



SOCIAL PERMACULTURE part 1) ORIENTATION TABLE

LAYER TYPE - COMMUNITY, STRUCTURE

A method to help groups orient their actions and understand their best strengths and weaknesses using Permaculture Principles in relation to the CLIPS model. Although it cuts across all the CLIPS layers, it is especially related to Community and Structure. The Social Permaculture & CLIPS method is formed by parts 1 & 2, therefore the Orientation Table (Part 1) should be consulted and applied before the Assessment tool.



Aims and Objectives

- This method has the aims to:
- merge two integrated approaches and the respective languages and knowledge
- identify the areas that need urgent attention
- unveil group dynamics that are not clearly visible using other tools
- open new perspectives and relate group processes to natural processes in the belief that “Nature is the Master”.



Time

About 90 minutes, depending on the group size.



Materials Preparation

- The 12 Permaculture Principles cards
- The Social Permaculture Orientation Table
- Colored markers
- Sheets of paper and pencils for participants to take notes



Target audience

This method is aimed at groups that have a basic knowledge of Permaculture and want to explore the relations between group dynamics and the Permaculture Design Principles.



Number of Participants

Minimum 5 – maximum 30.



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**CLIPS
METHODS**



Duration	Activity
10'	INTRODUCTION - FRAMING THE EXERCISE
15'	PRESENTING THE ORIENTATION TABLE
5'	CREATING WORKING GROUPS
40'	APPLYING THE PRINCIPLES TO THE GROUP'S REALITY
20'	DEBRIEFING

INTRODUCTION

FRAMING- 10 MINUTES

This method can be used during a plenary session when the group wants to have fresh view on the internal dynamics using Permaculture Principles, language and knowledge.

The practical application starts presenting the general concepts of Permaculture to the group, and then introducing the principles applied to the social context using the principles cards (freely downloadable). The Orientation Table supports the Clips Facilitator (who should be a Permaculture Design graduate) to identify areas of weakness or incoherence in the group. The assessment tool further defines the possible symptoms that the CLIPS Facilitator will identify to address the group's needs.

In CLIPS, we can apply Holmgren's principles (plus 2 additional design principles) to the group, and identify areas of weakness where the principle is entirely - or partially - not applied.

SOCIAL PERMACULTURE ORIENTATION TABLE

INSTRUCTION 1 - PRESENTING THE ORIENTATION TABLE 15 MINUTES

In his book "Permaculture, Principles and Pathways Beyond Sustainability" (2002), Holmgren analyzed and explored 12 design principles, applying them both to natural ecosystems and to human habitats, and laid the foundation of our CLIPS & Social Permaculture Orientation Table and Assessment. Since Permaculture is focused on the long-term storing of energy (in an ecosystem as well as a social system), this perspective gives us interesting information on where the group has an energetic deficit and what symptoms arise from this fault in its social design.

The Orientation Table has been produced to relate the principles to the four CLIPS layers, and identify the key indicators that highlight their effects on each layer; as several principles are closely related to each other, so are the effects on the group, and the table should be used with an organic approach to integrate the information we detect.

INSTRUCTION 2-CREATING WORKING GROUPS 5 MINUTES

The facilitator will divide the large group in sub-groups of 5 to 7 people, inviting the members to choose one or more principles that they would like to focus on (according to the number of groups).

He/she can also use systemic constellation and place the Principles cards face down on the floor, asking people to group around them.

INSTRUCTION 3 - APPLYING THE PRINCIPLES TO THE GROUP'S REALITY 40 MINUTES

This analysis cuts across all the 4 CLIPS layers in relation to each of the principles.

All the principles have been analyzed and specific symptoms have been identified for each layer; some are closely related but have a slightly different angle. Two pairs of principles have been unified (2&3 and 8&10), and two others have been added (Multiple Elements and Multiple Functions) as both have relevant impact on group dynamics

The Table A is organized in 3 columns: Holmgren's Principle, Applied to Nature and Garden, Social permaculture examples.

Each group will read the principle(s) and discuss how it / they apply to each individual participant, then to the group's context.

The facilitator can ask questions to stimulate the discussion:

- is this principle applied in our group?
- how does it manifest itself?
- how can we increase its benefit?
- how are the principles inter-related to each other?
- how does this principle impact society at large?

In another session, the facilitator can introduce the group to the Social permaculture & CLIPS self assessment tool, a more specific and layer-oriented evaluation method to frame in more detail the critical areas related to each of the principles.



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INSTRUCTION 4 - DEBRIEFING 20 MINUTES

Sitting in a circle, participants are encouraged to share their experience and what they learnt about each other and the group reality.

