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Addenda to [The Pristine Truth of Expedition Education](#)

Afterword: Sharing The Good News

by Jim Swan, Ph.D.

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On the evening of March 21, 1970, I sat in a small room upstairs in the Union Building at the University of Michigan with three other people, one of whom was the noted ecologist. Dr. Barry Commoner. Just a few hours earlier, 15,000 people had filled Chrysler Arena there to hear speeches by Commoner, Arthur Godfrey, Senator Gaylord Nelson, and representatives from half a dozen student groups, and music by Gordon Lightfoot.

By a scheduling quirk. The University of Michigan Earth Day 1970 Teach-In on the environment was held one month prior to the April 22 date observed nationwide. That made this the first large-scale environmental teach-in in the United States, and Commoner was elated. It was a sweet moment of victory for people such as Barry Commoner, Margaret Mead, Kenneth Boulding and others who had long been environmental advocates. The standing ovation for David Brower that night signaled that, finally, the nation was willing to listen to the pleas of the ecologists who kept telling us that the earth was in trouble.

We who had organized the teach-in were talking excitedly about the evening and the events of the days to come, when a moment of silence came over the small group. Seemingly struck by a profound insight. Commoner turned to me and said, "Jim, I don't think any of us here tonight are fully aware of the implications of this teach-in, or what it may ultimately mean for society and the world."

We all sat there in silence on these words. This was the first of the large environmental teach-ins of that first Earth Day in 1970, which brought the issue of environmental quality into full public view for perhaps the first time in modern society. Yet it was as Commoner observed, a little like a person in psychoanalysis having a profound insight and then having to work through the implications of the insight to really grasp its meaning.

It led Bill Stapp to create a working definition of environmental education that has been used since then by countries around the world to help them formulate their environmental education policy. The goal statement to which we had agreed in that seminar was that environmental education was concerned with developing a citizenry that is aware of the biophysical environment and its associated problems, understands these problems and how to become involved in resolving them, and is motivated to do so.' In contrast to the earlier movements of outdoor education, nature study education, and conservation education, with their strong emphasis upon nature appreciation,

recreation, and natural history, this new definition took the bold new direction of specifically addressing environmental problems and finding ways to get people involved in resolving them.

The gnawing question which arose from this new definition was what to teach in the name of environmental education, and perhaps more importantly, how to teach it.

I was reminded that Nature is perhaps one of the most critical issues of our day and that environmental education is a key to our society's understanding of its true relationship with Nature. This is why I wanted to visit the Expedition Institute. It stressed that I should familiarize myself with the Audubon Expedition Institute program before I met with the school where I was to teach a class on education research methods.

This I began to realize as I read copies of *Our Classroom Is Wild America* and *Across the Running Tide*. AEI is an experiential program designed to critically examine and deprogram much of the destructive rote learning that goes on in other schools and to help people to become autonomous. It is an accredited high school, college, and graduate program geared to help people holistically and academically to get in close touch with nature within and without, and to explore ecologically sound lifestyles. This I liked a lot. They were not only talking about things that I believed in; they were doing them. It seemed like a fresh breath of air, and so I was off to the woods and waters of Maine.

Bouncing down a gravel road in rural Maine, Mike Cohen began to orient me to the class ahead. "They've been reading the book you and Stapp wrote," Mike said, "and they think it needs to be updated." I agreed that the book was six years old and probably could use some reworking, but little did I realize what I was about to walk into. The students in the Expedition Institute and I met the next morning at the classroom building named the *Greenhouse* (because it is painted green). Mike had invited me to be informal, as that was the atmosphere of the group. These people had been literally *on the road* for two years, travelling around the country in yellow school buses, sleeping out in tents in all kinds of weather, and exploring first-hand what living in harmony with nature means to different people in different parts of the country. They had been to the Hopi ceremonies in the Southwest, lived among the Amish of Pennsylvania, and studied the folk customs of New England. They had travelled from New Brunswick to Florida and westward from the Hopi villages to the Olympic Peninsula. First-hand, they had studied a combination of archaeology, anthropology, sociology and ecology as a unified experience all the while living as a close-knit community. Also generated in this living-learning community was the impetus to develop an ecologically sound lifestyle. This is created out of group discussion and personal experience. Everyone seems to become responsible to everyone else; at least this is what I saw.

