



• Creativity • Collaboration • Continuity • Community

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FEATURE STORY

REGISTRATION OPEN FOR THE PERMACULTURE DESIGN CERTIFICATE (PDC) IN LEBANON

Mark your calendar: This spring, the Permaculture Design Certificate (PDC) course will take place for the 3rd time in Lebanon.

3RD PDC LEBANON: APRIL 24-MAY 8, 2016 - SAIDOUN (JEZZINE)

The 72-hour intensive course will be held over 2 weeks in the village of **Saidoun (Jezzine caza)**.

The PDC will enable you to develop a mutually enhancing interaction with land and community, through nature observation and agriculture/social tools to teach you the principles of sustainable design in farming, building, waste management, community building and energy conservation.

This marks the third consecutive year that SOILS organizes the PDC course in Lebanon. To date, 14 Lebanese participants have graduated from the course and are now seeking to implement permaculture principles in their personal and professional lives, from natural farming to establishing eco-villages, empowering rural communities, reforestation and beekeeping.

The PDC is a pre-requisite to further training in permaculture design (diploma programs, teacher training courses and advanced trainings). All PDC courses worldwide have the same format to ensure the integrity of the certification.

The course offers an ideal opportunity to explore an exciting and meaningful life (and career) path through permaculture that will allow you to introduce positive change and make a difference in the world around you.

The course will be led by **Klaudia van Gool**, and **Betty Khoury** who have developed the PDC course in Lebanon and taught it for the past 2 years. Klaudia is a teacher, trainer and environmental consultant who has taught over 20 permaculture design courses worldwide. Betty is an outdoor environmental educator and permaculturist with a background in populations and ecosystems biology, as well as the co-founder of the Dayma social enterprise (Egypt).

See program and registration details on Page 2



PERMACULTURE DESIGN CERTIFICATE (PDC) LEBANON-2016

EARN AN INTERNATIONALLY ACCREDITED CERTIFICATE IN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

From April 24 to May 8, 2016 (2 weeks)
Saidoun, Jezzine

Organized by



تراب SOILS
للزراعة البيئية لبنان
PERMACULTURE ASSOCIATION LEBANON



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Continued from Page 1

PDC 2016 PROGRAM - - - - -

I. Introduction

Ethics and principles of permaculture, global/local issues

II. Ecological Concepts

Elements of an ecosystem, natural cycles and interactions, human impact, agriculture and forestry systems

III. Sustainable Resource Management

Soil conservation and regeneration, water harvesting, energy conservation and waste reduction, plant growth and fertility, natural pest control strategies

IV. Social Framework

Community building tools

V. Permaculture Site Design

Site survey (climate, plant and animal species), design development and evolution

REGISTRATION AND FEES - - - - -

The deadline for registration is April 4, 2016.

Local participants (Lebanese nationals, non-Lebanese residents):

\$650 per person

(\$250 pre-registration by April 4, 2016 + \$400 on the first day of the PDC)

Early Bird Discount: \$590 for full payment by March 10, 2016

International participants:

\$1,200 per person

Early Bird Discount: \$1,000 for full payment by March 10, 2016

The cost includes participation fees, accommodation (in guest houses) and meals (lunch, dinner) during the entire course.

Find more details about the PDC and download the Registration Form on our web-site:

<http://www.soils-permaculture-lebanon.com/pdc-2016.html>

We will announce an info-session on the Facebook event page before the PDC to meet you one-on-one and answer your questions:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/433881023483671/>

Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us:

Email: contact.soilslebanon@gmail.com

Telephone or Whatsapp: +961-71-617 988 (Rita)



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UPCOMING EVENTS

"CYCLING ADVENTURES STORYTELLING NIGHT" GATHERING AND NETWORKING EVENT



JANUARY 21, 2016

8:00 p.m.

AltCity, Hamra - Beirut

Listen to the inspiring stories of cycling globetrotter, Sally and Lauren, and meet other cyclists from Lebanon.

*Free entrance

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1210766095618926/>

"LANGUAGE EXCHANGE" CHILL CHAT AND NETWORKING EVENT



JANUARY 19, 2016

7:30 p.m.

Artscape, Makhoul Street, Hamra - Beirut

Meet and network with people from different countries for social or educational purposes.

*Minimum fee: LBP 5,000

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1524190977910385/>

"SHAKUHACHI MEDITATION & HEALING" SPIRITUAL RECONNECTION



JANUARY 31, 2016

7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Beirut Sivananda Yoga Center, Gemmayzeh

Meditation session accompanied by music on the Shikahachi flute and tea.

