

People & Permaculture



Designing personal, collective and planetary well-being

LOOBY MACNAMARA

This book is cause for celebration! Many of us have long hankered for the insights and principles of permaculture to be translated to serve all aspects of our lives. Looby Macnamara has been worth waiting for: she fills the bill with luminous clarity, lean eloquence and an exquisite knowledge of systems. Her opening chapters on 'Thinking like an Ecosystem' should be required reading in every classroom from third grade through graduate school. Equally rewarding are her applications of permaculture to health, communication and the life of the mind. It's part of the genius of the book that all this, once you see it, can seem as natural as breathing.

Joanna Macy, author of *Coming Back to Life, World as Lover, World as Self*
and co-author, *Active Hope: How to Face the Mess We're in without Going Crazy*

The application of permaculture principles and thinking to peoplecare has long been a vexed issue for permaculture activists, designers and teachers. In this book Looby Macnamara uses her solid grounding in permaculture to show that its principles and thinking can help us all be effective and hopeful in an age of change and challenge. In the process she draws in kindred ideas and influences from the field of peoplecare, making a significant contribution in the ongoing evolution of permaculture as a concept and a movement creating a better world.

David Holmgren, co-originator of the Permaculture concept

Looby Macnamara's inspiring and groundbreaking book is a rich celebration of the interconnectivity of all life and is filled to the brim with the potential of our future growth and happiness. It is the very best of guidebooks: entertaining, instructive, nurturing and profound. It will become a constant companion and is one of those books you will want to give to everyone you know!

Glennie Kindred, author of several books on Earth wisdom,
our native trees and plants, and celebrating the Earth's cycles

We all have our dark moments of the soul, when we go deep into our individual beings and ask hard questions and sometimes get unwelcome answers. Are humans a plague on the planet? Can one person, when that one person is me, really make a difference? Can the juggernaut of consumer society be turned? Why should we single out our fellow humans for a special degree of care over, say, salmon, or whales? The answer is in this book. We take care of people because people matter, and because that is our nature as creatures who care. What we care about matters to the fate of the world, now as never before. If permaculture as a design tool is about making connections, this book is about how we reconnect ourselves – to each other, to our inner selves, to our highest aspirations and, finally, to the cycles of life, of which we are just a small, but incredibly important, part.

Albert Bates, author and educator, The Farm Ecovillage Training Center,
Tennessee USA

Thanks to Looby Macnamara for bringing us a heart-warming book which invites us to step from our comfortable sofa into a world of adventures, explorations and connections – and blesses us to return for a good rest and some quiet when we need it. She offers us the world as our playground – not something we have to set straight, but something we have the honour of engaging with. A roadmap for the joyful expression of our love for each other and this wild, beautiful planet we call our home.

Kosha Anja Joubert, president of the Global Ecovillage Network

People @ Permaculture is a book of practical wisdom that can improve our lives, our relationships and our ability to act for our world.

Chris Johnstone, author of *Find Your Power*
and co-author of *Active Hope: How to Face the Mess We're in without Going Crazy*

Land design is complex, but trees don't answer back! In my experience the most challenging aspect of any design is not which plants or elements to include, but how to work with my fellow humans, and create situations where each person feels valued and able to make their best contribution. Looby has done the permaculture community a great service with this book. It has helped me explore my own potential and think in new ways. I've gained insight into how I can work more effectively with others and, in turn, move towards a more harmonious and abundant relationship with our amazing Earth. Looby's book is an important step towards our goal of personal, social and ecological well-being, and I urge you to read it.

Andy Goldring, CEO, The Permaculture Association (Britain)

Living in today's global climate can be fraught with fear, overwhelm and despair. Looby Macnamara effortlessly eases you out of that predicament and on to an upwardly-spiralling path of practical exercises, solutions and earth-based wisdom. *People @ Permaculture* offers a pragmatic and holistic approach to transforming our relationships, not only with each other, but with nature as a whole. Its timing couldn't be more fortuitous; this book holds enough insight and inspiration to help us thrive throughout these changing times and create a brighter future for all. Essential reading for anyone who wishes to reclaim their most intimate connection to people, place and planet.

Natalie Fee, author of *The Everyday Alchemist's Happiness Handbook*
and *The Everyday Alchemist's Book of Poems*. www.nataliefee.com

Peoplecare is as important to permaculture as earthcare – unless we learn to live in harmony with each other, we'll never get anything done. Looby's book fills a gap that has long been there in permaculture literature. I heartily congratulate her.

Patrick Whitefield, permaculture teacher and author

I do believe that we all love this Earth, everyone of us. Yet finding the way to express the joy of this life has become so complicated, our very actions in celebrating often causing the destruction we so desperately don't need. Permaculture offers a glimpse to a kinder future, where our expression meets the right actions. This book is a manual in how to get there – grounded, practical and brimming with joy for the good stuff. What I like most about this book, is that we are not banished from nature, but centred in it, which I believe is our rightful place.