I found that my first encounter with the group was just that—an encounter. They knew me by a volume I had written six years prior. I knew them by the books Mike had sent me and through his briefing in the car between the Bangor airport and the land near Lubec where they have their base camp. I had not expected the students I met. Some of them were older than the average graduate student. They had some experience in the world. Several had been school teachers or naturalists. As I walked up to the Greenhouse that first day, I heard a string band playing. During the course of the year many of them learn to play an instrument: a guitar, mandolin, banjo, or at least a penny whistle, as well as to sing the ballads of the land. A stop at Pete Seeger's sloop, Clearwater, on the Hudson River is an annual event. They really do know something about harmony, I thought to myself, as I approached the Greenhouse that first day.

The charge of the class to Lesley College, the accrediting institution, was

to present the fundamentals of research methods, enabling students to formulate research projects, as well as prepare them for additional classes on research methods, if they wanted to go on for a Ph.D. After the first few *getting to know you* exchanges came the first question: "What do you think about the existing environmental education programs in this country?" The ensuing discussion on this one question became our first class of three hours. By the time the period had formally ended, we had sheets of paper on the walls listing as many different programs as we could think of. I was not teaching a class; rather, I was more of a rudder, steering a boat that was already underway by asking it which way it wanted to go. This atmosphere remained with us for the next ten days. There was never an issue about class participation. It was almost as if the energy was there waiting to be voiced; I facilitated the group as an exploring unit. The experience of being on the road for a year or two had primed people for the discussion that took place. We became fellow members of a ship looking for a new land, or at least for a new way to get to the existing one. The destination, they said, was the kind of relationship with nature that people like the Hopi Indians or hunter-gatherers have. I couldn't argue with that, but then challenged them to state that as a goal. What we then came up with was a definition of environmental education which really is radical, at least in contrast to what I had written down a few years prior with Bill Stapp.

Environmental education is the process which aids humankind in developing behavior congruent with maintaining the earth as a living organism. This is the goal we came up with. I stood there in front of the class looking at what I had written down. Then I turned and almost paraphrased Barry Commoner: "Do you realize what you're saying?" I asked. They responded that to state anything less was not living up to what was needed. I couldn't argue with them. In my work with the medicine man, Rolling Thunder, I've often heard him declare that, "The earth is a living being, and we should treat it that way. You learn to love and respect the earth as you would ask another human being to treat you. This is how the Indian people have always been brought up to think."

When Mike told me that the title of the book he was writing was *Prejudice Against Nature*, I was really hooked. I couldn't agree more with his analysis. It seems like so much of what humanistic psychotherapy, meditation, and American Indian ceremony and ritual does is try to poke holes in our prejudices against nature, so that the culturally blocked connections between nature within and nature without will become unplugged and resonate together in harmony. It's interesting that on one hand we desire the environmental benefits of harmony with nature; but on the other hand we get concerned about the processes of achieving harmony—if they differ from our cultural conditioning.

The problem with modern culture is just what Fritz Perls called *projection*—we tend to do to ourselves as we do to the world around us. The modern epidemic of psychosomatic illnesses that beset Americans, cancer, heart trouble, ulcers, etc., all are due to denial of our inner voices—our own inner nature (Nature within). While subduing nature around us, we poison ourselves with a myriad of chemicals in our foods, and the air we breathe as we dump these chemicals into the environment. We must be desperate to continually try to create ways to control and alter the balance of nature to do this to ourselves. We synthesize a new chemical compound every minute. Rather than seeking to sensitize our minds and bodies to nature and learning to live in harmony with nature's subtle pulses and flows, we seek to control nature. We belch clouds of wastes into the air in the process of walling ourselves off from nature in concrete structures which may do us more harm than good in the long run.

There is a profound neurosis in our culture and it is the fear of the future. Fear breeds prejudice—*against nature*.

The title of the book alone got my interest. Rather than trying to plan and regroup myself for the next day of class, I began reading the manuscript.

The setting for the first chapter is the tidal marsh, the predominant feature of the Lubec land where we met. I went down to the rocks exposed by the receding tides (which are 27 feet in this arm of the Bay of Fundy) and began to read. I had just flown in from Seattle which is on Puget Sound, also a large bay with tides and salt water; so I felt quite at home. But in just a few hours I would marvel to see the uniqueness of this place. At one time, I'd look at this bay with three tiny islands in it; come back six hours later and it would be empty, exposing rocks and tidal flats that extend to the islands over a mile away. The surge of water through the estuary is like the life blood of Earth pulsating through an artery. The metaphor of the earth being alive took on more meaning.