Fees: LBP 25,000

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1104746922882821/>

For reservation: SMS or Whatsapp 03-119 465

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LET'S SHARE OUR NEWS

SOILS LEADS SAIDOUN 8 OTHER VILLAGES IN SORTING RECYCLABLE WASTE

We are really glad that we'll be kicking off 2016 with a 3-month pilot project about **solid waste management** in 9 villages - including **Saidoun**, of course - of the Jezzine caza in South Lebanon.

This pilot will be led by **SOILS Permaculture Association Lebanon** and the people of Saidoun, within the framework of the INTAJ program, implemented by **Mercy Corps** with funding from the UK's Department for International Development (DFID).

The project will include sorting at source of **recyclable materials** (plastic, paper, glass, etc.) which will be collected weekly from houses and moved to a temporary sorting center that one Saidoun resident rented to us. There, we will do a secondary sorting in order to segregate the different types, the way they will be sold to the recycling factories.

As for organic waste, we will show members of each household how to compost their kitchen scraps in their garden (that is if they don't compost already or don't feed scraps to chickens). Since the targeted villages are all small (20-60 households per village) almost all residents have backyard gardens and can dispose of their organic waste easily and turn the nutrients back to the soil.

In order to help residents sort in an efficient way a group of local animators will conduct awareness visits to each house, in addition to reinforcement group workshops in composting.

Once the system is up and running we will experiment with ways to add value to some of the collected material by teaching a few local women how to make recycled crafts from plastic bags and paper, and how to do vermi-composting. If this trial is successful, we will accompany the trainees and help them market their recycled crafts and/or vermi-cast.

In preparation for this project we visited the sorting center in **Arab Salim** (Nabatiye governorate), where a group of women have been sorting their town's waste since 20 years, when practically no one else in the country had yet considered waste sorting and recycling.

We were welcomed by **Zeinab Mokalled**, one of the pioneering women who launched the project and maintained it despite all "insurmountable" difficulties. She explained how the idea came to her during the large-scale Israeli military aggression against Lebanon back in 1996, when the garbage started piling up in the streets. She gathered a group of women and convinced them to help her spread the idea of proper waste management among other villagers.

There were several other problems over the years - and there still are. First, Arab Salim spent years without a municipal council, which made it difficult to fund the women's efforts or get things moving. Add to that another war operation by Israel in 2006, and continuous issues having to do with lack of awareness, lack of cooperation, lack of space, lack of funding, etc.

Despite all the challenges, Zeinab and her friends stayed focused on their mission. First, the women started storing the recyclable materials in their own houses. Then they managed to identify recycling factories which accepted to take the sorted materials, and they eventually organized themselves in an association called **Nidaa' Al Ard** (the call of the earth) and received funding to build a sorting center. Zeinab then took us around the center, and showed us the operations aspect of their work.

At the end of the pilot project in March 2016, we will decide about the next steps depending on circumstances. If the Union of Municipalities of Jezzine, with whom we are collaborating, will have managed to build or rent a sorting center by then, we will hand over the sorting and collection operations to them, and extend the awareness campaign to the other villages of the Union. Otherwise, we will continue with the collection and the sorting from the 9 villages, and try to fund the extension of our activities, partly from the selling of recyclables, and partly from the contribution of the concerned municipalities.

It is great to finally start sorting and recycling on a large scale. One thing is sure, once the collection and sorting have started, we will not turn back.

Shared by the Editorial Team



The project team at Arab Salim sorting center

فكر قبل ما تكب

المواد القابلة للتدوير

البيلاستيك

- قاني، مياه، مشروبات غازية، مساحيق تنظيف، شامبو
- علب اللين واللينة
- عابون زيت سالي
- الأكواب والبصون والأوعية الجاهزة (التليفة فقط)

نايلون

- أكياس
- نايلون شفاف للتغليف

تلك ووديد

- عبوات المشروبات الغازية
- معدات
- أوراق ألومنيوم (أسانتا)

ورق وكرتون

- جراند ومجلات
- أوراق وفاتر
- علب كرتون

زجاج

- قاني من كل الأنواع
- مرايطين

الكثريات

- بطاريات
- الأجهزة الإلكترونية والكهربائية

إرشادات

- 1 نضع الزجاج في كيس منفصل لتجنب كسر الزجاج.
- 2 نشطف مياه سائل الأوعية المصنعة بالطعام أو السوائل.
- 3 نفرغ القاني من السوائل قبل وضعها.
- 4 نفرغ قطع الورق والكرتون للتغليف.
- 5 نسلخ علب الكرتون قبل وضعها.