Alys Fowler, gardener, writer and presenter (who deeply loves soil)

This is a work of significant courage – for years now considerations of the peoplecare aspect of permaculture have been so conflicting that no-one has dared publish a volume like this. Bravo to Looby for breaking through the wall of silence and producing this book. I found it to be of startling breadth, timely relevance and it contains a handsome blend of insights drawn from Looby's own experience integrated with the wisdom of others. The agile extension of the design approach that is, along with the principles, at the core of permaculture into the field of humans relations is particularly useful to me. I recommend this encyclopedic book to you.

Andrew Langford, co-president, Gaia University, www.gaiauniversity.org

Looby Macnamara presents an exciting and inspiring vision for humanity in *People & Permaculture*. Most importantly she also equips readers with the tools and techniques needed to make this vision a reality. An enlightening handbook for those who want to change the world.

Melissa Corkhill, editor of *The Green Parent* magazine, www.thegreenparent.co.uk

All too often, promising environmental projects are thwarted by burnout or conflict. *People & Permaculture* sounds a clarion of hope, empowering us with practical solutions that make people central to permaculture design. This book is a treasure trove of wise observations and a manual for how to put the peoplecare ethic into practice.

Rebecca Laughton, author of *Surviving & Thriving On The Land*

In *People & Permaculture* Looby Macnamara displays an uncanny knack for laying a safe path of stepping stones into new territories of personal abundance. This handbook is so full of golden keys: explanations, illustrations, adventurous exercises and powerful quotations, each unlocking a forgotten limiting belief, freeing more love to come out and play. Looby is a masterful hand-holder, redesigning our inner landscape with raw distinctions and organic intelligence. This is a book of learning – learning from other cultures, from ancestors, from nature, learning from our own pain. Looby helps us remember that out of deep rich compost grows the best fruits, herbs, flowers and vegetables.

Clinton Callahan, originator of Possibility Management
and author of *Conscious Feelings*, www.nextculture.org

What a great idea – to explore how permaculture principles can be applied to designing healthy human culture at all levels of scale, from individual, to group, to global. This book is rich with ideas, real life examples and tried and tested tools for creating happy, effective and resilient people and projects.

Sophy Banks, Transition Town Totnes and Transition Network

This is a wonderful book, both wise and pragmatic, as imaginative as it is intelligent.

Jay Griffiths, author of *Wild: An Elemental Journey*

The future of culture and agriculture is in permaculture. This book is perhaps the first to give readers the big picture and a comprehensive understanding of permaculture and how it can underpin our ecological, social and spiritual paradigm. The book is an outstanding contribution to an ever evolving vision which is creative, imaginative, sustainable and joyful.

Satish Kumar, editor of *Resurgence*

This is a very timely and important book. Our world is calling for people to stand together in heart-centred, creative and powerful ways for a healthy future, a future where humans naturally love and care about our beautiful Planet Earth, all creatures and also themselves. Permaculture principles provide common sense design strategies, not only for redesigning our physical environments for a sustainable world, but also for creating supportive, dynamic, caring and restorative systems that care for people. This is a must read book for all who care for themselves and our world.

Robin Clayfield, author of *The Manual For Teaching Permaculture Creatively*
and *You Can Have Your Permaculture and Eat It Too*

With *People & Permaculture* Looby has filled a gaping hole in the permaculture literature. To create the positive changes we want to see in the world we need to work together, something our modern society teaches us precious little of. The second ethic of 'care of people' needed its own manual and here it is. Her non-linear Design Web is a particularly important contribution to our toolbox. Buy this book and add it to yours.

Aranya, permaculture teacher and author of *Permaculture Design – Step By Step*

People & Permaculture is a stand out title of great and enduring originality. The Design Web by itself is one of the most innovative and useful developments in permaculture design in the last few decades. I have used it on a variety of projects, from a woodland educational charity to a commercial enterprise to clarify and share visions and then design pathways to achieving them. It works every time. *People & Permaculture* has so much more to it in these pages and the new introduction perfectly updates both Looby's new thinking and the experiences of the many readers who have put this book into action.

Maddy Harland, author of *Fertile Edges* and *The Biotime Log*
and editor of *Permaculture Magazine*

The gift Looby has brought is her profound ability to pull the threads of design spirit out of everyone and make us realise 'I can'. She shows all of us, including me, how we can be more effective in redreaming and regenerating our world in a truly beautiful way.

