence of more birds and the need

for the tree to pass on the genetic coding via seed into the future. Some felt the tree responding to our visit in a grateful way. We shared the value of not judging ourselves or each other in our experiences. By being open we allow ourselves to experience subtle sensations that can teach us more of the intimacy and unity of all living things.

We sat in a circle and shared our experiences both present and past of communing with nature. We shared around the circle some various items to feel the energy of each. These included a small vial of Ayurvedic medicine, a rock, some owl feathers, some orange and its peel. We shared the value of walking the Earth with awareness, being mindful, the value of silence to help open our consciousness, and the value of regularly practising to extend our sensitivity.

Thanks to all who came. It is an honour to share.