



Image 1: Participants of the course during an observation task

# Designing an introduction to permaculture course

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Diploma design 6/10

Diploma started in 4/22

Client: myself & the course participants

*P&C design by Lumia  
Huhdanpää-Jais*

# Summary and data

## SUMMARY

Designing a weekend course “Introduction to Permaculture” to be held at Beyond Buckthorns. This design concentrates on the curriculum of the course.

## DATES

Design started 1/2023 - course held 7/23 - design writeup finished 12/23.

## ETHICS

**Earth care:** This course shall have Earth care in its centre. The course will inform and inspire the participants to actively take care of the Earth in all possible means.

**People care:** The course shall inspire and remind participants that we humans are nature working and therefore deserve, like all living things, basic respect. The course shall emphasize personal responsibility, friendship and community as an integral part of permaculture.

**Fair share:** The course shall be based on sharing knowledge, experiences and inspiration.

## DESIGN FRAMEWORK

GOBRADIME: Goals - Observation - Boundaries - Resources - Analysis - Design - Implement - Monitoring/Mistakes/Measurement/Maintenance - Evaluate (& Enjoy!) (<https://www.freepermaculture.com/whole-systems-design/>)

## TOOLS

S.M.A.R.T.E.R goals, Benchmarking, Principles as a lense, SWOC, Random assembly, To-Do list, PMI, What worked/what didn't/what will I change

All images mine if not stated otherwise. All decorative graphics by Canva if not stated otherwise.



# Goals

## MY S.M.A.R.T.E.R GOAL IS

- To teach a successful Permaculture Introduction Course in Finnish language on 1.-2.7.2023 at Beyond Buckthorns.
- Success is measured by participant feedback.
- And to create a good-enough baseline to build other PICs for the coming years.
- Success is measured by personal reflection.

## LEARNING GOALS OF THE COURSE

Participants understand what permaculture is

- its ethical essence, not just a collection of tools but a way of thinking, designing and working
- its essence in nature: emphasize observation and appreciation
- that it can be used widely in different areas of life.

They see the value and possibilities in starting to use permaculture in their lives, whatever their situation might be, and feel empowered to do so.

Students are inspired to learn more about permaculture.

They are aware of their options for continuing learning.

Participants can connect with and learn from each other - there is ample time and possibility for peer-to-peer learning.

## PRACTICAL & BASELINE GOALS

- Stack functions as much as possible for another layer of demonstration
- Document feedback & lessons learned and use them as part of this design for the next years.





# Observation

## STATEMENTS

- This will be my first PIC course, or any course for that matter that I will teach as a lead teacher
- The PIC will be in Finnish, this is a given in this design (due to lack of Finnish language permaculture education & me being a native Finnish speaker)
- There are other PICs in Finland this summer

## BENCHMARKING

A good place to start figuring out what a PIC is, is the very helpful Permaculture Association UK's website, where a structure of a PIC is described like this:

"An introductory course is usually held over a weekend, and most courses will include sessions on:

- Ethics and principles
- Design
- Examples of permaculture
- An observation exercise
- A video
- A practical exercise or walk
- An overview of the permaculture network and how to find out more. "

Quote from <https://www.permaculture.org.uk/education/introduction-permaculture>, 4/23.

# Observation

## BENCHMARKING CONTINUED

My friend Otilia did some research for me during a work placement in January 2023 on PIC and similar courses in Europe. See her full [work on the drive](#).

From Otilias research I pull together the following information of various PIC contents:

### **Most courses contain**

- What is permaculture (history and definition)
- Ethics and principles
- Observation skills
- Permaculture specific design methods like zones and sectors
- Permaculture tools like soil management, food forest
- What to do next

### **Some mention topics like**

- Social Permaculture
- Observation techniques
- Natural systems and patterns
- Hands-on work together
- Practical design exercises
- Personal self-sufficiency

# Boundaries

- Limited time prepping the course.
- Limited knowledge about teaching permaculture courses.
- Limited knowledge about some important permaculture application areas.
- Weather concerns (coldness, rain are possible and need to be kept in mind when designing the curriculum, especially regarding activities).



Image 2: our course dining room at Beyond Buckthorns, 7/23

# Resources

## Personal resources

- Strong vision and realistic goals about the course.
- Strong grasp of keeping time & not overfilling the course.
- Good knowledge of permaculture in general.
- Having been to a PIC myself → experience.

## Onsite resources

- Beyond Buckthorns is a versatile location with lots of practical permaculture examples that can be included in the course as demonstration
- Dominik as a peer and co-teacher.

## Other resources

- Helps and information like <https://www.permaculture.org.uk/education/introduction-permaculture>.



Image 3: PIC participants designing at Beyond Buckthorns, 7/23



# Analysis

## FIRST REMARKS

To start with, I will quote Otilias analysis "While making the lists I started doubting the information I am coming up with is helping you much, I think in the permaculture world people know each other and that is why there's so much personal information and history about the teacher, and so little info about the course subjects and materials, etc..."

**Argh!** This "insider club-esqueness", who-knows-who and namedropping is exactly what I hate about permaculture teaching today and something I absolutely want to avoid in my course. The subject comes first, and the person teaching it after that, no matter who it is. That Otilia, who is not a "permie" notices that so visibly made me even more determined to create a course that is open for all and concentrates on the subject.

## EVALUATING & IDEA GATHERING THROUGH THE PRINCIPLES' LENSE

### **Mollison & Slay's Ecological Principles**

#### **Each element performs many functions**

- Participants learn from me, I learn from the participants, the participants learn from each others.
- The action learning parts should aim to cover as many topics and connections at one time as possible (still keeping a stress-free atmosphere).