Jon Young, founder of the 8 Shields Institute

A lovely, refreshing way to look at permaculture. Full of common sense for a world where common sense is so often lacking. Well structured, full of enthusiasm, bringing simplicity into a complex theme with appeal well beyond permaculture – put down the remote control, pour yourself a homebrew and enjoy!

Max O Lindegger, permaculture pioneer, peasant farmer and beekeeper

Reading this book is like taking a shower under a fresh flowing waterfall: stimulating and revitalising. It contains not only passion and vision but a compendium of tools and ideas to turn our collective fear of scarcity into trust in abundance. Looby places personal and interpersonal work within the context of world-work and earthcare, no idle navel-gazing but a revolution in understanding which is as critical to our survival as a species as the tools to regenerate land. The writing is clear and engaging, and the book includes quotations, images and activities to keep the reader involved, reflecting Looby's experience as a skilled teacher. *People & Permaculture* is a pioneering book, opening the way for much more thinking in this area. I am excited to think of what riches may flow from it.

Jackie Singer, celebrant and author of *Birthrites*

This long-overdue book allows the peoplecare and fair share ethics of permaculture to find their place in the sun. To sustain ourselves, and all life on Planet Earth, we need to redesign the way we do things. Not all of us manage land, but all of us have responsibility for what we consume each day and how we relate to others. By taking small steps we can achieve great things. This book is packed with practical suggestions as well as underlying concepts to help us live in harmony with each other and with the Earth.

Ian Lillington, permaculture teacher and author of *The Holistic Life*

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The Author



Looby had been teaching permaculture since 2002. She lives with her partner, Chris Evans and two daughters Shanti and Teya, on a 20 acre smallholding in Herefordshire, UK. It is a teaching and demonstration site called Applewood Permaculture Centre. Here she grows food, connects with the wonderful wildlife and hosts people from around the world. She offers Permaculture, Cultural Emergence courses, teacher trainings and other specialist courses, globally, online and at Applewood. Looby has a passion for creative teaching methods and enjoys inventing participatory activities and games to

enhance learning and self-discovery. Her degree in Human Sciences provides a wealth of perspectives to bring into her teaching and writing. Looby is author of *7 Ways to Think Differently* and *Strands of Infinity* and a regular contributor to *Permaculture Magazine* and *Earth Pathways Diary*.

She has supported the development and growth of permaculture nationally through her input as trustee of the Permaculture Association (Britain) for five years (2001-2006) and was Chairperson for two of these. She is still an active member of the permaculture community and is a senior diploma tutor.

Looby is part of the Mother Nature project, an international group dedicated to empowering mothers on their personal transformation journey (www.mothernatureproject.org). As well as specialising in permaculture, Looby is a trained Work That Reconnects facilitator, and has worked with Jon Young and the 8 Shields Institute. She is co-founder of the Cultural Emergence project, developing tools for positive cultural evolution for individuals and communities.

She enjoys singing, yoga, gardening and growing food and making all sorts of things from cakes to mandalas and clothes to blankets.

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and Applewood Permaculture Centre: www.ApplewoodCourses.com

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Foreword

by Polly Higgins

Picking up this book for the first time is to hold a route map to the future in the palm of your hand. Use what you learn from it and – be warned – your life will change forever. You will become a co-creator of a beautiful new world.

Are you ready to take the step into the world of abundance, beauty and harmony? It may be a rocky journey at the beginning and full of challenges along the way, but I urge you to take the first step. That is the hardest bit. After this you will find life opens its doors to you and all you need do is walk through. Keep a sense of humour and when things don't quite work out as you thought, take it as a step in the learning curve. Give it a year and see how you feel when your world becomes increasingly more connected.

Permaculture has so much to teach us about life itself; by applying the principles of permaculture to our lives we can begin to transform each problem into a solution. Look to the margins, where the greatest ideas are to be found. It is the same in life too – seek out the edge as this is where the greatest innovation grows. Where two ecosystems meet is the home of the most creative activity – neither lives in isolation – both become a soup of many ingredients that would not otherwise meet. When they do, new life flourishes. So too in our lives, or when we meet with some form of living that runs counter to our own – that is a moment when we can either reject or engage the two different lives – so that something more can come into being. The two can become co-creators of a new world. When that happens the unlikely alliance bears fruit.

We are creating a new world, where people and planet come first. Do this, and the Earth becomes all of our business and we humans all become one big co-operation. Imagine that our Earth is our pot of gold. Each time we co-create with others we are adding to our pot and when we do this the pot fills up with all that we grow, both from our land and within our souls. The remarkable thing is that our pot continues to grow too; the more we put into the pot, the larger it becomes, the more we have to share with others. Permaculture is in the widest sense the biggest job creation scheme in the world. By creating abundance we are giving into the lives of those all around us, as well as gifting a legacy for those who have yet to come. Each seed we plant will grow and give to us for many generations to come. What could be better?

