

DISCUSSION COURSE



Discovering a Sense of Place

This eight-session course focuses on the importance of knowing and protecting our own bioregional place on Earth.

With the wisdom that comes from truly knowing the place in which we live, we can create lifestyles and social institutions in harmony with their unique place, fitting culture to nature rather than the reverse. This means providing for energy, food, shelter and transportation in a manner that promotes local self-reliance and long-term sustainability.

PURPOSE:

- To understand the meaning of a bioregion and what it would mean to develop a bioregional perspective;
- To discover how an understanding of and commitment to a place affects our willingness to accept personal responsibility to care for that place;
- To explore what it might mean to protect the place where we live.

The only fee associated with the course is \$25, which covers the cost of the book of readings and materials. The course is being offered by the Passionist Earth & Spirit Center, located in the barn and on the land behind the Passionist Monastery at 1920 Newburg Road in Louisville, KY.

For more information about hosting or participating in this discussion course or other transformative learning opportunities, contact the Earth & Spirit Center by phone at 502.452.2749, or email: earthandspirit@passionist.org, or visit our website: www.earthandspiritcenter.org.

TOPICS COVERED:

A Sense of Place: Kentuckian Wendell Berry, America's best-known bioregionalist, says if you don't know where you are, you don't know who you are. With a sense of place, your identity is defined – to a significant extent – by the natural features of the place you live. Without a sense of place, what will fill the void?

Responsibility to Place: There is a difference between living *on* the land and dwelling *in* it – understanding its rhythms, its potential, and its limits. Those who develop intimacy with a place over time tend to accept responsibility for it.

Knowing Your Bioregion: Your bioregion is a unique place with its own watershed, soils, climate, plants, animals, and history. How much do you know about it?

Living in Place: Living in place means consciously trying to satisfy your needs and find your pleasures in your local bioregion and working to assure the long-term health of the bioregion.

Mapping Your Place: Mapping can be learned by local groups and individuals to give a new sense of place. Where a typical map shows political subdivisions and transportation routes, a bioregional map delineates regions based on watersheds, climate, and plant types, thereby helping people relate to their natural surroundings.

Building Local Community: A bioregionalist assumes responsibility for the health and continuity of a place, not only its natural features, but also the social bonds of its people.

Empowerment: Knowing a place can inspire and empower one to take action to preserve or restore it. How important is individual and group action in modern society?