

Schumacher Institute Learning Programme Effective Thinking and Action for a Complex World

How would it be if you were able to act more effectively in the world, growing in confidence with the support of fellow learners?

Are you in transition, looking to make your livelihood more meaningful and authentic?

Are you looking for a different way of being in the world – one which sustains our planet?

Would you like to know more about Systems Thinking and how to test systems ideas in action?

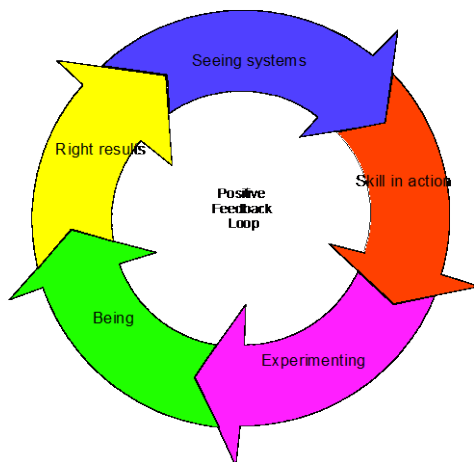
(Introduction to the course, from a participant)

Concept: We are group of 4 to 6 people, all interested to become more effective in action. We meet regularly to learn together how systems thinking can facilitate a transition to a more authentic way of being. We consolidate our learning between meetings.

Martin Sandbrook (more information below) acts as our facilitator, providing structure and resources, while responding to our emerging needs as a group.

This is what the course is doing for us:

- We are acting more effectively in the world supported by a peer group
- We are discovering more systemic ways to achieve our ends
- We test systems ideas and approaches through action
- We are growing in confidence
- We are using systems thinking to address these sorts of questions:
 - Why do well-intended initiatives frequently have unexpected and undesirable consequences?
 - How can I act more effectively in a complex world?
 - Are there 'leverage points' that will magnify the effect of an intervention?



"I personally found this a very powerful course. The tools and processes I learned and discovered enabled me to develop an appreciation for my own capacity to create change by altering the way I act in the world." Andy Shipley, Fellow at Clore Social Leadership

Outline of the course:

An initial 2 day workshop, to introduce:

- Each of us to each other
- The idea of a 'worldview' – our assumptions, beliefs and values
- The pervasiveness and consequences of the prevailing western worldview
- Other ways of being – the systemic approach
- The beginnings of So what? – if the systemic is more useful, how do we apply this to what we are working on?

Two further 2 day sessions, to deepen, and move on from, the learning of the first session:

- More about the systemic, but finding deeper answers to the 'So what?' question – what does this mean for me, and how I act in the world? What approaches might I use to make sense, to act more effectively in the world?
- What does this mean for us – how do we act together? How do we engage others and collaborate more effectively.

Between sessions:

- Reading (as much as we feel motivated to read)
- Learning and writing (short learning papers and a short project).
- Experimenting, noticing, recording.
- On-line materials and tutor support.

"Want a course to change your life? Effective Thinking and Action revolutionised my business." Esther Forman, Director at the Social Change Agency

Style:

The course is based on 3 workshop sessions, 6 to 8 weeks apart, covering a period of 3 months in all.

Each session is based on some input from Martin Sandbrook, and on readings or other research, which we will have done in preparation.

We work closely together in a Café Society style, responding with questions, raising issues and thinking about how to move forward.

We do some work in smaller 'learning groups', 3 (or 4) people, to share our personal development and to collaborate on shared actions between sessions.

We suggest how we would like the sessions to develop, and what we would like to do between sessions, asking Martin to respond accordingly.

"This is a comprehensive introduction to thinking and acting in relation to uncertainty and complexity. It covers a huge amount of ground in an accessible way: Martin is a great resource." Kate Swade, Development Manager at Shared Assets

Where and when:

The initial session is two days.

The preferred venue is Summerhill, near Stroud in Gloucestershire (regular trains from Paddington). <http://www.schumacherinstitute.org.uk/learning/systems-sustainability-and-me/summerhill-our-course-venue-at-minchinhampton/>

"I would highly recommend this course if you are looking at understanding a new approach. It will be unlike any other course you have been on before, but you will not regret it." Zoe Olsberg, Business, Marketing & Communications Strategy Consultant

Taster

To get a feel for what is in this course, for the materials on offer and for Martin Sandbrook, visit <http://www.systemslearning.org>

Certificate

Schumacher Institute will confirm successful completion with a Certificate and provide a suggested short summary for your CV if required.

Fee

The fee for this course is £600 per person (non-residential). We can offer some accommodation at Summerhill, or suggest local B&Bs.

Course Facilitator: Martin Sandbrook, MA, MBA, MSc

Director, Schumacher Institute for Sustainable Systems

Biography



I have been involved in many areas in my professional work: I have been an accountant, a senior manager in the both public and private sectors, a process consultant and a university lecturer in Management. I also set up a social enterprise, Involving Residents in Solutions, and am currently chair of DHI, a Charity addressing issues of addiction and homelessness.

In 2009 I graduated from the Responsibility and Business Practice MSc at University of Bath, an experience that changed my whole way of thinking and professional direction.

Influenced by this learning, and by EF Schumacher's statement that 'our task is to look at the world and see it whole', I now combine my passion and commitment to the ideas of sustainability and systems thinking, with my experience in the management of organisations. I support individuals and organisations make the shift to a more systemic approach to action and change. I am a Director at Schumacher Institute for Sustainable Systems in Bristol I have successfully run the Sustainability Toolkit programme, and the Pale Blue Dot learning programme (<http://www.schumacherinstitute.org.uk/learning>)