There are some interesting reflection points for the group:

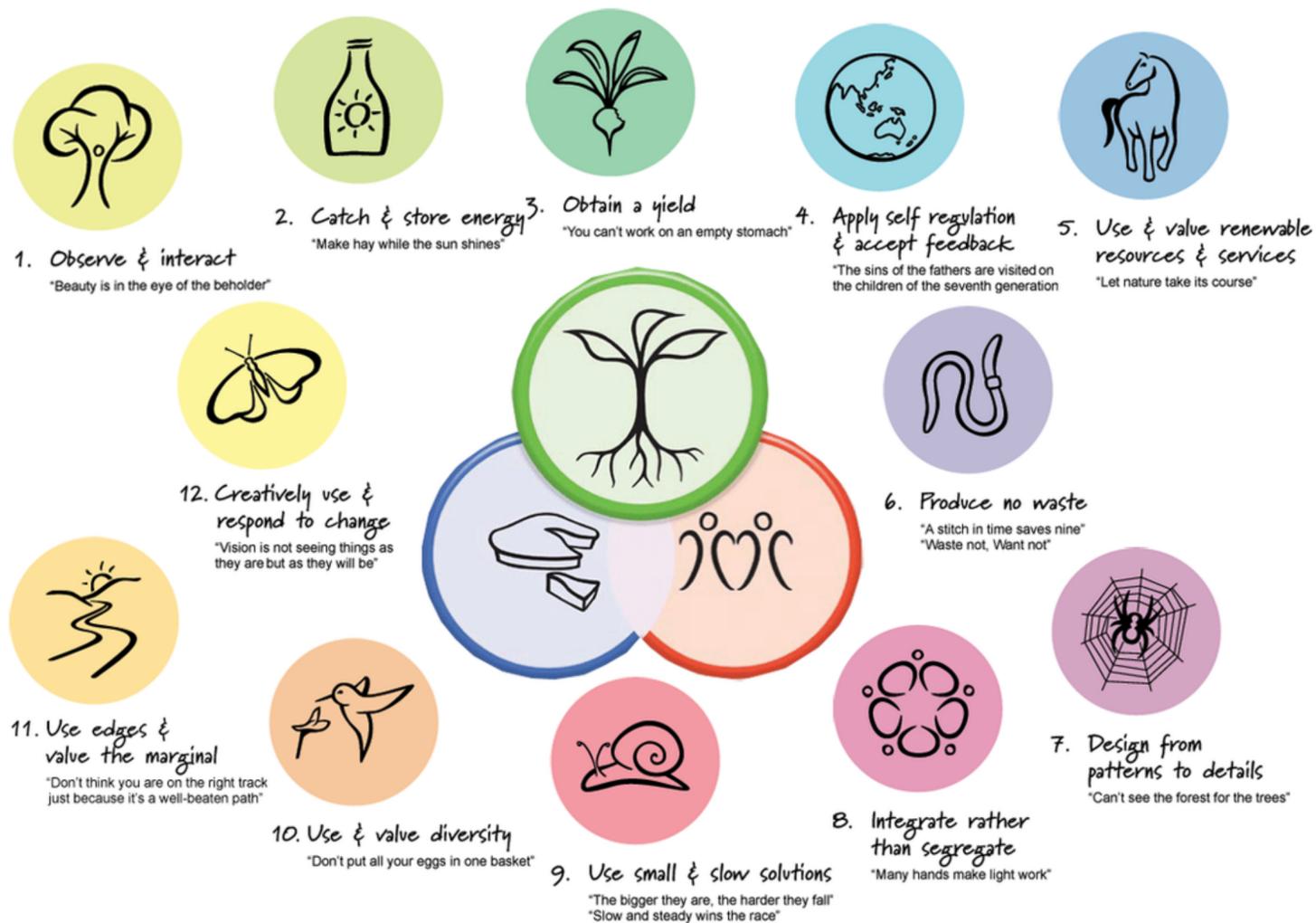
- what do the permaculture principles tell us about ourselves, our group, and society at large?
- how related do we feel with the laws of Nature? are they important for us?
- do we see a connection between permaculture design and group planning?
- do we want to go deeper and look into the Social permaculture & CLIPS Self assessment Tool?

RELATION TO THE CLIPS MODEL

This method looks at the group as an integrated system and analyzes its internal dynamics based on the Permaculture Design / Social permaculture approach. Even though it applies to all the CLIPS layers, it is most useful when addressing Community and Structure issues. This first approach will help the group to become familiar with the Principles and start to make connections with the group's strengths and weaknesses.

The next step with the Social Permaculture & CLIPS Assessment tool will go deeper into this analysis and will reveal how the lack of each principle can impact each of the layers.

