Principles DVD notes

Exploration of design principle has been an evolving one

Ethics central => inner core

Design principles arranged around them

Icons important as a way of distilling complex ideas into simple symbols – principles need to be understood at all levels, as is the case with all traditional learning (contrast to education system which repeatedly trashes then offers a new version. In traditional world, even the simplest story contains the deep concepts

Ethics are not claimed by PC – they are expressed in many times and places across the world

Care of the Earth often taken to be care of the whole planet rather than the earth under our feet – that which we have power to influence and responsibility for. Mission? To **rebuild nature’s capital** (conscious use of economic term to restore the idea that the earth’s assets have value)

Care of People is often taken to focus on the 6-7 billion, rather than nurture of self, kin & community. If we truly nurture ourselves, we are less attracted to the secondary sources of satisfaction (promoted by advertising & marketing). Similar with health: if we are healthy, we can look after those around us. Focus on the non-material frees up other possibilities The really important things (sense of belonging) don’t actually cost anything at all

Fair Share. 2 dynamics: accept nature’s limits & celebrate her abundance. Constrain behaviour because there are limits – but give things away beyond our circle of reciprocity, because we are confident that nature has enough for us all. This tension is great coz it forces us to think about the ethic.

Principles

Each stated as a positive action statement

The proverb emphasises that the older knowledge was there for us – and are also cautionary (slightly negative).

**1 Observe & interact**

Attempting to challenge deeply entrenched industrial design – education has disabled us … teaching us to look for the precise recipe, rather than “give & take” of baking or mortar mixing without precise directions or measurements. Not reproducible – you need to be alongside the elder to learn.

Animals survive by observing and interacting. Basis of art of any wholistic science. This is how we get new possibilities.

Icon has many things within it – tree, head in clouds, ecstatic or scared person, peeop hole through which you see the solution

Observation depends on how you look at things – hence proverb “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder” –

PHOTO – Peter Harper in garden, looking for hover flies

Emphasises that a lot of the things we need to observe are small and slow moving.

Farmers moving to organic find they’ve moved from big picture to little picture observation.

Observation is analog not digital – we need to rebuild the sensitivity we had in the past. Take teenager from city to country – they say nothing is going on.

**2 Catch & Store energy**

First of the Power principles

Look at how natural systems work – all systems that survive and thrive catch energy from outside and store inside

Icon – sun in jar, light bulb, solar power symbol, passive solar design, fruit from summer abundance, petrol in bottles,

Building up energy for future use (growth of forests, seed banks, water held for the future)

Energy mainly in the sense of embodied energy, rather than immediate use. Energy is a language and a currency.

“make hay while the sun shines”

PHOTO – Marilyn and Adrian’s place at Glenlyon. Dams catching winter water to supply summer needs. [also solar panel running pump to header tank, solar hot water system on roof]

**3 Obtain a yield**

Second of the Power principles

Not about investment in the future but about providing for immediate needs. Financial analogy is Cash flow (rather than investment)

Relates to core idea of growing food in garden… reaction to middle class English idea of front lawn as a symbol of not needing to grow food.

We need to eat today, not just grow food for tomorrow.

Bite taken out of beetroot icon reminds us that there is competition – there are other creatures out there nibbling!

Proverb – You can’t work on an empty stomach”

(did we get enough to carry on?

We need to be numerate and measure things to know whether we are actually providing enough for our year ahead.

PHOTO – milling – tests numeracy. We need to measure things to be sure it was worthwhile.

Some people find this principle challenging as it goes against idea of disconnected, ideologically pure environmentalism

What keeps that all in check?... the next principle:

**4 Apply self-regulation & accept feedback**

This is about putting foot on break to stop self running off road. In initial permaculture, wanted to plant self-reliant plants, hardy and tough…but also self regulating, not taking over the countryside. Nature is full of negative feedbacks that constrain things in all systems. Higher order organisms restrain themselves (e.g. mammals that restrain reproduction). Gaia hypothesis is that the whole earth is

Proverb: “The sins of the fathers are visited onto the children unto the seventh generation”

PHOTO – breastfeeding mothers. Selfreliance – breast is there regardless of n=money, power, etc. Feedback from child… sucking stimulates lactation. Mother’s diet generates response from baby in behaviour – causing mother to adjust diet

**5 Use & value renewable resources and services**

Use AND Value….. don’t just value it (without using)…. Don’t just use (without valuing)

Remember the services… shade from a tree is provided without the tree being consumed. (Classic consumption tells us to cut down the tree and mill it into an umbrella which will wear out

Icon – horse was biggest power available pre industrial revolution. Also connects to humans emotively. Not total control by humans… whose had chickens escape and dig up garden? Roatary hoes don’t do this

Let nature take its course – reminds us we’re not in control. There have to be give and take.

PHOTO – washing on clothes line. Simple function replaced by tumbler drier – drying on line gives bonus UV sterilisation. Photo also reminds us of simplicity of impleneting this

**6 Produce no waste**

Efficiency is the key to this principle. Dominant paradigm of much environmental thinking.

(Picking up hard garbage is Obtain a Yield… minimising waste in our own system is Produce no Waste)

Icon – worm which processes waste, recycles everything.

Proverb:

“Waste not, want not” – reminder of efficiency and consequences of waste

“Stitch in time saves nine” – maintenance in time prevents decline to point where huge energy is needed to restore it. (Sydney harbour bridge) part of traditional cultures

PHOTO Jack Moneghan with 1964 Valiant – not restored, just totally looked after… In 1950’s and 60’s most of the maintenance culture was lost… throw away culture.

(Jack was apanelbeater)

Second 6 principles are bigger picture

**7 Design from patterns to details**

Requires us to stand back and see larger patterns. This overturns deeply learned design principle in our culture which is reductionism (reduce everything to smallest scale, describe them then work up). More traditional is to work from broad picture and then go more close and into detail (without disregarding bigger picture)

Pattern recognition is key – Chris Alexander Pattern Language..

Based on the idea that there are repeating patterns in nature that can be applied in different contexts: understand the pattern and

Icon - Spider – design pattern exists which is universal, but every spider web is different

Also resonant of the permaculture techniques of zone and sector planning

[sb example – planning the ASPDC] spider spiral is like zones, long threads are like sectors – wild energies coming into site

“Can’t see the forest for the trees”

PHOTO – aerial view of P.A. Yeomans property (1993)

DH obsession with aerial photos. Similar to mountain views

Yeomans looked at broad patterns of repeating hills & valleys and realised what he needed to do… invented Keyline

**8 Integrate rather than segregate**

Industrial society says things work better if kept separate. Nature doesn’t do this; plant ecosystems are not separate to animal ecosystems. We apply separateness to people as well – segregating roles and properties. Individual focus rather than