Watching these tides, I decided to use that energy in class rather than to plan a lecture. Good research depends on careful planning at the conceptual stage. Scientific research is never objective. Because the unconscious asserts its influence, scientific methods *attempt* to be objective, but the choice of what to study is always a subjective one. Therefore, rather than fight the flow, the next morning I challenged the group to look at the assumptions underlying the conceptual definition of the earth being a living organism and the need to help human behavior become congruent with this working principle. To actualize and fully accept this definition, the group came up with the following statement of assumptions:

1. The planet earth is seen in its entirety as a living organism.
 2. Nature and human nature are one and the same.
 3. People are an organ of the organization of the earth.
 4. All elements of the earth-organism system are interrelated.
 5. Our culture, language, and symbols are presently inadequate to explain the earth as a living organism and that people are a part of that organism.
- Therefore, it is imperative that we develop functional communication which incorporates people, nature, culture, and the planet as interchangeable terms.
6. Sensing the totality of the earth as a living system involves sensing the wholeness of yourself.
 7. The planet's life is constantly fluctuating between tension and tension-release of energy, as evidenced by weather patterns, tides, thirst, and emotions.

Aside from the logical deductive process of justifying a new definitional statement, the items that seem most significant to me are numbers 5, 6, and 7.

Everyone dreams, but schools seldom help us understand our dreams. Everyone relates to other people in various kinds of relationships like expressing and understanding emotions, making agreements, and being understood. I couldn't agree more with Mike that nature speaks to us through feelings and with sensations and that our modern culture has a problem about nature, within and without. Emotions, feelings, intuitions, sensations (including your big toe throbbing right before a storm comes) all are part of still owning our personal connection with nature. Recently, we've been able to substantiate such anomalies as your Aunt Bessie's weather-sensitive toe as her sensitivity to positive ions in the air and changes in the barometric pressure as a front approaches.

While some people are sitting in schools learning abstract theories, others are learning to sense and feel nature so they can sense the tides, the frontal weather patterns, and the responsive movements of fish and game. In the old days, such sensitivity to nature's moods sometimes meant the difference between life and death. They are aspects of self-preservation in nature. Mike talks about alcoholism and prejudice against nature. If you were an Indian,

raised to value sensing and feeling nature and then thrust into a culture that says that such an education is worthless or even a negative influence on success, what choice would you have but to become depressed, feel worthless, and want to try to deaden the subtle voices you feel? The drunken Indian in the street may almost be a symbolic expression of our culture's prejudice against nature.

The assumption that our culture lacks the words and symbols to communicate about the person-planet relationship adequately is probably accurate and a good indication of what we have chosen to deny in order to develop our technological world. Simple, subtle things like words and expressions can tell you a great deal about a person or a culture. Mike's statement, "Our environmental problems remain and multiply because we are not conscious of our roots and symbols," hits home.

Increasing numbers of people have been experimenting with various conscious-broadening methods, such as drugs, gestalt, bioenergetics, meditation, yoga, and tai chi. We are seeing a new psychology beginning to emerge. In dreams, visions, and unusual experiences, we see people popping into realms of consciousness for which they may have no maps. In the eyes of conventional society, psychiatry, and psychology, many of these people seem to be *out of control* in their experiences and are considered psychotic or schizophrenic. Because there is no scientific control or measuring device for their experiences, they are called *mystical*. If one understands the nature of mystical experiences, especially those that seem to unite people and nature, then what many experimenters are experiencing is the equivalent of the vision quest experiences that some cultures purposefully plan.

In many laboratories, through the study of brainwave patterns, biorhythms, and the subtle electromagnetic fields of life, we are learning that we are not dense bodies but rather fields of atoms and molecules stuck together for a time. Because we are fields, we are also affected by the fields around us, which explains Aunt Bessie's weather-sensitive toe.

Some people seem to fear nature because they can't control it. Because of their fear, they seem to get stuck in a couple of places in their acceptance of nature within. Either they try consciously to deny experiencing it, or they try to dismiss the importance of the experience. In either case, the denial of nature within has an external counterpart; it is our alienation from our natural world. If we then break down the barriers to experiencing nature and find that the inner and outer language is new, it is not nature's fault. It's our challenge to come up with a new language to describe this perception. Describing our relationship with nature as being prejudicial is a way of meeting the challenge.

Returning to our classroom at the Greenhouse, it became apparent that the group wanted to be a voice for a new definition of environmental education. Because their statements and arguments hit so many resonant chords within me, we continued from making this statement to looking at its implications in terms of validation. Having acknowledged and recorded the initial statement as well as the assumptions underlying it, I then challenged back: "Okay, we've had the guts to make this scientifically and academically outlandish statement; how do you translate it into measurable elements like skills, knowledge, and behavior? If you're going to communicate this philosophy to a nature center director or a school superintendent, you've got to get more concrete."