#### **Each important function is supported by many elements**

- Plan the curriculum to work in all weathers, in case working outside is very uncomfortable.
- Design to reinforce the essence of permaculture throughout the course.

#### **Diversity**

- Aim to give the students a wide peek into many areas of applied permaculture and inspire them to learn more.
- Use diverse teaching methods like lecturing, discussion, games, practical work, etc.



# Analysis

## EVALUATING & IDEA GATHERING BY LOOKING THROUGH THE PRINCIPLES' LENSE CONTINUED

### **Holmgrens' Design Principles**

#### **Obtain a yield**

- Make sure the students get useful information they can build on.
- Document your own lessons learned from the design process and the course.

#### **Design from patterns to details**

- Make sure to get the big lines first (what, how) and then tend to the details (specific exercises, materials).

#### **Use edges and value the marginal**

- Emphasize the importance of diversity, in nature and among people.
- Design the course to have an edge, a niche to set us apart from the other courses in Finland this summer.

### **Cultural Emergence principles**

#### **Plan, then flow**

- Plan as well as I can, but don't strive for "perfection" → done is better than perfect.

## SWOC

### SWOC OF LUMIA AS A PERMACULTURE TEACHER AND HER RESOURCES

#### STRENGTHS

Ethics & Principles  
Design mindset & frameworks  
Observation & analysis tools  
Social permaculture  
Food preservation & creative kitchen  
Gardening (what to plant, no-till, mulching, lasagna, hugel...)  
Herb gardens  
Making the most of what's at hand  
Not striving for perfection



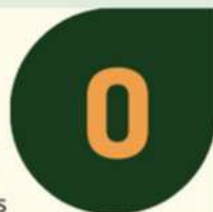
#### WEAKNESSES

Soil science  
Composting  
Plants and what they need/do  
Food forests  
Water harvesting  
Lacking versatile & student-centered teaching skills



Biogas & alternative energy by Dominik

Could include topics:  
Wild herbs and perennial edibles  
Fair share attitude in all aspects of life  
Financial knowledge & understanding of real wealth



#### OPPORTUNITIES

Biogas & alternative energy by Dominik available only in English

Inexperience



#### CHALLENGES

SWOC is used here as follows:

Strengths and Weaknesses are internal and current (as-is)

Opportunities and Challenges are external AND internal and look into the future (as-could / as-will-be/cannot-change-before-course)

I use this information in the Random Assembly to decide what areas to teach, what to delegate and what to leave out.

Image 4: SWOC of Lumia as a permaculture teacher and her resources

# Analysis

## RANDOM ASSEMBLY

Based on the benchmarking and the SWOC I created post-its about different themes, activities and topics in Flinga (<https://flinga.fi/s/F2UY8RX>) and came up with these areas:

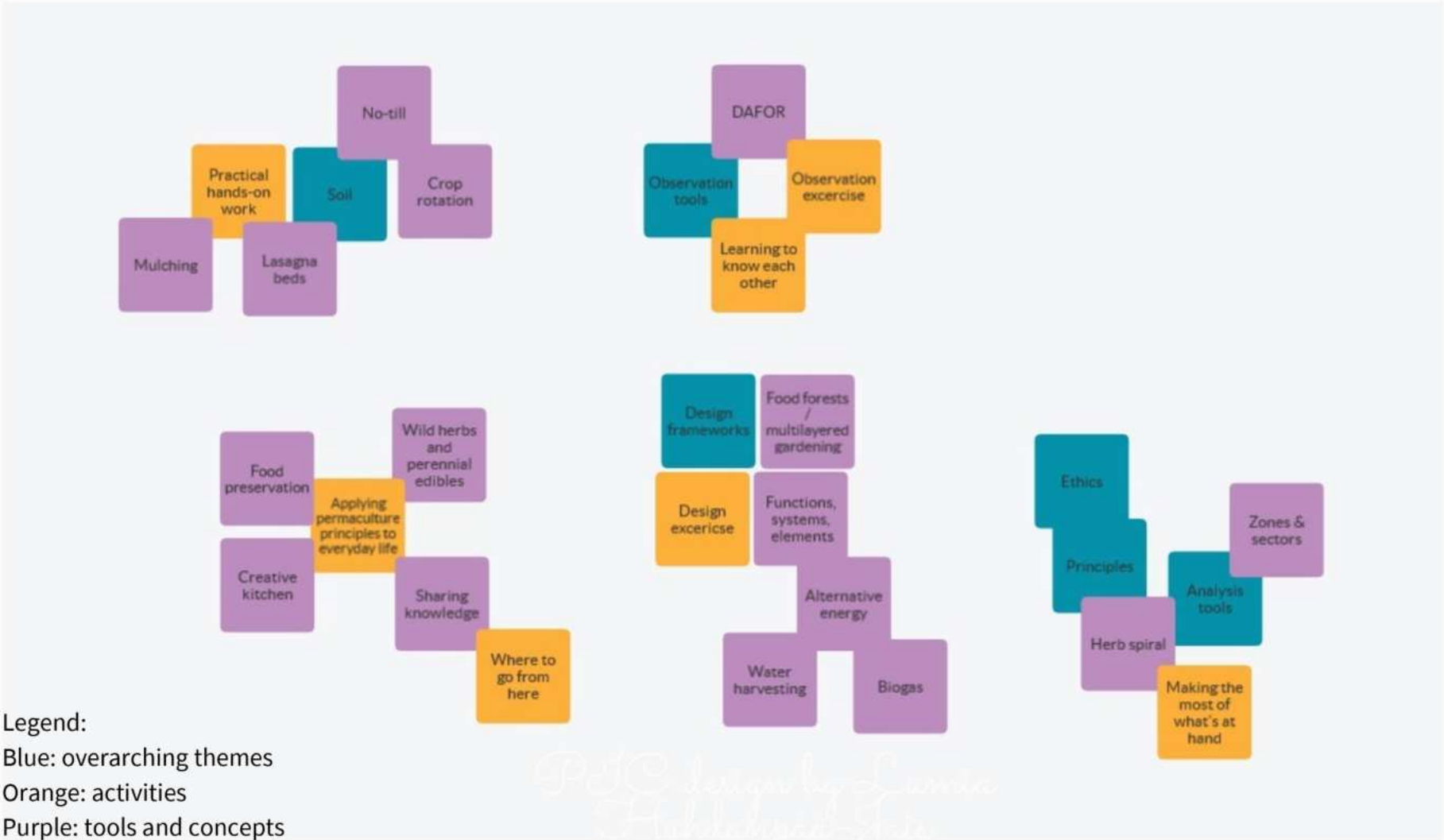


Image 5: Random assembly in Flinga

# Analysis

## RANDOM ASSEMBLY (& TIEING IT TOGETHER WITH SWOC ETC)

From this work some guild skeletons emerge:

1. Area: Ethics & principles (& making the most of what is at hand attitude)

Strategies & Tools: Zones & Sectors, Herb spiral

Methods: Herb spiral

2. Area: Soil health & improvement

Strategies & Tools: No-till, Crop rotation, Mulching, Lasagna beds

Methods: Practical hands-on work

3. Area: Observation mindset and tools

Strategies & Tools: DAFOR

Methods: Getting to know each other

4. Area: Apply permaculture principles in everyday life AND where to go from here (plus sharing attitude)

Strategies & Tools: Wild herbs & perennials, Food preservation, Creative kitchen

Methods: Sharing knowledge

5. Area: Design frameworks

Strategies & Tools: Functions, Systems, Elements;

Alternative energy & Biogas, Water harvesting, Food forests

Methods: Design exercise

To further demonstrate my use of my SWOC and the other analysis work done so far, here is some analysis on how these topics could be included in the curriculum:

1. Area: strengths -teach myself

Strategies & Tools: strengths - teach myself

Methods: strengths - teach myself

2. Area: weaknesses - learn more and delegate

Strategies & Tools: strengths - teach myself

Methods: strengths - teach myself

3. Area: strengths - teach myself

Strategies & Tools: (not mentioned in SWOC by name, included in Tools -> strengths)

Methods: weaknesses (teaching skills) - learn and teach myself

4. Area: strengths - teach myself

Strategies & Tools: strengths & opportunities - teach myself / consider including

Methods: weaknesses (teaching skills)- learn and teach myself

5. Area: strengths - teach myself

Strategies & Tools: strengths & opportunities & weaknesses - teach myself and delegate to Dominik and leave some out

Methods: strengths - teach myself



# Analysis

## RANDOM ASSEMBLY

### Review after first assembly:

Areas that are my strengths but missing completely in the assembly that need to be added:

- Social permaculture!

The food preservation and creative kitchen must be left out as a hands-on subject, as our small home kitchen is used to create lunch and dinner during the day and cannot be used for teaching.

Instead, I could set up a display of all kinds of foods I preserve in the lunch room to look at and ask questions about. Some will also be served during lunch!

As for Dominik being only available in English for Biogas and alternative energy, it won't be a problem if I am present to translate anything (or everything) if needed.

My lack of knowledge about soil can be helped by some learning before the course, using an expert in the form of a video, and concentrating on hands-on work where I am experienced in.

Our food forest is still very young and my knowledge limited, so I'll leave that topic out.



Image 6: our course participants looking at the raised bed wilderness, 7/23

# Analysis

## RANDOM ASSEMBLY

### **Plumping it up, revision2**

Area: Ethics & principles (& making the most of what is at hand attitude)

Strategies & Tools: Ethics & principles, Zones & Sectors, Herb spiral.

Methods: Lecturing, herb spiral

Area: Observation & appreciation mindset and tools

Strategies & Tools: DAFOR, patterns

Methods: DAFOR, group work (added benefit of getting to know each other), drawing patterns in nature

Area: Soil health & improvement

Strategies & Tools: What is soil. The importance of healthy soil. No-till, Crop rotation, Mulching, Lasagna beds.

Methods: Video, demonstration/lecturing on-site, practical hands-on work

Area: Social permaculture

Strategies & Tools: Sustainable life, sustainable communities, spirals of abundance and erosion, examples

Methods: Intro & discussion, Permaculture Action Cards

Area: Alternative energy

Strategies & Tools: Alternative energy & Biogas, Water harvesting

Methods: Demonstration/lecturing on-site (Dominik)

Area: Apply permaculture principles in everyday life AND where to go from here (plus sharing attitude)

Strategies & Tools: Social permaculture, Resource list, Three things I take with me, My next steps

Methods: Discussion and sharing knowledge

Area: Design in practice

Strategies & Tools: Functions, Systems, Elements, SADIM, food forests

Methods: Lecture, design exercise hands-on

# Design

## SURPRISE HELPS

I was this far, when I came across the site Introductory Course Materials at the UK Permaculture Association's website:  
<https://www.permaculture.org.uk/education/introductory-course-materials>

These resources were amazing! I went through them all and decided to use some of them in my curriculum based on what I already had, what was missing and what seemed to fit to my strengths and resources.