I have applied permaculture principles to my life and to my work – and believe me they work! When I remind myself to look to the problem and see how to make it the solution, inevitably I find the way forward. I am a lawyer, a lawyer who loves

the Earth. My journey started when I decided the Earth was in need of a good lawyer and that we can create a legal duty of care. Now I am bringing into being a whole new body of law called Earth Law where people and planet are put first. I am changing the rules of the game – after all, that is all law is – the rules of the game of life. The Earth has a right to life and we can all help nourish the life of the land beneath our feet. When we change our thinking about our lives, we come to the point of understanding that we are all inter-related and when we know that it is then just a small step to the thought that we are all interconnected. I woke up to that thought some years ago and it changed my understanding forever.

As a child I feared being stung by a bee; now I love them! They are the carriers of life itself. We can be like bees, seeding and pollinating literally and metaphorically. When we do that, new life and new ways of thinking can evolve very quickly. Take time to just be with the Earth and you will find there is so much to learn by looking to nature for our wisdom; if anyone knows the rules of the game of life it is the Earth. By just spending time with nature we will become more attuned to her rhythms and her song of love. I marvel when I hear the sounds of nature; not one of them is out of tune. When we attune ourselves to nature so too do we begin to thrum with the very vibration of life itself. It's a very different tune to the ones we have previously known; this one creates perfect harmony and with harmony comes happiness.

I have a vision of a Garden of Eden where each and every one of us is enjoying our new world. My vision is filled with great love for all living beings. I can see a world full of abundance for all, a world where people and planet are loved and given freedom to be. This is a world where the health and well-being of us all comes first. When this happens, we all become one – a living, breathing organism that is thrumming with love. I can almost hear the sound now.

People and Permaculture is a pathway to this new world. It will indeed change your life if you absorb its wisdom and apply its tools and techniques. It will enhance your personal and professional relationships and help you to design better projects. It is a big step forward in permaculture thinking and a valuable addition to any library. May it bring you balance and fulfilment and enable you to become an even more effective advocate for the Earth.

POLLY HIGGINS

Lawyer and ecocide law expert

Introduction to this new edition

Welcome to this second edition of *People and Permaculture*.

It's been seven years since *People and Permaculture* was launched into the world, and since then many things have shifted, evolved and emerged. Alongside many positive steps and successes, there has been growing awareness of local and global challenges. The methodology within *People and Permaculture* is needed more than ever in the world today. The gaps in personal, collective and planetary well-being are prevalent, calling us in the middle of the night, stirring our dreams and inviting us into action.

There appears to be an acceleration of the challenges, and hence a need for the acceleration of the solutions. In this ever-changing world we need tools for greater personal resilience and health. We need methods for effective relationships and group work so that we can collaborate and co-create together. We need a reform of our education systems to prepare future generations to problem solve and adapt to personal, social and global challenges. We need to level privilege on every scale within our groups and organisations and globally. We need to move towards universal justice and equality through levelling privilege and moving into a model for regenerative development. We need to re-evaluate how we interact with ecosystems and come into balance with how we use natural resources.

Change is happening already, moving us away from the destructive trajectory and shifting our direction towards a life sustaining Earth culture. Joanna Macy refers to this shift as the Great Turning. The time is ripe for more co-ordination, cohesion and design to navigate our journey in the Great Turning.

What differentiates this book from most that focus on personal well-being or others on global issues, is the recognition that personal, collective and planetary well-being are undeniably intertwined. True personal well-being depends on collective well-being, and increasing our own personal well-being supports collective and planetary well-being. There is a web of well-being and working at any point sends forth positive ripples. Well-being is multi-dimensional.

For ourselves as individuals, it encompasses physical, emotional and spiritual health and a healthy mind; from here we develop a sense of wholeness, connection, resilience and empowerment. We feel alive, awake, engaged and resourceful. We are continually growing – with our learning, our effectiveness, our spiritual and personal development. Our internal landscape is filled with regenerative positive thinking that encourages us to be our best in the world.

Collective well-being starts with those closest to us, our friends and family. We can nurture relationships and find ways to give and receive support with good communication, bringing us into peaceful connection with each other. This connection with other people extends to our groups and communities, so that we embrace diversity in all shapes and sizes with respect and valuing of intergenerational wisdom. Moving further out, we need to value and learn from the entire spectrum of global wisdom, and redefine development to support genuine regeneration based on ethical behaviour and long-term thinking. Collective wellbeing would mean valuing all people and beings for their intrinsic worth to create an inclusive, fair, stable and safe world. Every person would have freedom of speech and freedom for our bodies. We would all be free from oppression. There would be respect and freedom for the diversity of choices each of us makes.