After discussions about methods of evaluation and defining terms common to educational research, they came back with the following:

The translation of this working definition of environmental education into action involves attention to: skills, values, perceptions, feelings, behavior, and knowledge blended into a working wisdom of thought and action which is congruent with the definition. The components of this working definition are:

1. **SKILLS:** to be able to create and sustain consensus- based communities dedicated to personal self-reliance, continual growth, and self-actualization which arise from an increased awareness of the earth as a living organism.
2. **VALUES:** to construct an earth ethic that values personal responsibility to sense and respond empathetically to the living planet.
3. **PERCEPTIONS:** to develop a personal perception about the nature of the world, its connectedness within us, and the resulting sense of the unity of all things.
4. **FEELINGS:** to generate an understanding of the planet's fluctuating tension and release as experienced in people and how their feelings are expressed culturally, thus encouraging the acknowledgement, expression, and acceptance of feelings which are congruent with the life of the planet.
5. **KNOWLEDGE:** learning how to learn a wholistic perspective of the life processes by encountering nature's questions and using them to lead the individual towards a working knowledge of life.
6. **BEHAVIOR:** to integrate attitudes, feelings, perceptions, knowledge and skills into an active lifestyle of maintaining the earth as a living organism.

Rather than going over this statement point by point, it seems more appropriate and vital to look at what it's saying and to note the process which led to its creation. Here is a group of people who did not know each other before they came to the Institute. They have gone through a series of global learning experiences that have changed them and ultimately have given them an incredibly strong sense of community. The consensus of the entire group developed this definition. To get any group to agree on such a radical thing is a near miracle in itself. Also of importance is the fact that they came to this group decision in a relatively short time, considering that they came from backgrounds as diverse as rural towns and the inner cores of large cities. During my time at the Expedition Institute, a truly supportive community was formed. This enabled people to grow, change, explore and creatively exercise an integrated life process. Since a lot of time is spent in group process, ideas about people, nature, culture, and how this relates to lifestyle had been hashed around almost daily during group meetings. They were not graded on reaching consensus. They found its value by experiencing it, by reaching it. That they did so easily is what to me seems important. Not only does what they are saying ring true to my inner ears, but the electricity of the decision-making process remains a fond memory. We spent a good deal more time on this class than was planned, simply because everyone, including myself, wanted to. This is when education is exciting! We were taking the thoughts and experiences of two years of work and giving shape to them as guidelines to explain the world and how to deal with it.

The people on the Expedition Institute program really have taken Barry Commoner's thoughts to heart. They are saying that things are not working well the way our civilization is set up. We have made some important gains on cleaning up the environmental problems, but there is still a long way to go, and maybe we started out by tackling the least difficult problems. You can pass legislation to control air pollution, but then along comes another administration with a different perspective and that same legislation is repealed. The laws and recycling centers help—but just what are we doing to improve the environment by changing around the consciousness of the culture to remove our prejudice against nature? As Mike has pointed out, the roots go much deeper.

But I do believe that we need to restore a sense of reverence for life, which includes an acceptance and recognition of life and death and the

associated feelings. In deep therapy, continually we find at the very core of each person a sense of love and an embracing of life. If people rediscover this connection to the nature within themselves, then they can grow and develop toward self-actualization with a sense of wonder and awe about life that is beyond judgment and evaluation. It is simply a surrender to life itself and the experience of being alive. Descartes had it backwards; he should have said, "I am, therefore I think."

It seems to me that the students I met in the Institute program all could relate to what I have just talked about. Some of them openly talked about having been hooked on drugs or alcohol before joining up. Others talked about depression and feeling worthless. Somehow during the course of the Institute, they had broken through to their inner selves, which had been nourished by mother nature and a supportive community. This experience led them to come up with the environmental education definition upon which they all agreed. And they had done this without psychotherapy.

taking on a religious devotional practice, or becoming freaks. Carl Rogers has always maintained that strong positive interpersonal relationships are therapeutic in themselves. This is part of what I think happens during the time spent with the Institute. It is something that the students seem to take with them.