Based on my Random assembly results and these new-found tools, I created a schedule for the course.



Image 7: our course participants designing,  
7/23

Permaculture by Lumia  
Pää-Jais



## FINAL COURSE SCHEDULE DAY 1

9:45 -10 Arrival & coffee

10:00 - 11:00 Welcome circle: practicals & guidelines, introductions and hopes for the course (30 min, indoors) and short BB introduction/tour (30 min, outdoors)

11:00 – 12:00 Introduction to the history, principles and ethics of permaculture, lecture & questions, indoors

12:00-12:15 Short break

12:15 - 13:00 Observation exercise in nature (DAFOR) and getting to know each other better (groups work), practical exercise (25 min, outdoors) and discussion (20 min indoors, outdoors weather permitting)

13:00 - 14:00 Lunch break (with food preservation inspiration)

14:00 - 15:00 Gardening while caring for the soil: why soil health matters, no-till vegetable gardens, mulch, soil types, soil improvement basics, lecture & hands-on

First watch Ulla-Maija Takkunen's soil video (20 min, indoors), then outdoors (40 min)

15:00 - 16:00 Water collection, biogas and other alternative energy sources, examples and lecture in the field (translated from English). If very rainy, indoors.

16:00 - 16:30 Coffee break

16:30 – 17:30 Observation & analysis tools: zones & sectors, revisit ethics & principles, practical on the example of a herb spiral, outdoors

17:30 -18:00 PMI, feedback on the day & appreciation (indoors, outdoors weather permitting)



# Design

## FINAL COURSE SCHEDULE DAY 2

9:45 -10 Arrival & coffee

10:00 - 11:00 Welcome circle (30 min, indoors, outdoors weather permitting) Continuing with nature connection and observation, practical exercise (drawing shapes/patterns you see in nature) and discussion, outdoors

11:00 - 12:00 Caring for people & permaculture action: social permaculture, permaculture in your life, lecture and discussion how you could do permaculture actions in your daily life (again with the Cards)

12:00-12:15 Short break

12:15 – 13:00 Hands-on work in the garden, practical exercise (creating a lasagna bed)

13:00 - 14:00 Lunch break (with food preservation inspiration)

14:00 - 16:00 Permaculture design, design frameworks and tools (SADIM, Input-Output & Functions, Systems, Elements), lecture and workshop (area: connect the two food forests)

16:00 - 16:30 Coffee break

16:30 - 17:30 Where to go from here: resources, connections & sharing what you have learned (what three things do I take with me – what is my next actionable step, pair work)

17:30 - 18:00 Feedback on the day, course feedback and appreciation, thanks & goodbye

# Implement

## TO-DO LIST

- Create and download course materials
- Create course playbook
- Gather ethics, principles & history material from my PermaPuheet lecture
- Translate and print out Dominik's DAFOR sheet
- Prep soil session: download video, gather info pack
- Agree with Dominik about biogas lecture
- Gather & print Zones & Sectors materials from my PermaPuheet
- Gather drawing materials
- Prep social permaculture materials
- Prep & print SADIM printout (my PermaPuheet 2022)
- Prep base map of area-to-be-designed
- Create & print sheets for "What three things do I take with me – what three things will I do when I get home"
- Create & print feedback forms
- Prepare food preservation display
- Order Permaculture Action Cards from Permaculture Principles
- Learn more about soil
- After the course, plan time for pause & appreciation for yourself
- After the course, work through feedback

# Implement

## TWEAKING ON THE GO

Having everything ready, the participants arrived on a very rainy July Saturday morning to Beyond Buckthorns. Everyone was in good moods, but the rain was constant.

To avoid everyone getting wet (some were very well prepared, some less so - we offered raincoats, but I had no wellingtons to spare) some changes were made to the program:

we started with practicals and getting to know each other (using the Permaculture Action Card images) indoors, after which the session 2 (Ethics & Principles) was pulled forward. It didn't help at all - the rain continued to pour, as we took the tour and did the DAFOR exercise.

After lunch the soil lecture was indoors only: video and theory, as was the Alternative energy lecture and after the afternoon break, Zones and Sectors. The feedback was planned for indoors, so no changes there.

The second day was just as wet. Plus the participants had requested more Biogas in the 1st day feedback, so we again switched things up a bit.