Health-care and education systems are part of the fabric of society intended to support our collective well-being, and we can use permaculture thinking to enhance these to maximise their effectiveness. The well-being of each and every one of us is dependent on the health of the ecosystems around us, the air we breathe, water we drink and food we eat. It is a fallacy to look at our own personal well-being in isolation. We are being called to consider the well-being of ecosystems, the more than human world and all of Earth's systems. Collective well-being extends all the way from our family relationships to entire planetary well-being. Collective well-being would give us healthy, productive, abundant, regenerative communities, social systems and ecosystems.

To bring about full collective health we need to challenge cultural conditioning and facilitate cultural shifts to support the emergence of a culture of well-being. A culture of well-being would mean that self-care, family-care, community care, and ecosystem care are prioritised and valued. There is focus, intention and attention on well-being of the whole. We have a holistic sense and understanding of well-being that is taught and role modelled to us from an early age. Our collective well-being extends to future generations and caring for the world they will inherit.

With the daily news, scientists' predictions and the onslaught of abuses to campaign against, it can seem like we are actually heading away from this vision of personal, collective and planetary well-being. It can easily be overwhelming with huge challenges from multiple directions. I am familiar with the urge to bury my head in anger, denial or grief but I try and remain positive and hopeful that we can and will manifest the Great Turning. At the end of *People and Permaculture* I share a Manifesto for Humanity poem and I choose to put my belief in the power and wisdom of the collective to manifest this vision. I have made a commitment to put my energy and resources in that direction. I am often asked how do I maintain a positive attitude about the fate of world?

It is the power of design that gives me hope for the Great Turning.

Designing is a way of being proactive, visionary, creative and effective. Design empowers us to take responsibility for influencing our own personal and collective well-being. It starts with recognising where we are, visioning where we want to be and then identifying steps for how we get there. When we are designing well-being, whether it is for ourselves, our communities or for the planet, it is a non-

linear process with non-linear results. And with this non-linearity anything is possible. Tipping points from climate change to climate health could happen at any moment. Let's allow for the possibility of the seemingly impossible.

It is the potential of permaculture thinking and action for supporting personal transformation, collective growth and ecosystem restoration that propels me forward and prevents me from falling into a pit of despair at the state of the world. Permaculture has supported my well-being, lifestyle, livelihood and community in so many ways over the last 20 years. It has provided me with a platform to be visionary, leaderful, grounded and proactive.

While I was writing *People and Permaculture* I was using all of the principles, design and thinking described to make the writing process highly effective and to balance my writing with my family and self-care. For example, I took the principle *Catch & store energy* as a touchstone to give myself momentum as I began writing. Thoughts and ideas that emerged from any conversation, article, train journey or daydream were immediately scribbled into notebooks, mind-maps and any scrap of paper to hand. I continued to evolve my writing process as the book unfolded and it became a dynamic, emerging design in action that kept me focused, engaged and enjoying the process.

As *People and Permaculture* was birthed into the world and began having positive impact in people's lives, I too took the methodology deeper into my own life, career and well-being. The Design Web, featured on the front cover, is a framework that I created specifically to support people's designs. I embarked on many personal and work related designs both informally and formally. I have a multitude of inter-connecting, informal designs, where I apply the Design Web into my decision-making and general direction with particular aspects of my life. I also made intentional designs where I would systematically take myself, (and others) through the Design Web documenting the design and reaching a point of completeness, manifestation and integration into my being and life. The most significant and successful of these designs, being the fruition of a long-term goal and vision of my family to get our own home and land to run as an education and demonstration site. After many, many years of holding this dream in our hearts, myself and my partner, Chris, decided to make a commitment to making it happen and started formally using the Design Web to support its manifestation. In 2016, our design became reality and we moved into Applewood Permaculture Centre. This really has been a dream come true; our 20 acre smallholding is more wonderful than we could have imagined. We are stewards of a stunning landscape with ancient oaks, buzzards, and a parliament of owls, as part of the ecosystems of orchard, and pond. We also inherited enough infrastructure to host courses immediately, and have since been welcoming people from all over the world to come and learn and collaborate with us.

The Design Web has been used all over the world and in ways and situations that I couldn't have foreseen. It has been used to design pathways, places, projects, processes, plans and products. From looking after elderly parents to becoming a parent, from organising house cleaning duties to recovering from burnout and chronic illness, from running volunteer programmes to running events, from building homes

to building businesses. People have designed changes in lifestyles, diet, location and careers. Pathways have been considered for ongoing journeys as teachers, mentors, diploma apprentices, coaches, leaders and elders. Plans have been made for regular reflection and effectiveness as well as for transitions and rites of passage – from birth plans and weddings to end of life and dying creatively plans. Designs have been made to support a variety of skill development; becoming a facilitator, learning a new language, acquiring cooking or storytelling skills. The Design Web has been used to transform inner landscapes and create deep openings to our true potential.

