

**RISING EARTH: TRANSFORMATIVE PERMACULTURE IMMERSION  
TEN-WEEK PROGRAM FOR YOUNG ADULTS, FALL 2019  
ECO-INSTITUTE AT PICKARD'S MOUNTAIN, CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA  
By Herman Greene**

If one were to imagine a perfect program for young adults, ages 18-28, to prepare them for life and change-making in the difficult times ahead, it would probably look very much like the residential "[Rising Earth: Transformative Permaculture Immersion](#)" training program that will take place at the [Eco-Institute at Pickard's Mountain](#), Chapel Hill, North Carolina (EIPM), from September 8 to November 17, 2019.



EIPM, under the leadership of [Megan Toben](#), has been offering programs for all age groups for many years. The Rising Earth program is the successor to the Odyssey Fellowship Program, which EIPM offered for several years. Participants in that program have been uniformly positive about their experiences. They have grown by relating to other young people from the United States and abroad, by relating to the staff, and by relating to the land.



The program is designed as a semester-off program for college students or as a program for college graduates or for those who have decided not to attend college or have not yet begun college.

The curriculum covers three areas—Inner Connection, Human Connection, and Earth connection—and nine areas:

## INNER CONNECTION

### 1. SOMATIC SELF-CARE

“Soma” means body in Greek; somatics is the internal experience of body. In guided and ultimately self-guided yoga, dance, and other movement practices, we develop depth in our capacity to sense ourselves, one another, and life around us.

### 2. EMOTIONAL LITERACY

Self-care prepares us for community care. When we apply permaculture theory to our emotional landscape, we see that the compost heap is just as valuable as the fruits of the garden. Learning to be at home in our emotional realities allows us to honor the hearts of others.

### 3. LIFE-PATH NAVIGATION

Early adulthood invites us into the journey of discovering our most authentic place in the world. As we begin to uncover our truest gifts and offerings, our deeper sense of purpose becomes a source of guidance throughout our lives.



## HUMAN CONNECTION

### 4. CONSCIOUS COMMUNICATION

Learning to clearly and compassionately communicate is a lifelong skill, one that takes both courage and vulnerability. Deep listening and authentic speech are vital tools for civic livelihood and healthy relationships.

## 5. COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP

The Rising Earth community is cooperative; the health of our community depends on the health of each member and the relationships between them. By practicing the arts of participatory governance, consensus, and sociocracy, we honor all voices on the way to harmonious solutions.

## 6. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ACTIVISM

The well-being of our planet as a whole living system requires that we reconsider the various institutions that structure our lives—social, economic, historical, and political—and the ways in which these systems perpetuate themselves. Once we understand how these systems function we can participate in changing them for the better.

## EARTH CONNECTION

### 7. HOMESTEAD SKILLS

Industrialized food and housing systems have distanced us from a true sense of home. Seed-saving, fermenting, herbalism, natural building, mushroom foraging, and farm-to-table culinary arts are just a few of the practices we engage in to explore how to mend the broken bonds between humanity and our ecological home.

### 8. TENDING THE LAND

Caring for a piece of land is a transformative experience, and understanding its functions and systems only deepens that power. Stewarding The Eco-Institute Farm while participating in a Permaculture Foundations course teaches the whole-systems framework underlying all we do at Rising Earth.

### 9. SPIRITUAL ECOLOGY

Consciousness pervades all forms of life: cells, organisms, soil, waterways. When we recognize the animacy of the natural world, we begin to see that it's all connected, and that we're each given the opportunity to wake up into conscious living for the sake of all beings.



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