يتم جمع النفايات القابلة للتدوير من أمام المنازل كل يوم ابتداءً من تاريخ

Facebook page
فكر قبل ما تكب - جزون

جمعية "ترايب" - صيدون لجزيرة من المعلومات، اتصال أو واتساب، على: 03-108676

SOILS
للتنوع البيئي والتنمية الحضرية
PERMACULTURE ASSOCIATION



LET'S SHARE OUR NEWS

RECYCLE EMPTY BOTTLES INTO USEFUL AND BEAUTIFUL ART

2 years ago, I came across glasses and vases made from **upcycled wine and beer bottles** at an exhibition in Beirut, and I just loved the idea. What better way to turn empty bottles into something useful and beautiful, rather than see them dumped in a landfill or a water body? In case you didn't know, there are very few glass recyclers in Lebanon, and those few who do recycle it only process clear "white" glass - not green, brown, or colored. The only green glass recycling facility in the country was destroyed by an air strike during an aggression by the Israeli military in the summer of 2006. There has not been another factory since. So upcycling them was definitely an option on the table

I began researching ways to cut glass bottles online, and I found dozens of methods that involved using either a glass cutter or a strip of fabric dipped in nail polish remover and set on fire(!). I wanted the most cost-effective and least energy-intensive method - not to mention it had to work. Based on product reviews, the best option for me was the **G2 Bottle Cutter**. I also liked its simple and minimalist design, made from recycled aluminum (<http://www.amazon.com/Diamond-Tech-Crafts-Bottle-Cutter/dp/B004ZRV3AU>). Since Amazon didn't ship this to Lebanon, I asked a friend visiting the US to purchase it for me, and it turned out to be a great buy!

At first, my success rate was low - very low. I had read the instructions and applied them to the letter, so I was getting frustrated. After checking out videos of people who actually used this tool and following their tips, I finally found the ideal procedure:



Using the G2 Bottle Cutter (which is basically a simple glass cutting knife mounted on an axis with a pivoting nozzle), I apply even pressure on a bottle by rotating it 360 degrees so I get an end-to-end horizontal line across the bottle's circumference. Then, I pour hot water over the scored line to cause the glass to expand. Immediately after that, I pour cold water and repeat the operation as necessary (up to 3 times maximum) until the bottle neatly snaps in 2 along the scored line. Voila! After sanding the cut line down, you end up with a bottom part that you can use as a vase, glass or container, and a top part that you can use as a lamp shade. The best video tutorial I found online for this method is by Green Power Science. Check it out on this link to get a clearer idea of the process: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sFXngPx3w3M>

Every little effort counts in reducing waste. If you want to tackle glass, you don't have to buy a G2 Bottle Cutter. I'm very happy with mine (especially since replacement glass cutting knives can be found for \$1 at any local hardware store), but you can build your own. Recently, I met *Wissam Muases*, the person who had created the upcycled glasses and vases at the exhibition I attended. Wissam was the co-founder of **Artafif**, a collective of Syrian artists who had relocated to Lebanon and wanted their art to have a social impact. Seeing the high number of discarded bottles that were not being recycled, Wissam also began experimenting with ways of cutting them and transforming them. He built his own first bottle cutting apparatus based on a DIY Youtube video, and later invented a motorized machine to cut and sand bottles. He is currently seeking to patent his design! You can even get in touch with him and send him your empty bottles or ask him to cut them for you.

Or, you might want to check out the **Green Glass Recycling Initiative Lebanon (GGRIL)** by *Ziad Abi Chaker*. This pioneering green entrepreneur organizes the collection of colored bottles, and sends them to the last glass blowing workshop in Sarafand - South Lebanon. This way, he not only contributes to reducing waste, but also helps a traditional artisanal craft (dating back to Phoenician times) remain alive in Lebanon.



1 and 2: The Artafif collection: Planters, jars, glasses and lamps. Check out more on: <https://www.facebook.com/artafif/?fref=ts>

3: The GGRIL collection: Glasses, bottles and lamps Check out more on: <https://www.facebook.com/ggrilebanon/?fref=ts>

Shared by Alexis Baghdadi

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LET'S SHARE OUR NEWS

HOW TO INSTILL GOOD HABITS INTO YOUR LIFE (AND ELIMINATE THE BAD ONES)

"Starting tomorrow, I am implementing all your recommendations in one go – you'll be amazed," beams an enthusiastic Jenny as I am handing her the customized health plan. A week earlier, I had been working closely with her to determine the reason behind her deteriorating condition. Mental fogginess, dwindling energy and digestive discomfort were the main symptoms with which she had been battling. Several hours of discussions and a comprehensive blood test later, I determined the root cause of her problem. Patience and commitment to the solution are imperative in tackling the root cause behind any health condition, and Jenny was well aware of it. Nevertheless, her mistake was one that all of us commit (especially when making New Year's resolutions.) We simply fail to consider our flawed nature in terms of handling fear that arises from taking on new challenges. And so when it comes to discarding bad habits and replacing those with good ones, humans have a discouraging record.