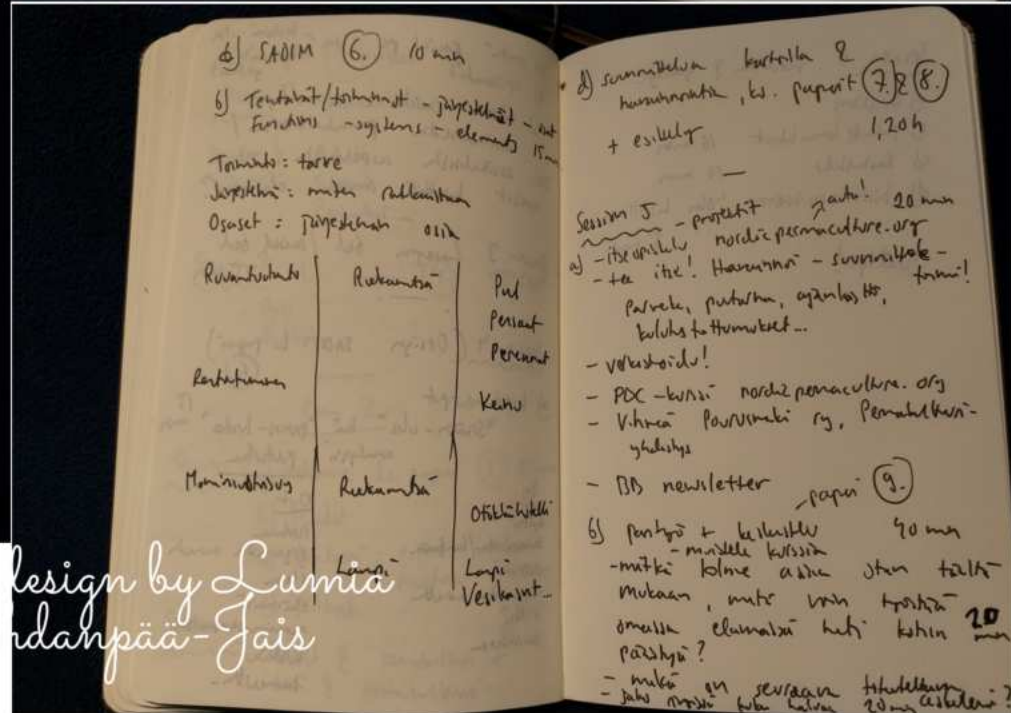
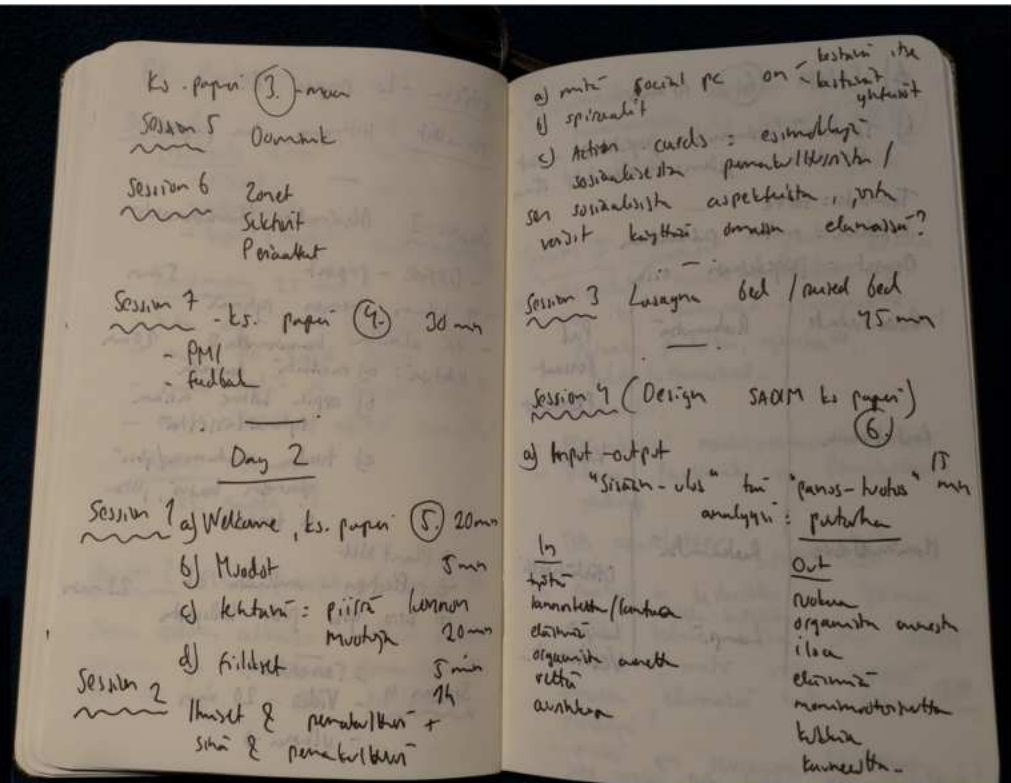
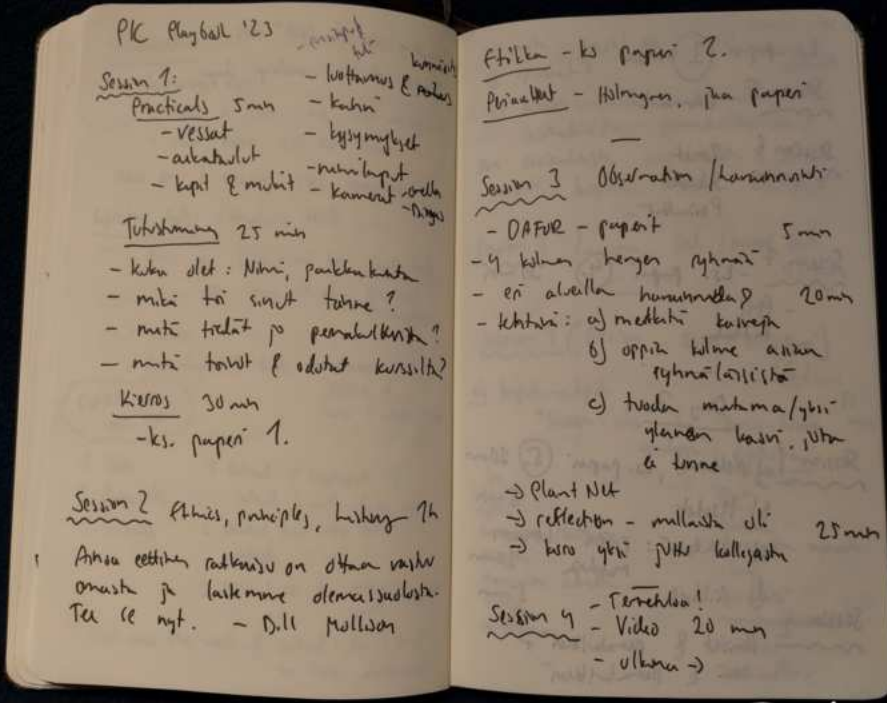
After the welcome circle, we skipped the Patterns session and introduced Biogas 101 by Dominik, which was much liked. He can talk about Biogas without any preparation. They also "fed the dragon". The Social permaculture session and the afternoon went as planned - it was still rainy, but not pouring all the time. Plus you can't really do land observation and designing inside!



