



SEEDS: webinar series

To love the Earth is the most urgent task we need to do as humanity. Loving the Earth is not an act of activism, but a sacred deed, which builds the bonds we have with all beings and with ourselves. A Native American piece of wisdom says that “man's heart, away from nature, becomes hard”. By returning to the natural world, we create space for our hearts to soften and open, allowing us to build more authentic and responsible relationships with the world around us.

How can we move beyond the rational, pragmatic, and transactional way of relating to nature and create an intimate partnership, a relationship that brings wellbeing and harmony to both humans and in the wider living world? We believe that Earth-based education is an answer to this question.

Thus, we created “**SEEDS: Webinar Series – Empowering Youth to Grow with the Earth.**” This online event offers a unique opportunity to explore three interconnected nature-based educational approaches that generate personal growth and social transformation. These approaches are:

- Ecocentric development
- Deep Ecology
- Outdoor education

The webinar series contains three online workshops, each dedicated to one of the topics. In them, we will explore key concepts, tools, and ideas, share good practices, and ignite conversations that can expand youth work practice and the perspectives of the participants.

This webinar series is part of the Erasmus+ project “ **SEEDS – Empowering Youth to Grow with the Earth**”, a small-scale cooperation partnership co-financed by the European Union through the Erasmus+ Programme and implemented by Naturalexplorers (Bulgaria) and Dreams for Life (Romania). Each organization is specialized in the three core areas.

Details about each workshop can be found below.

Workshop 1 – Circular consciousness and the path of ecocentric development

Date and time: 8th of April (Wednesday), from 18.00 to 20.00 CET

Facilitator: Bogdan Romanică (from Romania)

Description: The Earth is nonlinear, life is cyclical, and the rhythms of the natural world are circular, yet we often live in a linear way. Often life feels like a race from A to B, from school to the job market to retirement. And as much as we need to survive and be able to pay our bills, we also need harmony, meaning, and sacredness. In this webinar we are going to explore circular consciousness, the rhythms and patterns of nature, and our inner ecology. We will explore maps and models that put Earth and the human soul at their centre. We will look at these from the perspective of educators and facilitators, those who mentor and educate others, especially youth, who are the young buds and branches of the Tree of Life.

Workshop 2 – From separation to belonging: experiential introduction to deep ecology

Date and time: 15th of April (Wednesday), from 18.00 to 20.00 CET

Facilitator: Albena Popova (Bulgaria)

Description: In this webinar, we will explore Deep Ecology as a pathway from separation to belonging - a shift from seeing ourselves as isolated individuals to experiencing our deep interconnectedness with all life. Inspired by the work of Joanna Macy, this session offers an experiential introduction to the Work That Reconnects. Through storytelling, reflection, and interactive practices, we will create a space to reconnect with the Earth and rediscover our bond with nature and all living beings. We will explore how acknowledging our feelings for

the world - including grief, gratitude, and hope - can become a source of strength and motivation for meaningful action. The webinar will also offer practical tools for youth work, supporting young people in developing ecological awareness, empathy, and a deeper sense of belonging. This session is an invitation to soften, to listen, and to remember that we are part of a larger living community - and that from this place, new ways of being and acting can emerge.

Workshop 3 – Learning Outdoors - step closer to Nature and Freedom

Date and time: 22nd of April (Wednesday), from 18.00 to 20.00 CET

Facilitators: Sashka Vitanova (Bulgaria)

Description: Outdoor education is a learning approach that takes place outside the traditional indoor setting. While it is often associated with wilderness settings, any outdoor space, such as parks, schoolyards, or urban green areas, can become a meaningful learning environment. In this webinar we are going to explore the vast field of Outdoor education - its power and challenges, performance and impact and benefits. Outdoor education strengthens our connection with nature, ourselves, and our community. It plays a vital role in helping young people rebuild their relationship with the natural world and develop a sense of belonging to their surroundings. Being outdoors supports physical, mental, and psychological well-being. We will see how the chosen place connects learning to the local environment and community, where participants engage with real-life resources and situations found outdoors.

Registration procedure

Participation in this event is FREE, and registration is open to all.

The participation in the Webinar Series requires the completion of a registration form, which is available at the following link:

<https://forms.gle/cAhWeUswgFnbAkqM7>

You can participate in any of the webinars.

There are 100 places available for each workshop.

The workshops will be held on Zoom.

About the facilitators:

Bogdan Romanică – Bogdan is a human development guide, trainer, and mentor, from Romania. In his work, he combines elements of eco-psychology, nature connection, experiential learning, outdoor education, storytelling, and art. He loves exploring nature and the human soul. He feels in his element when inspiring and empowering people to become the truest versions of themselves. He has worked locally and internationally in the field of human development since 2010. He developed his craft by engaging consistently in deep and meaningful work and training with the Animas Valley Institute from the USA (organization founded by Bill Plotkin), the Mankind Project, Illuman and other organizations and teachers. Born in Romania, he feels deeply connected with the lands where he lives, the hills, mountains and forests that spread not far from his city, Cluj-Napoca.

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Albena Popova – Albena is a facilitator, trainer, and teacher from Bulgaria working at the intersection of storytelling, human development, and ecological awareness. With a background in philology, she is a PhD candidate at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, researching children’s literature from a psychoanalytic perspective. In her work, she combines elements of deep ecology, experiential learning, psychodrama, storytelling, and metaphorical cards to create spaces for reflection, dialogue, and inner exploration. For more than 15 years, she has been involved in international participatory projects focused on the relationship between people and the environment, collaborating with partners in Germany, France, South Africa, Niger, and Morocco. She currently coordinates the Roots & Shoots program in Bulgaria, the global youth initiative founded by Dr. Jane Goodall. Born and living in Bulgaria, Albena continues to explore nature as one of the deepest sources of learning and insight — a living metaphor and teacher through which she seeks to better understand herself and the human journey.

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Sashka Vitanova – She is co-founder and director of Naturalexplorers, from Bulgaria. She has more than 15 years of experience in youth work, project management, facilitation, and the organisation and delivery of trainings and events. Over the years she has built and developed a sustainable network of partner organisations at both national and international level. She has been active in the NGO sector since 2002, and in the field of non-formal and environmental education since 2007. She has been applying the Experiential Learning methodology in combination with Outdoor education in her practice

since 2010. Since 2018 she has been a licensed mountain guide. Sashka has been part of the instructor team at the Beglika kids camp since 2013, and from 2020 — part of the team of Chatama Forest Center, both part of Bikearea Association.

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