The Kaizen Effect

"I want you to go as slow as humanly possible in terms of implementing my recommendations," I respond to a bewildered Jenny, who was probably expecting an applause for her statement. "Choose a single recommendation; work on it daily and for several days up until you start doing it with ease. Only then should you move on to the next recommendation and so forth." This advice stems from a principle I learned a while back; one that the Japanese used to resurrect a devastated economy after their defeat in World War II. Although this principle was created by the Americans, the Japanese utilized it to their favor and with impressive results. A couple of decades later, Japan emerged as an industrial heavyweight. The principle is called Kaizen. And in simple terms, it advocates the implementation of "baby steps" towards achieving a specific objective. Descriptive quotes that come to my mind are, "We must learn to walk before we can run" and "A journey of a thousand miles must begin with the first step." So for example, if your aim is to quit smoking then stopping the habit entirely in one fell swoop is bound to fail as a strategy. And even if it does succeed, the possibility of a regression is very likely to occur on the long run. A better approach would be to reduce gradually the number of cigarettes you smoke (one less cigarette each week) until one day you are able to quit entirely. And instead of cutting your sugar intake completely (sugar is more addictive than cocaine by the way), you can start by reducing the amounts slowly. Eat half a bowl of ice cream instead of a full one and steadily decrease the portion over the coming days/weeks until you are able to eat minimal amounts. Such small steps would accumulate into a larger change eventually. This approach is very commonsensical but rarely implemented, since most of us are eager to change our lives around quickly. Kaizen as a principle works because it simply bypasses the "flight-or-fight" center in the brain or the Amygdala, according to Robert Maurer, associate clinical professor at the UCLA School of Medicine.

Overcoming the "Fear Factor"

You see humans in prehistoric times relied on this small part of the brain to survive a harsh environment. The amygdala was triggered every time danger was sensed – be it through the presence of a predator or a life-threatening change in the environment. And guess what happens when you try to impose drastic changes to your life rather quickly? Yes, you trigger the amygdala, which will in turn sabotage your attempt to stay the course. This part of your brain is designed to resist change and does not understand your intentions or goals. The fear of change is very real; any new challenge, opportunity or desire triggers a certain level of apprehension. Kaizen works as a system because the changes you implement daily are so minute and gradual that the amygdala remains silent. And your brain has enough time to accept and embrace the change that you wish to introduce into your life.

Nowadays, I still find myself reminding Jenny to take things slowly. But overall, she has been doing great. Instead of eliminating altogether the bad food choices and eating only "clean" stuff, she now tries to add one healthy food item to her diet each week. And every now and then, one bad dietary choice is either substituted with a cleaner version (coconut sugar instead of white sugar, for example) or only consumed during her once-a-week cheat day. Jenny is finally coming to the realization that success in achieving any goal needs to be built upon a solid foundation of healthy and enduring habits – erected one stone at a time!

By Richard Labaki - Published in Natural News <http://www.NaturalNews.com>



PHOTO OF THE MONTH

You sent us your submissions and you voted for your favorites. Here it is, the PHOTO OF THE MONTH:
To send us your photos, email us on contact.soilslebanon@gmail.com



Trees and changing seasons - Taanayel, Bekaa
Photo by Adel Nehme

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GET IN TOUCH, GET INVOLVED


Do you enjoy reading this newsletter?


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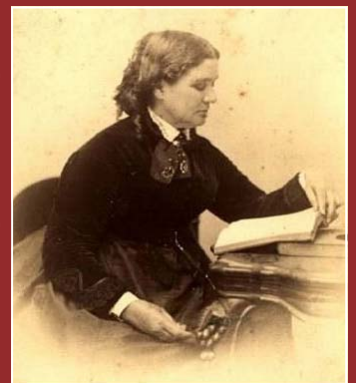
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A THOUGHT TO SHARE ...

"No one can feel more gratefully the charm of noble scenery, or the refreshment of escape into the unspoiled solitudes of nature, than the laborer at some close in-door employment."



–Lucy Larcom (1824-1893)
Idyl of Work

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