FACILITATION TIP: Offering a session with the Social permaculture orientation table can bring a new perspective to the group and open stimulating conversations, especially for groups that have a strong environmental focus. Having group members who are permaculture-literate can be of great support for the facilitator, and investing some time to give a general introduction on Permaculture can be useful, but not strictly necessary during the session. Permaculture Design training is available in most countries and in most languages; a web search will give contact with the local Permaculture Academy, Association or Institute. Literature is also widely available in many languages, and providing the group with a short summary of the most relevant points can be of support.



SOCIAL PERMACULTURE ORIENTATION TABLE

<i>SOCIAL PERMACULTURE ORIENTATION TABLE</i>		
HOLMGREN'S PRINCIPLES	NATURE/GARDEN EXAMPLE	SOCIAL PERMACULTURE EXAMPLE
1 - <i>Observe and interact</i>	In the garden we need to observe when fruit is ready to harvest, when pests are attacking our crops and what plants need attention.	Identifying our patterns of behaviour, preferences, contradictions, habits, reactions, body and non-verbal language allows us to see what is going well and what might need changing.
2 - <i>Catch and store energy</i>	Energy is all around us in different forms: sleep and food for our bodies, water (dams, basins), fertile soil (humus), perennial plants.	Energy comes to us in different forms: yoga, physical exercise, music, stimulating conversations, meditation, work with passion. Learning our biorhythms helps us to plan actions accordingly. Awareness allows us to be respectful of when we need to conserve energy.
3 - <i>Obtain a yield</i>	Grazing animals are continually obtaining a harvest.	Expanding our idea of yields: money, time saved, job satisfaction, play, fun, friendship, laughter, hugs, joy, growth, learning. In a group: trust, cooperation, knowledge and language shared motivate people. Obtaining a yield helps us to maintain motivation and momentum.
4 - <i>Apply self-regulation and accept feedback</i>	Warm-blooded animals keep their body temperature constant.	Being open to feedback and learning to hear it without feeling criticized is important to our development as humans. In a group: practicing self-moderation and respectfully accepting comments develops reflection, introspection and mutual respect.
5 - <i>Use and value renewable resources and services</i>	All the energy to grow a forest comes from the sun. Plants, animals, soil, water offer renewable services without being consumed (e.g. tree for shade, chickens to clean up land, horse for work and transport).	Friends are renewable resources, with which we can exchange goods, services, skills, knowledge for free, and with which we can find forms of fun based on creation rather than consumption.
6 - <i>Produce no waste</i>	There is no waste in a woodland: everything is used within the system.	In a couple or a group, finding ways to communicate, to support and improve each other avoids conflict and stress, since if we hurt each other by our words or actions we also harm ourselves as part of the same couple/group system.
7 - <i>Design from patterns to details</i>	Every tree has the same pattern of roots, trunk and leaves but each has different details resulting in thousands of different species. The idea that started permaculture was the forest as a model for agriculture.	Identifying patterns of thought, behavior and communication that affect our lives and interactions with others (positively or negatively).
8 - <i>Integrate rather than segregate</i>	In every aspect of nature (from organisms to ecosystems) connections are just as important as the elements, and cooperation matters more than competition.	In groups, inclusivity and acceptance allow everyone to participate, making their skills available and finding their appropriate role.
9 - <i>Use small and slow solutions</i>	Trees don't grow overnight.	When dealing with other people, working towards win/win solutions can take more time in the short term but will provide better outcomes in the long run.
10 - <i>Use and value diversity</i>	The stability and resilience of an ecosystem grows with its biodiversity. A monoculture can be destroyed by a disease	When working in groups, recognizing and incorporating everyone's talents and skills, different points of view and ways of thinking and behaving, provide a wider range of possibilities than if we were all thinking the same.
11 - <i>Use and value edges and margins</i>	In nature edges are not sharply defined boundaries. The interface between two ecosystems is an active and productive space (1+1=3)	We learn most when we are at the edge of our comfort zone. Let's not allow peers pressure and group norms to force us to conform to the others, let's our ask friends to help us expand our comfort zones, to explore, experiment and adapt to new situations, skills and dynamics.
12 - <i>Creatively use and respond to change</i>	Bare soil is quickly colonized by pioneer plants, which pave the way for succession towards the forest. Nature is not static, but in dynamic balance with constant transformation.	Groups and settlements also have a natural evolution over time, with a flow of people from pioneers to mature communities. Change and conflict are inevitable, often beyond our control, influence and comprehension: instead of resisting them, we need to be flexible and adaptable to observe and seek the gifts they bring, to reflect on how we can learn and grow.