# Implement (before the course)

## PHOTO DOCUMENTATION OF PLAYBOOK

Pictures of my playbook, aka the guiding notes on how I plan to run the PIC: the questions, activities... internal notes



Images 8,9 and 10: playbook photos (last page not pictured)

design by Lumia  
rdanpää-Jais



# Implement (before the course)

## DOCUMENTATION

Link to my notes that accompany the playbook: resources from the Permaculture Association, other information I will present, handouts: [on the drive](#)

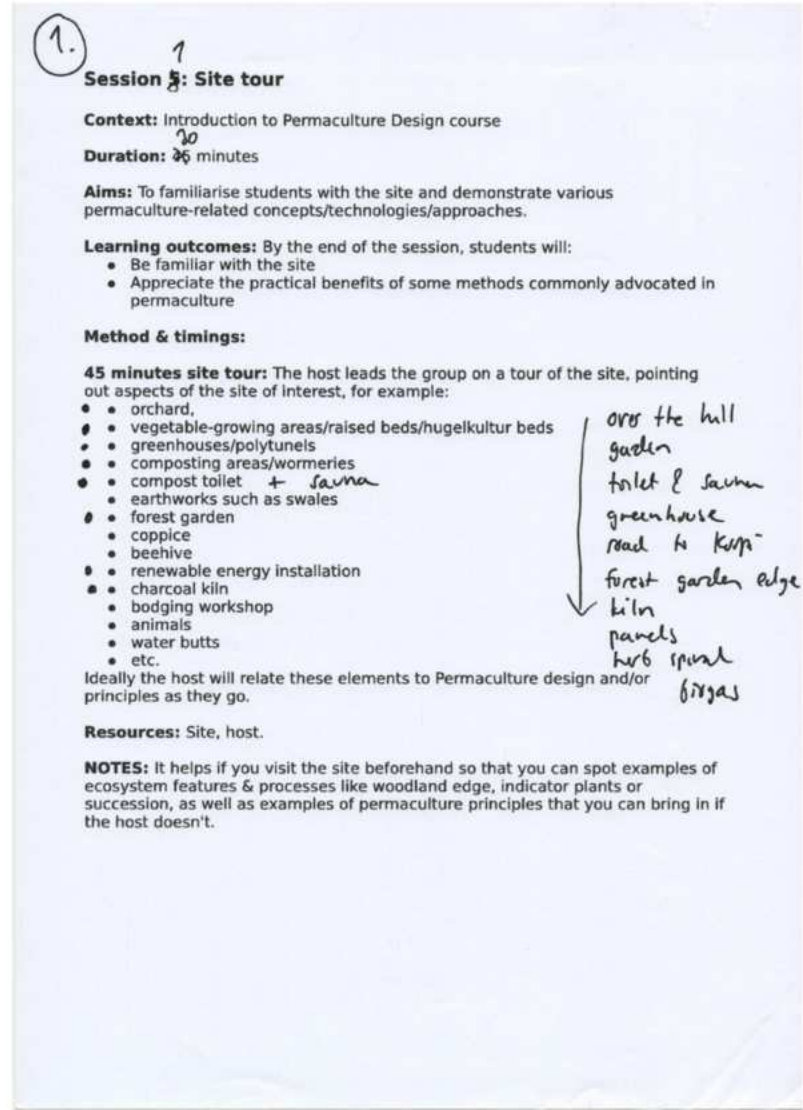


Image 11: first note page

# Implement (during the course)

## PHOTO DOCUMENTATION

Some images from the course.



Images 12, 13 and 14: lecture room,  
participants building a lasagna bed, in  
playbook and notes in action



# Maintenance

## TO-DO LIST

### **To-dos to maintain and tweak this design**

- Plan next year's courses early in the year
- Hold at least one PIC every summer onsite at BB
- Use the feedback received to improve the course every year
- Go through the playbook and handouts and incorporate any changes and improvements yearly
- Rewrite the playbook for each course in my bullet journal, improving it in iterations
- Include more biogas and alternative energy and social permaculture in the curriculum
- Create a "material bank", a link and reading list to send the participants after the course
- Continue learning about the topics I teach!

### **Ideas**

- Offer to hold the course in other locations also
- Hold the course as a variation online

# Measurement

## COURSE IN NUMBERS

Feedback asked from the participants: on a scale from 1-5, how would you rate the following areas of the course:

<b>Feedback PIC 1.-2.7.</b>	<b>Reviews nr.:</b>	<b>9</b>
	<b>Sum of points</b>	<b>Average</b>
Beyond Buckthorns location	43	4,8
Facilities	39	4,3
Food and snacks	40	4,4
Course organisation	40	4,4
Course content	39	4,3
Course leaders presence/presentation	42	4,7
Course leaders knowledge	41	4,6

