

Sustainable Education: Resources

Starter questions:

What are your individual guiding principles?

What is education for?

What sort of knowledge should education include?

Who controls education? Education is for whom? Education is for what purpose?

What is worth knowing?

What values should inform education?

Earth Charter (1995-2000) – Read the Preamble (www.earthcharterinaction.org)

1987-Writing began in the lead up to the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio
Rio Earth Summit – 1992 – Government Commitment to Agenda 21 – The program for Sustainable Development

The Earth Charter is a declaration of fundamental ethical principles for building a just, sustainable and peaceful global society in the 21st century. It seeks to inspire in all people a new sense of global interdependence and shared responsibility for the well-being of the whole human family, the greater community of life, and future generations. It is a vision of hope and a call to action.

A first Earth Charter benchmark Draft was issued in March 1997 and a second Draft was issued in 1999. Each one of them was translated in various languages, circulated widely and received significant contributions for improvement.

Earth Charter Explores Right Relationship with:

Oneself -Other Persons -Other Cultures -Other Life -Earth -Larger whole of which all are a Part

Sara Parkin, *Positive Deviant: Sustainability Leadership in a Perverse World*

Four habits of sustainability thought

Resilience – Am I enhancing the capacity of any ecological or social system to stay strong or become stronger so as to absorb large shocks yet remain fundamentally unchanged?

Relationships- Am I creating and protecting the good and many relationships that underpin resilience in individuals and in systems?

Reflection- Am I taking time to think about things so as to learn from experience and apply the lessons to the future?

Reverence- Am I demonstrating a 'respectful awe' for the power of the natural world and the intimacy of our biological relationship with it? (I have unknowns I know about. I have unknowns I don't know about)

Strategies for sustainability, therefore, need to accommodate the likelihood that the workings of nature may be beyond our understanding possibly forever. So a position of reverence, a respectful awe of its power, beauty and complexity and our total interdependency with it, seems to be the only sensible position. Practically speaking, this means thinking continually about how best to give nature back control over its ecosystems in our own backyards as well as globally. Even in the most densely built environment, many opportunities exist to liberate hectares of land from tarmac or industrial grass and give it over to plants and trees. We do know that the better the quality of the environment, the better our own biochemistry and spirits.

Prosperity

-One in which it is possible for human beings to flourish, to achieve greater social cohesion, to find higher levels of well-being and yet still to reduce their material impact on the environment.

-One in which it is possible for human beings to give and receive love, enjoy the respect of your peers, contribute useful work and to have a sense of belonging and trust in the community.

Sustainable Development

Sustainable Development is development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. (Brundtland Commission 1987)

Sustainable development is a dynamic process which enables all people to realize their potential and to improve their quality of life in ways which simultaneously protect and enhance the Earth's life support system. (Forum for the Future)

Sustainability-literate Leadership

- A leader imagines a better future and persuades people to follow
- Leadership for a greater good that embraces ALL LIFE on Earth, including all humanity and future generations. (boundary-less)
- Recognizes that sustainability leadership is about the continuing participation of our species in evolution.
- Get it wrong and we (our species) are fossils.

Tim Jackson, *Prosperity without Growth*

Prosperity

- Prosperity has to do with our ability to flourish: Physically, psychologically and socially.
 - Beyond mere subsistence, prosperity hangs crucially on our ability to participate meaningfully in the life of society.
 - Prosperity is not synonymous with material sustenance.
 - Family, community, friendship, health are vital influences on prosperity
- Human well-being is fundamentally dependent on the health of our environment.
Clean water, safe streets and meaningful work

Goal is Resilient, Robust Communities

- capable of resisting external shocks
- maintaining people's livelihoods and living within our ecological means

The Natural Step (Founded in 1989 in Sweden by Dr. Karl-Henrik Robert)

Natural Step Framework for Strategic Sustainable Development

- 1) Reduce dependence on Fossil Fuels and Heavy Metals
- 2) Reduce our dependence on synthetic chemicals that persist in nature
- 3) Reduce our destruction of nature
- 4) Ensure we are not stopping people globally from meeting their needs

Ecological Consciousness – Christopher Uhl (Page 249)

Respect life and natural processes –

Sustainability commits us to explicit consideration of the effects of our decisions and actions on the health and well – being of the entire community of life.

Living within limits-

Sustainability involves an awareness that the natural resources upon which all life depends –forests, fertile soils, fisheries, pure water and clean air – are finite endowments to be used with care and prudence, at a rate consonant with their capacity for regeneration.

Valuing the local-

Sustainability commits us to show respect for the natural components of our neighborhoods and bioregions, to preservation, restoration, and use of local knowledge; and to creation of strong, self-reliant local economies.

Accounting for full costs-

Sustainability requires that we become aware of the costs generated by our products –from 'Source to sink: -- to the environment and society. Product prices must reflect this awareness.

Sharing Power.

Sustainability demands we recognize that we are all interconnected—people, biota, and physical elements. Problems are solved by each individual assuming a share of the responsibility.