Another thing which happens is that people seem to be able to learn to use the environment to educate themselves, as Mike talks about. I'm not sure how this happens; but on short field trips with some of the people, I found myself relating to places slightly differently as they guided me about rural Maine. Equilibrium, I think, is a key word for describing what the Institute teaches. They learn it academically, but also through contact with nature, sleeping out in tents in all sorts of weather and hiking through wild places. They also learn it through song and dancing folk dances. To really understand what the Institute is trying to do, you should attend one of the group sings or join them when they sponsor a contra dance in a rural old time meeting place. Get a copy of the *Equilibrium* album which they produced through Folkways Records and the National Audubon Society. You can learn about harmony. It involves systematically tuning into something, letting go of your mind, and then seeing if you are on the same frequency.

Beyond this, how can you measure prejudice against nature, or congruence with nature? The fact that I can't come up with a

measure now doesn't mean these things don't exist. It simply says that I may not be able to measure them at this time. Maybe they must be measured against the health of the ecosystem. On this I can agree.

This was the type of discussion which we got into as we wrapped up the environmental education definition.

You can test to see if something is memorized, but what else is going on in the class? In many cases, what is learned outside of the formal class lessons is more important to the life process than what is supposed to be happening in the class.

The subtle messages are that education takes place best when it can be structured, segmented, and presented in abstraction. This leaves us learning to lock ourselves up in school buildings inside of our heads and to treat the rest of the world this way, if we are *good students*. Quite frankly, our schools are prejudiced against human nature as well as nature. Thinking and memorizing is what counts, or at least along with learning to sit still, is what gets us good grades. This mode of education prepares us to enter into a society run just like a school. It may be contrary to human nature and to nature, but it is the foundation of the world we know today. The problem is that ours is an educational system which fragments us and asks us to become mechanical so we can more easily exist in a mechanical world.

Since Earth Day 1970, the problems of the environment have been problems that we can talk about openly. As each new door is opened to subjects that used to be taboo, we approach a more holistic education. But talking about something is very different than doing it. This, I think, may be the strongest function of the Audubon Expedition Institute. In a variety of settings across the country, they holistically study firsthand experiences which later may become extrapolated subjects like anthropology, archaeology, sociology, and natural sciences. This first-hand exposure to people and places makes subjects in books become real. They become experiences. It affords students the chance to do reality testing on what books say, and discussions about reality, especially related to environmental matters, are an important part of the Expedition. The students are encouraged to question anything, and as I learned first-hand, they do so. This aspect of the program helps people become autonomous thinkers, getting away from the weakness inherent in traditional education of relying upon rote memorization of material from authoritarian people.

On the Expedition, students are exposed to a whole host of authority figures. They experience them and then go away to process the experience. This is the essence of real learning.

Decision-making on the Expedition takes place on a consensus basis after having made an initial agreement to be a part of the group. Each prospective student for the program is interviewed by staff members, who explore questions of willingness to live in a group setting as well as commitment to the mission of the Institute of improving person-planet congruency. In choosing to join the Expedition Institute, a person needs to be aware of the decision s/ he is making. You will be sleeping in a tent in all kinds of weather for up to two years—in some cases more, depending on the type of program you become involved with. You may not shower regularly. You often will be without electricity and hot running water. You will travel in a yellow school bus and become a member of a small community. While in this co-ed community, you will be asked not to pair up with members of the same or opposite sex for special relationships. (Experience of 15 years has shown that pairing up while on the Expedition can be very disruptive to the group process. Upon completion of their experience with the Institute, some students have

become lifelong friends, while others even have married.)

All too often today, we become caught up in what might be called *well-informed futility*. We read all the papers and magazines, listen to the radio and watch television constantly. Although we may be well-informed, the general scope of the material may be way beyond what we feel to be in our realm of influence. We tend to let others define reality for us and lose our individual power and sense of defining reality.

By stripping away many of the conveniences of modern society which Mike suggests create a *technological euphoria*, people on the Institute are increasingly faced with themselves. They learn that the world does not fall apart if they don't have a television set. They learn that viable community life is the basic product of a healthy human society. They also learn that resource consumption decreases in a healthy community setting as people feel more, share more, and cooperate more.

