

Dear Friends,

Happy 2012!

*The Landscapes and Lifeskills (L&L) Course has begun at the Gurukula Botanical Sanctuary (GBS) with a lovely mix of new and old students. The little group has been busy building their home in the valley for the coming two months. We have had introductory walks, a session of music, and several discussions. The theme for this week is **Listening to the Land**. Course readings/discussions are titled: *Where do you end and I begin?*, *Decay*, *The Needs of the Natural World*, *Predator and Prey*.*

We now invite you to join us for the following three day workshop. We would particularly like to invite youngsters (16-24 years) from the region to consider attending this workshop!



Title: Listening to the Body

Date: Friday the 14th of January to Tuesday the 18th. Arrival Friday afternoon. Departure any time after Monday evening.

Description and Intent

Nature expresses itself through bodies, the human body included, for we are wild to the core. We are animals, in our blood, and in our skin. The disconnect with the natural world is first with our own bodies.

In other words, this workshop is about connecting to the natural world through the human body, and connecting to the body through the natural world.

Most modern humans are trained to engage our bodies in compartmentalized ways. The purpose of this workshop is to re-awaken the extraordinary sensitivities of our bodies, to call the wild *back* into our cells.

Facilitators: Suprabha Seshan, Lorenzo Castellari, the Sanctuary land, the Kallampuzha river, and the plants and animals who live here.

Disclaimer

The activities and modalities used in this workshop are simply teasers from a life long journey, arising out of the many years of work with youngsters, and with plants and animals in this place. We are not body experts, nor fitness and exercise teachers. Rather, we believe the natural world has more to offer than any specific body science or training, and that the real experts are the wild ones.

Workshop highlights and themes

- Living in a Riot of Creatures: how we are shaped by non-humans.
- The Natural History of the Senses: opening to the wild.
- Wind, Water and Earth: the elemental body, our natural strengths.
- Pretend You are a River: how do we listen?
- The Work of the Heart
- Stillness, Attunement, Alertness and Instinct: where does one end and the other begin?
- Learning from Other Animals: mimicry, movement and empathy
- Sinking into the Land: relaxation, rest and release.
- Supporting the Land and Ourselves: community work
- Games People Play.
- Quickness of Foot: skipping, stepping, sliding, gripping, leaping.
- We Eat and We are Eaten: where am I in the food chain?
- Hand and Eye: catching and throwing, juggling, coordination.
- How do We Hold Ourselves? Balance, stance and posture, the beauty of barefeet.
- Dancing with the Plants to the Music of the Jungle Orchestra.

Specific activities (time permitting) include: riverwalking, treeclimbing, running, autogenic relaxation, yoga, landwork, swimming, games, an ingenious Russian cardiovascular exercise routine, the ABC's of Kalaripayattu, manual work, blind running and more. Discover your own and share with the rest of us.



Workshop readings will be structured around philosopher J. Krishnamurti and writer Derrick Jensen.

Location: The Manisseri Valley in the Gurukula Botanical Sanctuary.

Accommodation: For the communal natural folks, the L&L homebase under a tarpaulin in the Manisseri Valley
For the pucca folks: the main Sanctuary dwellings.

Cost: Down in the Valley: Rs. 1000 a day
Up at the House: Rs. 2000 a day.

Please know that this fee covers not only costs and facilitators' time, but also youngsters who need support to attend the workshop.

Constraints: We are very sorry that we cannot offer these courses to wheelchair bound individuals, and to those with special needs.

Restrictions: No alcohol and drugs permitted.

Contact: Suprabha at this email id: jungler@gmail.com. You can also call me on 09448059414 and if you can't get through send me an SMS. As a last resort, call the Sanctuary's (temperamental) landline on 04935-325302 and leave a message and number,

and I'll call you back.

Directions: Once we know you are joining us, we will send you directions by email.

To Bring: Sleeping bag and carry-mat, torch, rubber-chappals, your own thoughts and explorations on this subject.

We know the announcement is late, but the idea is to get more folks from nearby! We will take on five persons on a first-come, first-serve basis after an introductory chat by phone.

For more information about GBS, please see the website: <http://www.gbsanctuary.org>.

Finally, watch this space. We will soon send out an announcement for our next workshop for the following weekend Jan 21-24th titled: **Listening to Wild Mind: what does it mean to be human?** In brief, this workshop focuses on modern human society, psychopathology, reification, a culture of abuse and addiction, and the disconnect with nature.

Finally, finally, we would like to remind youngsters, that it is possible to join the L&L programme at any point for a period of 3-7 days, irrespective of the workshops, so you get a feel for the course, meet other youngsters and also explore the possibility of joining the Himalaya segment in April and May. For local and regional folks, scholarships are available.

And after that, there will be more workshops in February!

Best wishes,

Suprabha