Designs have enhanced family dynamics and brought harmony and connection to relationships. It has clarified intentions and unified singing, parenting and transition groups. People have crafted portfolios of connected designs building a holistic picture of their projects. Designs have manifested products such as books, courses and learning tools. Momentum has been gained with ongoing processes such as nature connection and empowerment of women and marginalised groups through making designs. Teachers and health professionals have brought permaculture design into schools and hospitals to enable more peoplecare and resilience. Designs of places have included land, buildings, homes and offices. From gardens to woodlands to city farms designs have been followed that listen to the voice of the land and it's needs and aligning them with the needs of the people.

International organisations and businesses have made designs for scaling up and restructuring their work. Designs been used to bring understanding across diverse cultural backgrounds. They have informed disaster relief and international development programmes. There has even been a global-scale conceptual design for how we could create a safe world for all women and children – a world without sexual abuse. It seems so far from where we currently are, but perhaps if we could work towards zero for the statistics of abuse, why not try and design our way there?

There are infinite opportunities for us to shift our perspectives, invite change and create positive spirals of health, wealth and abundance in many different forms through design. When I wrote *People and Permaculture* I had the intention of sharing the benefits of permaculture and making it relevant to everyone. I wanted to show how widely applicable the tools and thinking are to any situation no matter where you are and the scope of designs produced illustrates this potential. I want to activate the design aptitude in everyone.

People have found the emerging, non linear process of the Design Web intuitive, practical, sensible, fluid, inspirational and resonant with their own organic nature. Just like the mandala on the cover it is a layered, interconnected process. I have reviewed numerous designs in my work as a diploma tutor, and each one has deepened my learning. Each person has incorporated their life's experiences, bringing new methods and adapted the tools. They have brought their own artistic, analytical, logical and story telling skills into the process. It has convinced me that there is a never-ending supply of unique approaches to design and that we are all natural designers.

People and Permaculture has been a gamechanger for the permaculture movement. For the many people globally who don't have access to land and thought that permaculture was just about gardening, *People and Permaculture* has illustrated

that there are many more ways to use the tools and bring the ethics alive within our lives. It has widened the edges of our movement and created more entry points for people to discover permaculture thinking and its potential. Over the last few years new fields of people permaculture have emerged and are being cultivated, such as social, personal, liberation and emotional permaculture. All of these are contributing to the tools we need for personal, collective and planetary well-being.

People and Permaculture was never proposed to be a definitive guide or end point, it is intended as a hundred thousand starting points for each reader to engage in their own journey of well-being, peoplecare, finding solutions, taking responsibility, thinking differently and manifesting through design and action. It is an opening into the ongoing search for humanity to find ways to live in harmony, with each other, the planet and ourselves. This conversation is so pertinent to our current time.

My own search for meaning, for solutions and new tools, for ways to share perspectives and ways to pioneer and contribute continues. It has led to interactions with other change makers and methodologies that share similar visions of regenerative cultures. *7 Ways To Think Differently* is my second book that emerged through experiencing and training in the Work That Reconnects. It is also in part a distillation, synthesis and evolution of the thinking embedded in *People and Permaculture*. Furthermore, *7 Ways To Think Differently* is a response to the much-asked question – what is permaculture? Through permaculture we can shift our perspectives and adjust our mindsets, then our behaviours, activities and what we create in the world will also change. *Strands of Infinity*, my third book, is a collection of poetry and is a different way of engaging our heart and minds. It is not just through our thoughts and actions that we create change, we also need to allow our hearts and feelings to motivate, connect and nourish us on our journeys.

People and Permaculture has spawned many designs, insights, interactions and collaborations, and will continue to do so. The Cultural Emergence project is my latest focus, which builds and expands upon the tools offered here. It continues the groundwork, influences, and methodology here. There is a continuum from permaculture to people and permaculture to Cultural Emergence, all of them reinforcing and overlapping with each other. Cultural Emergence began through a collaboration with Jon Young and 8 Shields, and is now involving many other visionaries and leaders. We envision an acceleration of global cultural transformation towards a peaceful, connected world that can bring us into humanitarian and planetary alignment for a positive regenerative future. Our mission is to create, develop, share and use profoundly effective tools and methods for individuals and communities that bring us into a state of fertile Cultural Emergence. Through interactions with change makers we are encouraging the emergence of positive tools for cultural shifts and understandings. Emergence is a phenomenon of systems where something new and unexpected arises through interactions. Emergence is all around us from water to honey from rainbows to art. The separate ingredients of a cake do not give a clue as to the end product, and it is one of the smallest ingredients, the baking powder, that literally gives rise to the cake. We believe in the power and potential of emergence to make this vision of a regenerative culture possible, and it could happen very fast. We need to fully inhabit the belief and

act with the conviction that we have the capacity to make the Great Turning. It could happen very swiftly and convincingly if we are effective, collaborative and supportive. This is the time to bring ourselves together with such unity and sense of purpose that we know we will succeed in emerging new cultures that brings balance, health and care for all beings.