Table 1: Feedback from PIC 2023 in numbers

*De Nederlandse Vereniging van  
Fysiotherapeuten*



# Measurement - feedback

## FEEDBACK FROM THE PARTICIPANTS SOME EXAMPLES

**Palautelomake kurssista Beyond Buckthornsilla**

Kurssin nimi ja aika: Permakulttuurin perusteet  
1-27.13

Anna pisteitä 1-5 (1: huono, 5: erinomainen) aihealueille:

Paikka Beyond Buckthorns	5
Fasilitteitit	5
Ruoka & virvokkeet	5
Kurssijärjestelyt	4 ks. ruokaa-ajoin
Kurssin sisältö	4 ks. esittelyt ja kysymykset
Kurssinvetäjän esiintyminen	5
Kurssinvetäjän osaaminen	4 jatkain koulua, mutta ei todellakaan päättävällä kokonaisuus kokonaisuus
Oma osallistumiseni	5

**Mikä oli kurssilla parasta?**  
Nähdä konkreettisia toimenpiteitä ja saada ideoita.  
Hyvä kokonaiskuva permakulttuurista, helppo  
jatkua.

**Mikä oli kurssilla huonoita?**  
En osaa nimetä mitk huonoita.

**Mitä muuttaisit seuraavalle kurssille?**  
- Enemmän aikaa keikeittöille esteistä ohjeita  
- voisi mainita kahvieräistä tarkemmin: ymmärsin siis  
että aamukahvilla myös eväste, tuli kova näätä ennen  
lounasta. Eli esim. omat eväät mukana tai ruokailuajat

**Muita kommentteja?** etukäteen tiedoksi. ~~alustuksen~~

**Mistä bongasit kurssin?**

- Hakemalla itse netistä (beyondbuckthorns.com vai joku muu?)
- Utiskirjeen kautta
- Facebookista
- Instagramista
- Kaverilta
- Muu, mikä?
- 

**Kiitos!**

Image 15: an example feedback questionnaire filled by a participant

### What was best?

Seeing concrete actions and getting ideas  
Good overview of permaculture, it's good to continue from here  
Relaxed take on doing, warm atmosphere  
The relaxed "coffeetable talks" and the people, good company  
Getting hands on experience  
Good, relaxed and comfortable atmosphere  
Everyone was heard and respected  
The inspiration and encouragement  
Community, authenticity, honesty, the talks, sharing, seeing how BB works, lack of haste, the circles (discussion rounds), relaxedness, non-perfectionism

### What was worst?

The weather!  
A review of the day at the end of the day would be good  
The course room being very cold due to the weather  
Nothing

### What would you change (for the next course)?

More time to talk about ethics  
More time and depth for introductions  
Creating a network of the participants more systematically  
The evening program could be more a part of the course, like a gathering around the fire  
More on social permaculture already on the first day, to emphasise its significance  
How to apply permaculture in your life without a house/garden?

All answers can be found on the drive.

# Monitoring & Mistakes

## PMI ON MAIN (S.M.A.R.T.E.R) AND OTHER GOALS

### PMI Chart

PIC23 Measurement / Mistakes  
in relation to my goals (see also page 2)

#### GOALS

MY S.M.A.R.T.E.R GOAL IS

specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, timebound, ecological, and rewarding

- To teach a successful Permaculture Introduction Course in Finnish language on 1.-2.7.2023 at Beyond Buckthorns.
- Success is measured by participant feedback.
- And to create a good-enough baseline to build other PICs for the coming years.
- Success is measured by personal reflection.

#### PLUS

- The course took place as planned, on the 1.-2.7.23 at BB
- There were 11 participants, which was amazing (BB max capacity is 10)
- The playbook and my notes will give an "80% backbone" for any future courses
- The participants felt empowered and inspired to use permaculture in their lives and gardens
- The course was kept modest & simple in its practical side
- Feedback was gathered and documented well
- Participants had lots of possibilities and time to discuss and learn from each other

#### MINUS

- The weather was so bad that my preparations were not sufficient
- I feel nature and observation was not emphasized as much as I planned
- The practical application empowerment for people without land was perhaps lacking
- The options for continued learning were not so clearly communicated as I had planned
- The baseline is not complete (yet)

#### INTERESTING

- A stronger-than-planned emphasis on soil health and importance emerged during the course
- The same happened with social permaculture
- Participants were so interested in Biogas and our digester Jean-Luc, an extra session was introduced for that (skipping patterns and more outdoor observation)
- The alternative energy and biogas sessions were in English, no translation was needed as everyone was fluent
- The group also suggested a Whatsapp group to keep in touch for continued learning and inspiration from each other

*PIC design by Lumia*

Image 16: PMI of PIC in relation to stated goals

# Evaluate - the design

WHAT WORKED, WHAT DIDN'T, WHAT WILL I CHANGE

## *What worked*

- Building on my strengths and resources; building on authenticity
- Planning in a lot of breaks
- Keeping the program loose-ish timewise
- Enabling peer-to-peer learning
- Allowing myself to plan then flow and trusting the process/the participants
- Fostering a culture of being un-perfect
- Having Dominik cook and teach some lessons - sharing the load/having an expert help
- Asking for lots of feedback
- Emphasizing taking small action in ones own life.

## *What didn't*

- The weather prep - need to innovate some real solutions, at least some heating (socks and blankets were offered though)
- The evening program - I need to plan and participate in the evening program better / make it more a part of the course
- The pattern drawing exercise - I was glad to skip it, I didn't feel sure enough to lead that exercise.

## *What I'll change*

- The evening program preparation needs to be better
- Plan more material and questions for non-sharing group (unlikely, but possible)
- Enable even more peer-to-peer learning
- Prep for cold, wet weather even better
- Have a second co-teacher - maybe someone less experienced than me so they can learn teaching without risk and I can have someone to lean on.



