

Open Education Conference
Sustainable Pedagogies

Speakers:

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CLARE LEE: What we are about is sustainable pedagogies that allow students to become agents for change. There is no one single pedagogy that can be said to be sustainable. Pedagogy is in the multiple that encourage people to work together and creatively allow students to grow and allow students to grow the skills they'll need to be sustainable, to live sustainably in the world.

I'm rushing and I should calm down. Therefore, sustainable pedagogies ask for transformations in the way that we offer learning and the way that learning is facilitated, and it's that that we will major on in this session. But we'll just look at two ways to work with learners of any age that start to help them build the skills and understandings that they will need to work flexibly and with confidence in a world that's constantly changing.

The first pedagogy that we'll look at is compassionate pedagogy, and the second is we're using traditional ecological knowledge to approach issues that take sustainability seriously.

ALISON GLOVER: Now, the two pedagogies that we will focus on are explained fully in detail in a new OpenLearn course, and we'll share the link with you at the end of the session for the course so you can explore that further. The course is based on UNESCO Sustainable Development Goals, and it's about introducing those who teach to ways their learners can work to meet those goals.

And it's part of the OU's drive to work for a sustainable future. And in that course, there are 8 x 3-hour units, and it's freely available and relevant to anyone who teaches whatever the age of the learner. It contains ideas and examples of ways to add these pedagogies to your repertoire, to the benefit of your learners and the world.

So, we encourage you to access the course and explore the other pedagogies, as well as the two that we're focusing on today. to see how you might work to better equipped your learners to think creatively and work collaboratively to solve the issues brought about by climate change. So, it is of necessity really, that here is only an introduction to these ideas.

CLARE LEE: So first of all, we're going to be asking you to look at compassion as a pedagogy. Compassion is learned through the ways that learners experience their world. Compassionate pedagogy asks learners to care and to take action to promote what they care about. Learning when using compassionate pedagogies happens in three spaces. Compassionate conversations are held, and within this space, learners are joint authors or co researchers making decisions collectively with their learners.

Compassionate inquiry asks learners to act as researchers and are in, where they're encouraged to seek out different perspectives and to act as change agents in their community. And the third space is in compassionate action. Here, learning is encouraged through trial and improvement, taking risks and being innovative as learners discover new ways that they can collectively change their world through action within their community.

ALISON GLOVER: And so traditional ecological wisdom is there to be learned from such learning is vital as the human and non-human biosphere coexists in harmony in traditional cultures. Re-establishing a world where such harmony exists is the goal of sustainability. So

asking learners to consider the reciprocal or circular connections that are part of traditional cultures, and what can be brought into their ways of living is a step towards understanding that their actions really matter.

So there are recurring notions shared by many indigenous and traditional beliefs, and they tend to respect and apply mutual benefit to the bonds and boundaries between humans and non-humans. They hold nature in reverence, which is reflected in rituals, the arts, the crafts, agricultural techniques, and day to day activities. They revere relationships. They feel every person's relationship to each other, the animals around them, and to the land should be shaped by something other than economic profit.

They apply restraints knowing that we are all dependent on Earth's limited resources. They use the land respectfully and with restraint. Lastly, each generation takes the responsibility to live a healthy world for future generations seriously. So the permaculture flower has three ethics at its core, Care for Earth, Care for People, and Fair Share. All traditional knowledge is ethically based, and the outer layer of the flower shows you the 12 principles, the guidelines to be used when designing any sustainable system.

So, these principles can be integrated into curriculum design, but they can also be learning and teaching tools. Ensuring what is taught and how it is taught aligns with nature's principles. Now all 12 principles are listed on the second padlet wall that you'll be visiting in your breakout room. So, I'll just mention a few here. For example, number one is observe and interact.

So for instance, observe in patterns of behaviour and habits allows us to see what's going well and what might need to change. Then we have applied self-regulation and accept feedback. So being open to feedback and learning as suggestions for improvement. Use and value renewable resources. So as humans, we need to work with our natural rhythms and our energy levels and our passions and as do students. Then there is the greatest productivity. Then we also have to use of the edges and value the marginal role.

So being aware of our boundaries, we can be open to new viewpoints that thinking outside the box creatively use and respond to change. Being flexible is essential in developing resilience. So which of those principles can be built into the education in your context? That's the real key takeaway question.