As we continue on this path new exciting opportunities and developments will surface that weren't present before. There will be more edges to stretch, insights to have, tools to develop and understandings to contribute to the ongoing journey of the Great Turning we find ourselves on.

There are many people who think that tools and technology will save the day and provide what is needed for the planet and humanity. What we really need though are tools that can deconstruct and release the cultural conditioning and mindsets that have brought us to the place of unprecedented ecosystem stress and destruction, social chaos and injustice, widespread abuse and individual fragility and disconnection. We need tools for the invisible structures of communication, decision-making, well-being, education, group dynamics and community building. We need tools that challenge and awaken, move and invigorate, nourish and empower us; tools that bring us into a fuller sense of ourselves and connect us with the bigger vision of possibility for ourselves and humanity. It is going to take multiple tools to emerge the cultures that will enable the ethics of Earth care, peoplecare and Fair shares to grow and flourish for now and future generations. To bring us to a place of true, embodied collective well-being.

Of course it's not just having the tools that counts, owning a paintbrush does not make us painters. We need to move the tools, you my dear reader, need to move the tools. Ask yourself questions, have a go at designing, do the activities in here. These are transferable tools, applicable globally to anyone, you can make them your own and adapt them to your own cultural contexts. As we use the tools they become familiar to us and before long they become part of the way we are, the way we interact with the world, part of our ways of being and thinking, part of our holistic well-being. They become part of our own personal culture, rippling out and influencing all the other cultures we are part of.

Permaculture is part common sense, part design and part magic. Through this potent combination anything is possible. We can design and manifest the world we want to live in for ourselves now, and for future generations and all of life. Permaculture inhabits a place of hope and possibility. We can design personal, collective and planetary well-being.

Happy designing.

LOOBY MACNAMARA
2019

(You can engage with other readers and designers in a global community and share your insights from the activities in the Facebook group People & Permaculture.)

About this book

There is a vision for humanity, a way of being with each other and ourselves that doesn't harm or pollute; that empowers and allows us to be the best we can. Mostly this vision is obscured by our lack of energy and motivation, petty everyday quarrels and the horrors of the daily news. At other times the vision is shining before us and within us, drawing us closer.

This book shines a light on how we can use permaculture thinking and design in our interactions with ourselves and other people to create harmony. We will explore how to see things differently, find new ways of approaching our lives, care for ourselves, act compassionately with other people and move towards our hope for humanity.

To live a life of abundance – to have what we need, to be thriving, to have enough to be generous – is magical. True abundant living permeates all levels of our lives; abundance in our well-being, in the quality of our relationships, in our communities and into the world.

Using permaculture can benefit us on a personal level; we can feel more empowered, healthy, grounded and able to make appropriate decisions. On a social level permaculture connects people and enables synergistic and co-operative relationships. Globally it can help alleviate poverty and improve quality and access to food, water and shelter, so we can meet our needs in non-polluting and non-damaging ways. For the environment, permaculture can restore and protect ecosystems, increase biodiversity, and preserve and regenerate our fundamental resources of life; soil, water and trees.

This book has arisen out of the need to focus on us as people, how we can inter-relate, motivate, inspire, act co-operatively and effectively to bring about positive benefits for the planet and people to secure our future.

With a rising population we must move quickly to ways of connecting and supporting, giving and receiving, nurturing and growing. We must break down existing paradigms of fear, greed and competition that are pulling apart the seams of our life-support systems on the planet. We need to turn our attention to how we interact with each other if there is any hope for our species' survival. It is we as humans that we need to save – by saving ourselves we will save the planet through the realisation that this is one and the same thing. We can only live in harmony with the planet if we can live in harmony with ourselves.

It is an aspirational goal that we can work towards in small steps. This book is intended both to share this bigger vision and stimulate you to make improvements in your own lives. Permaculture gives us the opportunity and tools to actively create peace and understanding, to weave our own webs of abundance.

Structure of the book

The book expands out from the self into relationships and groups, then into society and beyond into a global context. On either side we have edges of permaculture thinking. There is a glossary at the end for reference to unfamiliar terms; it can also be used as a review.

Part 1: Thinking like an ecosystem

We begin with opening up our thinking, to imagining how ecosystems hold the abundance that they do. We gain familiarity with permaculture concepts.

Part 2: Looking deep into the centre

From this we focus on our own self-care, improving our well-being and how we can expand into the true potential of ourselves.

