

Intro to Permaculture Where to From Here? Video Transcript

Music

Hello. My name is Javan Kerby Bernakevitch. I've been involved with Permaculture since 2009, teaching, designing, and installing systems around the world with permaculturebc.com and my design company, All Points Land Design that's allpointsdesign.ca

First, thanks for being in the course. We're here because we see that there is a problem with our world and with humanity. It's an all hands on deck situation where everyone is needed, just as you are, focused, engaged, and in action. Permaculture provides the mind shift necessary to see global and local problems in their most basic forms, and by definition, the solutions needed for a positive, productive future. The old adage to change the world we have to start with ourselves takes a new spin with Permaculture. To design a world with solutions we must start by designing ourselves as those very solutions.

This session is entitled, "Where to From Here?" Permaculture is traditionally taught in a full length, 72 hour or more Permaculture design course. You'll hear "PDC" used to refer to the Permaculture Design Course. Sometimes taught in 13 or 14 days straight run or part time or online like the Oregon State University's PDC. There will be links below for that. This is the formal immersion into Permaculture design. You can think of it like a buffet, you're walking along and sampling all these amazing ways to see change and make change in the world. Now, towards the end of that course, the PDC, this is where this session normally would be. Normally we would speak about Permaculture groups, associations, training, institutes, ways to learn more and explore Permaculture. But that information will be provided also in the lessons below.

What I've found, teaching Permaculture, is that Permaculture participants leave these courses ecstatic. They are on fire. They're ready for anything. You've got the solutions and can't wait to use them. It's like having high-octane fuel in your tank except without a map, a compass, or sometimes even a steering wheel.

It's like being in the ocean with all of the possibilities of land but without a clear direction or means. When we're looking, and when we're applying Permaculture design to ourselves, we can build a steering wheel, a map, a compass, and turn our enthusiasm into action.

What I am going to share with you today is a simple way to observe, design, and create the next steps for yourself in making a livelihood with Permaculture. So when we are taking a look at a watershed, just like in a landscape, there are topographical points where water and life collects and flows.

Now, where these points converge, is where life starts to flow. In that middle place, we can find an incredible amount of life and opportunity.

You remember zone design is used to cluster elements for their frequency and intensity of use. The elements in Zone 1 are closer at hand and have higher usage than elements in Zone 3 for example.

When we apply this concept of zones to ourselves we discover something incredible. We discover our Zones of Brilliance.

Using zones as a framework, we can access where there are areas in our life where we have higher usage and frequency, places where we naturally excel. Through observation, our Zones of Brilliance can be identified like the sectors of a landscape, physical attributes and energies that influence a site, or in this case, a person.

These three aspects we observe are Inherent Gifts, Perennial Passions, and Perceived Problems. Our gifts are skills, traits, and attributes we've demonstrated excellence in. We come into Permaculture with these. For myself, teaching and design both come naturally to me. They are skills where I can put one unit of effort in and produce two efforts of results. These are like regenerative skills. Unlike writing reports, where I'll put in one unit of effort and maybe get a quarter out, it's a skill I have, but it's more difficult for me to complete. It's not what comes naturally, and it isn't a Zone of Brilliance.

Perennial Passions are our interests that keep reappearing, thus that perennial aspect. Within Permaculture, a perennial passion of mine is water management on the broad landscapes, not to mention humanure composting.

Finally, although we are here in this course because we see the world and humanity in trouble, the specific problems we want to individually solve are dramatically different. For example, Robyn Francis sought to bring Permaculture to communities in civil unrest. Craig Sponholtz works to revitalize watersheds. Pandora Thomas to helping convicts reenter society with Permaculture. Those are three names you'll probably want to look up. For myself, I love helping Permaculture practitioners and promoters find where they can apply themselves. This is a problem I love to struggle with and help people solve. The problems you are drawn to provide a canvas on which to design your life. And the potential next steps for you from this course. At the intersection of these three: Inherent Gifts, Perennial Passions, and Perceived Problems are native niches.

Just like areas where water naturally pools, so to at the confluence of these three; your gifts, your passions and problems are niches where you naturally excel. And there is no one true niche. That would be like a mono cropping of yourself. We aren't just one thing. We have many niches where we can explore and apply ourselves successfully within Permaculture and within life. To discover these we have to ask ourselves questions, observational questions, like we do with landscapes and climates. Remember, the more specific your questions and answers are, the more specific your next steps can be.

Here's a few to think about.

To help understand our gifts we can ask: "Where do I naturally excel?" "What talent is in my DNA?" or "What attributes, traits, and skills was I born with?" Exploring our passions, all we have to do is look back upon this course; look on our bookshelf, or even our recent browser history to learn what topics, strategies, and techniques appeal to us. Look beyond just idol fascination. Look for consistent, persistent curiosity. What am I naturally drawn to time and time and time again in this course, not to mention life? When it comes to our vocation, which comes from the Latin, "to be called," it isn't finding our bliss that

helps most, but to ask what problems do I love to struggle with? Probe into yourself and ask, if there was one problem I can work on over the next 12 months, what would pull me through an entire year? What would pull me so that I can struggle and help solve?

The native niches found in our Zones of Brilliance provide this low hanging fruit to explore and pick next in our Permaculture exploration.

Look for opportunities that you're pulled into versus having to push yourself into. Areas where there are open doors, invitations to learn to work and play. Where there's a two-way street of wanting to help and a need for your work. Once a native niche is explored, others are discovered and reveal themselves. In my own Permaculture work, I've been a laborer, teacher, farmer, landscaper, land designer, marketer, mentor, and now coach helping people like yourself find where they naturally fit into the greater context of the world is a native niche I found through this exploration, which I would have never thought of right in the beginning.

This process is a cycle that continues with further and further refinement. It's a spiral pattern that repeats itself infinitely. It never finishes.

As Dan Gilbert said, "Human beings are works in process that mistakenly feel they're finished." Niche, the word, has its roots in old French, meaning "to nest." Think of niches as the nests you occupy in your community, where you can create and nurture your own livelihood.

If you want to learn more about Zones of Brilliance and how to further design your life with Permaculture, visit my Website, YouTube channel, or contact me below. Remember, we need you, just as you are. Focused, engaged, and in action. Knowing where to go to from here. Thanks for being apart of the solution. I'm glad to have you as an ally. I'm Javan Kerby Bernakevitch. Be fruitful and mulch apply.