

Soil, Soul & Society
in the Educational
Encounter

A Journey of
Embodied
Scholarship with
Dr. Giles Barrow

Mill House, Suffolk
2025 - 2026

*Introducing a five
weekend in-person
programme in
educational
philosophy and
theory for the
here and now*



SOIL, SOUL &
SOCIETY IN THE
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WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?

I have designed and developed a year programme, based on my doctorate study, which brings together many of the ideas that have been running through my work over many years. It is in most respects a vision of what education might look like if planet and people matter. A culmination of the ecological, existential and political threads that lead to a perspective rooted in reconnection with self, others and the earth.

The intention is to cultivate a space for educators to drop deep into the 'why' and the 'who' of educational purpose and practice. It will be both political and personal, combining the academic with the earthy. We will be getting heads rinsed with ideas, and hands grubby in the soil. Planting seeds, literally and metaphorically, being in conversation with the contemporary and the ancestral voices, whilst keeping an eye on the horizon of possibilities. The outcomes are for participants to discern for themselves; this is not about learning how to be better at your job but imagining what an education worth having might look like.

WHO'S IT FOR?

Interested? If so, you will most likely already be an experienced educator, perhaps in schooling, college/higher education or delivering adult professional development. You are also likely to have had personal experience of teacher training, the political world of formal education and familiar with the core components of teaching and learning. You may also have additional qualification in educational psychology, leadership, school/college improvement, professional development and be generally familiar with the world of scholarship.

And, you may also have had a crisis of faith as an educator. You may have felt as if you have lost your way, or that education has become side-tracked. You may ache for a more human centred approach to the classroom. Or perhaps you have wondered how anything in schooling speaks to the climate collapse just outside the school/college grounds. You are likely to have spent much of your time curious about how might education exist in a way that's relevant to a planet on the rocks. Ultimately, you'll be wondering how can education matter, and how that might be important for you as an educator.

PROGRAMME DETAIL

To be part of this programme is to be engaged with scholarship around education philosophy and theory. There are some key writers with who we will be in conversation include Gert Biesta, Hannah Arendt, Grace Jantzen, George Cajete, James Conroy, Satish Kumar, Parker Palmer, Max v. Manen, Martin Shaw and many others.

The ideas, themes and theories we will be exploring include; ecological pedagogy, natality, existential educational philosophy, holistic education, professional identity and vocation, subjectification, teacherly gaze and gesture, liminality, the importance of story and myth, the role of seduction in education, place based education and indigenous education perspectives.



To let me know you are interested, or have further questions please get in touch: giles.barrow@gmail.com

PROGRAMME FORMAT

The programme comprises of five weekend workshops in-person at Mill House, Suffolk.

In support of these in-person gatherings there are five online evening meetings.

These sessions are an opportunity to stay connected with the group and discuss a selection of readings relating to the in-person sessions. Participants will need to ensure a minimum attendance at the first introductory on-line session and all five in-person sessions.

The in-person workshops will involve time spent outdoors and introduce ecological practices for use in between sessions.

Importantly, each participant will have a hard copy of the original PhD manuscript for personal journaling throughout the programme. This will become the 'educational object', which is a specific feature of the programme itself.

A BIT ABOUT ME...

I am an educator with experience across formal contexts, as school teacher and professional trainer. Following an earlier career in the schooling sector, I have spent much of my recent years in adult education, providing professional development, mentoring and supervision for educators both in the UK and internationally. With a background in specialist education, ecological education and teacher education, I have been involved in a wide range of initiatives relating to schooling, outdoor practice and politics in education. Over the years I have written widely on educational leadership, the relational aspects of teaching and learning and the importance of place in education. I am a Teaching and Supervising Transactional Analyst (TSTA) in the educational field and completed my PhD in 2022.

PROGRAMME PRACTICALITIES

Provisional dates are:

On-line 3rd Nov 2025 (6 - 8pm) Introductory Briefing

In-person eve 5th - 7th Dec 2025 Orientation and Methodology

On-line 23rd Feb 2026 (6-8pm) Study Group

In-person eve 20th -22nd March 2026 Arrival

On-line 13th April 2026 (6-8pm) Study Group

In-person eve 22nd - 24th May 2026 Beyond Arrival

On-line 29th June 2026 (6-8pm) Study Group

In-person eve 3rd - 5th July 2026 Who is the Teacher?

On-line 17th Aug (6-8pm) Study Group

In-person eve 18th - 20th Sept 2026 For Whom is the Harvest?

BUSINESS CONTRACT

The maximum number of places will be held at 12 participants.
The in-person workshops will be at
Mill House, Suffolk (IP13 7RP).

On-line sessions will be on zoom.

Cost of the programme: £1140 pp.
inclusive of on-line and in-person sessions,
hard copy of the study and refreshments.

Does not include accommodation or lunches.