Part 3: Hearing each other

We explore how we can truly listen to each other to improve our relationships, families and groups. We look at how we can provide support, give and receive feedback, make decisions, and prevent and resolve conflict.

Part 4: Living in society

Here we expand our vision to examine what is happening in our communities and how, with shifts of thinking, we can create abundant systems of peoplecare.

Part 5: Feeling connected globally

Taking this out as far as we can, we expand our consciousness to feel connected to everyone in the world and to the planet.

Part 6: Sensing our futures

With the final part we return to permaculture design as an approach for making sense of our futures and manifesting change. The book concludes with many voices sharing their vision for humanity.

Author's note

This book is intended as a springboard for further research, discussion and application. It gives us tools to further develop peoplecare in our own lives. It is not intended as a definitive guide or encyclopaedic volume.

What I have selected here are only some of the perspectives, theories, tools and concepts that are useful for permaculture; there are many more. We are learning and evolving all the time; inevitably new information will come in and new perspectives arise.

Given here is a wide enough viewpoint to see the whole picture and show the variety of possible applications; any part of this could be zoomed in on further and further to see more detail and complexity.

Activities

Throughout there are activities to help deepen your learning. Doing the activities will turn this from someone else's ideas and words on a page into your own first hand experience. You will be actively creating knowledge personal to you rather than just passively absorbing it. The learning will move from just words in your mind into your muscles and body.

During permaculture courses it is often remarked that it is all common sense – it is, but common sense isn't all that common these days. Recognising this shows that the new information is resonating with your innate wisdom. You are invited not to put your old brain aside to learn these new concepts, but to integrate them with your lifetime of experience and observation.

There are questions, self-enquiries to probe deeper into your true feelings, to reflect upon experiences and access your self-knowledge. Each of us has our own answers, when asked the right questions. These exercises will support you in the process of connecting with your own sense of being. By enhancing understanding of ourselves we improve our understanding of other people.

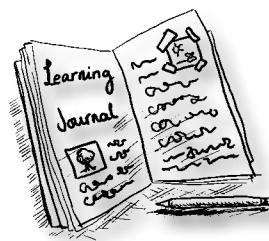
The activities are starting points for design, and can be part of the design process, which we will look at in closer detail as we go. They can be translated to other chapters. For example, a visioning exercise for ourselves could also be used for our families.

All of us have our own ways of engaging with books, and so too with the activities. Some of them will filter through and you might find yourself doing it in a different way. Others you might come back to in a couple of months' time, when you arrive in a new situation in your life. Other activities you might have a strong rapport with and begin to do every day. Find a way that suits you; there is no right or wrong way, and you don't need to feel guilty to be moving past activities without doing them. They are intended to be fun and engaging, not guilt inducing.

Discussions with friends can help assimilate your thoughts. A word of caution here; being too enthusiastic about the ideas and using lots of new words with your family and friends can be off-putting for them. There's been many a person who has rushed home after a course espousing permaculture this and permaculture that and their husband/wife/housemate has got to the point where they don't want to hear anything about it any more. It can be a question of translation; people can hear it more clearly if you make it appropriate for them, in terms they can understand. So be gentle, introduce things slowly and take time to understand them and make changes for yourself first. They will be drawn in by witnessing positive changes in you, and you will be invited to share.

Learning journal

To maximise the benefit from the activities it is useful to have a way of reflecting and capturing the learning. Find yourself an appealing notebook to have as a learning journal. In here you can do the activities and note anything that has struck a chord, or that you have further questions about, and reflections you



have about your journey through this book. Enjoy the activities and the learning and benefits they will provide.

ACTIVITY: AIMS FOR THE BOOK



Start your learning journal with your aims for reading the book.

What's my aim in reading this book?

What would I like to get out of it?

What are my motivations for reading it?

Taking time to think about this now will enable you to direct your energies.

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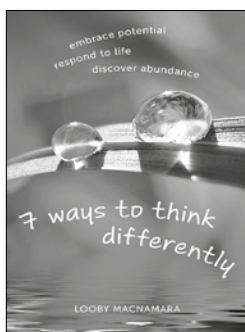
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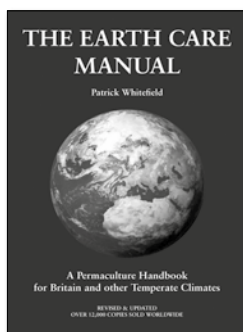
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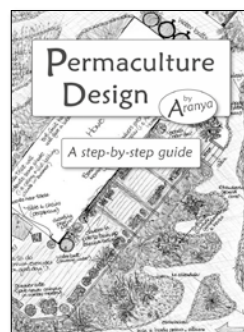
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