Mike might say that they were agreeing to create stress cooperatively in order to achieve higher performance. Here again the culprit is fear. You have to believe in yourself to do well at whatever you do. If you have high self-esteem, then you tend to evaluate your performance more on your own standards than you do in relation to other people. Where I saw this happening on the Expedition was in their music. Many of them played instruments like banjos, guitars, mandolins and fiddles. They did not try to hold contests as to be able to see who was best. Instead they worked at everybody's developing enough proficiency to be good enough to play together in tune. This way they could have a band, play music for local country dances, and even hold concerts. The Institute band has played at the festivals held at the sloop *Clearwater* and directed by Pete Seeger, as well as at Saturday night dances in Lubec, Maine. Once they were in Arizona and met a group of Tarahumara Indians from Mexico who showed them their folk dances. In return the Institute band played folk songs for them and demonstrated the contra and Morris dances of New England. In this case neither group was trying to compete for the best dances or singing. Instead they each tried to do their best to show the essence of their culture and skills. This is the kind of competition we need to promote. We need to help people recapture their self-worth which makes it possible to express themselves without worrying about winning or losing. In such cases every person who participates becomes a winner.

Today when you see the hula danced in a hotel in downtown Honolulu, you may not always see the dance as it was in the beginning. Originally to dance the hula, young women and men would go off to the hills and were told to sit in silence and study the movement of a single tree in the wind. They were to remain there until they could merge with the tree and perfectly express its flow and grace in the wind. Then they could go down to the village and learn the technique and form.

It seems to me that, in a way, the Expedition Institute uses an updated version of a very old practice of learning to blend your mind with nature by first-hand exposure to wild places. Strip away your attachments to modern culture and you will find the kind of interpersonal encounters Mike describes happening. People cannot avoid each other. People cannot avoid nature. Often, in such situations, people begin to cry for reasons they cannot rationally explain. This is not insanity. Instead it is the voice of sanity itself speaking through and expressing a sob of relief at the barriers at last being broken down. I am coming to believe that the mind wants to unite with nature, within and without. This is a natural tendency. It may not always result in increased performance score on the SAT test or on an IQ test, but it most certainly leads to a sense of personal health.

Perhaps one reason why we don't have more Thoreaus, John Muirs, or

Aldo Leopold is that these people were brave pioneers who were willing to spend a good deal of time alone by themselves in the woods. We don't have the time to have everyone go off to a Walden Pond, and a lot of us wouldn't do it. We need to find ways to connect people with nature in groups. The Audubon Expedition Institute is exploring ways of doing this

The planet is calling to us with its voices of nature saying we must adapt our ways towards learning to live in harmony with nature. We should be listening to these voices with our hearts and minds and finding ways to hear them more clearly. We need to be finding new ways to learn about how to live, before we can expect to truly grasp abstractions. Abstractions unconnected to anything run the risk of being schizophrenic. More than one educational critic these days has suggested that our schools tend to program people to be schizophrenic.

Now more than ever we need programs like the Audubon Expedition Institute. By occasionally stepping outside the confines of contemporary society and getting down to the basics of what life is all about, they enable us to tap into our own creativity and create new ways of living appropriate to the times and the planet. For many reasons it seems to me that the Audubon Expedition Institute is doing precisely this. I look to them for leadership in charting new directions for living in harmony with nature. Rather than being a fixed process, each Expedition is a new exploration of the relationship between people and nature. This definition, I think, marks the beginning of a whole series of important ideas, concepts and products which will be coming from the Expedition Institute.

On the Expedition Institute apparently, as people let go of their cultural feelings, they become more and more capable of experiencing this state of natural euphoria in natural environmental settings. Through such records, the Expedition Institute may be able to help considerably with our understanding of the relationship between experience and place. We may well find that the reason, or at least one reason, why *mother nature* is so important to us is that she has the power to help us re-create ourselves. Nature may be seen as an amplifier of human states of re-creation.

In talking about this subject, of the variety of experiences of person-planet congruency, we run up against the problem stated in Working Assumption No. 5: our lack of an adequate language to explain the necessary states. To this end, Mike's experience with the CNS paradigm, anti-Nature myths, and Whole-Life factor (presently Pristine Truth and Natureness) deserves widespread consideration. Cultures which conduct ceremonies and rituals and practice lifestyles which are seemingly more congruent with person-planet harmony use phrases like *earth mother* to refer to the planet. Such phrases produce images which subtly suggest aliveness and the need for a sense of respect and love for the earth as we might respect and love our own mother. Because of the mechanical nature of our culture, such images aren't normally used in our language. This may seem like a picky point, but really it is not. The structure of our sentences and the emotions and images they contain set a tone which pervades and limits our lives

The common perception of the Earth as a living being may be one of the most powerful concepts we can have, of ourselves as a part of nature, rather than as a steward of it. Think about its importance to the process of restoration. For the health of us all, persons and planet, we need to erase our prejudice against nature and restore harmony to the world. We need to allow ourselves to be able to sense and maintain a sense of common greenness about the living system of the planet..