# Reflecting on the process

## **Framework GOBRADIME**

I enjoyed trying something else again. I struggled most with M - how is Measuring or Mistakes anything different from Analysis or Evaluate? But I then realized the connection to the Goals and understood it is an emphasis question. I used it as Maintenance also, as this is not supposed to be a one-off event. I enjoyed the thoughtful goal setting!

## **Tools**

- S.M.A.R.T.E.R goals - enjoyed it: will explore again and refine its use
- Benchmarking - wise tool, no need to reinvent the wheel. Great for giving ideas. Can take time though.
- Principles as a lense - my bread and butter, will never not use!
- SWOC - I recognise I use it differently than original SWOT with its internal/external division. This now/future application serves me better.
- Random assembly - loved to try it: it was very helpful in grouping things together and coming up with connections
- To-Do list - use in my daily life, works well in this design too. Simple is beautiful!
- PMI - trusted workhorse! Simple and powerful, will use again and again.
- What worked/what didn't/what will I change - first time using this adaptation of Best, Worst, Change. I enjoy answering questions, so easy to use! For me the "one-two-three" evaluation tools are all interchangeable though.

## **Ethics & Principles**

See next slides



# Reflecting on the ethics

**Earth care:** This course shall have Earth care in its centre. The course will inform and inspire the participants to actively take care of the Earth in all possible means. The physical course implementation will have as minimal as possible negative effect on the Earth. (Quote from Page 1)

I designed the course with the care of the Earth in its centre and based on the feedback it looks like it showed. During one discussion on the course it became evident again that this thinking is not so mainstream; the mainstream is to put the people's wishes first and then make Earth do the work. In permaculture we really flip that upside down. I really need to learn more about the actual soil though, perhaps the soil food web plus the co-operation with roots and soil. I'm rather well versed in the practicals, but lack lots of theory.

**People care:** The course shall inspire and remind participants that we humans are nature working and therefore deserve, like all living things, basic respect. The course shall emphasize personal responsibility, friendship and community as an integral part of permaculture. (Quote from Page 1)

This is in my essence, so it is visible throughout the design. I don't acknowledge hierarchies or treating people differently based on what they own or their so-called status, so none of that was present in the design or the actual course. I used this ethic to really try to create a community from the start. And the people still want more! There's such a lack of real community and sharing in the world today. I will continue concentrating on this moving forward.

**Fair share:** The course shall be based on sharing knowledge, experiences and inspiration. (Quote from Page 1)

It was, it really was. You'll see in the Principles reflection that this ethic really materialized hand in hand with the Use and value diversity principles. I designed the course so that people would have lots of time to share and learn from each other, and they did. People had experience in the most interesting things and were open to sharing. It was at times magical. I hope to share my learning first with an "apprentice", my friend Alexis who might teach the PIC with me next year, and later this design, too.

# Reflecting on the principles

## **Each element performs many functions**

This principle was present in my design work, but not front and centre. In my next designs I should explore this even more, as it sounds so simple, but it's not always so straightforward to bring it into practice, especially in social designs.

## **Each important function is supported by many elements**

This is the brother of "Each element performs many functions". I'm reading about systems theory right now and feel these principles are in the core of well functioning systems. I need to understand these better moving forward, though both of them were definitely a part of my designing.

## **Use & value diversity**

I feel I used this principle well in the design, as I was looking at my resources, strengths and weaknesses and learning from the benchmarking to create a course as diverse in topics and methods as possible. Of course during the course it was wonderful to have people share about their own areas of expertise (like clay building, industrial recycling of fabrics or van life!)

## **Obtain a yield**

I concentrated on not only building this one course but a baseline for future courses. This principle was present in every step of the design process.

## **Design from patterns to details**

I feel I kept this in mind throughout. It really feels that the designs are better when done this way - first why, then what, then how.

## **Use edges and value the marginal**

This principle was not so front and centre in the design really. I could have only quoted the Diversity principle to be honest. I don't feel I deliberately designed the course has a real niche (other than it looking a lot like me!) as I set out to do.

## **Plan, then flow**

I really embraced this one due to the weather and the course participants wishes. I think I am pretty good in using this one, even though it doesn't come to me naturally. I also need to take care of not abandoning my plans too easily in the future just because I feel unsure.



# Reflections continued

## Lessons learned

- I learned that I really really do like to teach
- I learned that I am perceived as a very calming person with a grounding energy, which was huge news to me!
- I learned that my pace is perceived calming and relaxing, which again was a surprise, but a great gift to know. This information helps me in my teaching work a lot
- I learned to trust the process and the people. People know so much and they are so eager to share. I need only to guide.
- I learned how important it is to speak up for un-perfection. Our world is gone crazy in its desperate search for perfection, and it's making us sick and tired, literally.
- Process-wise I learned that it is really a good idea not to try and describe everything I did in a design in the documentation!

## Next steps

- To hold this course again next summer
- Integrate the feedback and suggestions into the curriculum and course practicals
- Think about a special social permaculture course as that seems to be a topic I love and that people are so interested in
- Look into how can I become a better teacher - look for a TPT course, and perhaps some further training.



Image 17: me teaching social permaculture at our PDC 6/23





Image 18: Dominik during the PDC

6/23

## Thanks

To Otilia for the amazing benchmarking work and the mental support during the course.

To Dominik for his continued support in all areas of my life.

To the participants for trusting a newbie and giving me a chance to teach and learn.

*Handwritten signature in light blue ink, likely reading 'Dominik'.*