



Courses Offered Spring 2023 at The New Roots Project

Daily Life and Emergent Curriculum at New Roots:

The backbone of our New Roots curriculum lies in daily outdoor life on the Willowell land, home to the Walden Project and Community Garden, Gordon Sculpture Park, 110 acres of preserved wetland, and a variety of shelters embedded in the landscape. With our experienced and supportive teachers, our multi-aged classes are empowered to make their outdoor “classrooms,” gathering firewood and building their daily fires, while navigating the challenges of being and learning outside through all kinds of weather and seasons. This immersive program engages students in seasonal hands-on activities such as shelter building, wildcrafting, carving, games, storytelling and more. While learning to adapt creatively to the survival opportunities of being immersed in the great outdoors, our students learn to work together, to develop personal knowledge and skill sets they can take with them anywhere. Students are involved in helping to make appropriate group agreements that give them agency and responsibility, while encouraging them to accept, and even seek out, instruction from teachers or peers. Our student's curiosity and natural drive to discover are the kindling for their education. At New Roots free time and unstructured play are the catalysts for inventive (and educational) games, adventures navigating the cedar groves and beyond. Our New Roots teachers emphasize interdisciplinary learning, inclusivity, and following one’s passion in a safe environment.

Hearth and Home - All New Roots Teachers

Fire building and tending techniques will be explored and practiced throughout the days and activities at New Roots. Fire intersects with a variety of subjects, experiences, and projects from being a heat source for warmth and cooking, to fire’s role in the process of making herbal, wood and metal projects. The element of fire holds a dynamic role at the center of human communities

seen in the history of indigenous land management applied as a fire paintbrush, in human evolution informing human social structures and physiological development, and in the archetype of tending the inner fire of personal power.

Land as Home - *All New Roots Teachers*

Seasonal, experiential naturalist learning includes 1) Animal, insect, plant and tree identification: what trees are growing in our classroom? What living beings do we encounter on the land? 2) Identifying Tracks in mud and snow 3) Playing games that cultivate the application of tracking, stalking, observational and sensory intelligences 4) Adventures on the land exploring changes throughout the seasons in cedar forests, meadows, community garden, marsh land, sculpture park, and more. 5) We meet and speak in a circle to invest in the individual and collective voices and visions of our participants as we co-create a community.

Our Bodies and the Wild Land As Home - *Meghan Rigali, WEMT & Yulia Klimento*

Wilderness survival is a highly creative and resourceful wisdom that is shared with immediate rewards for the individual and the collective. While immersed in the natural world and seasons at New Roots, in this ongoing course we will learn about the rich intersection of creativity and human evolution, wilderness medicine, self care and a variety of related survival systems such as clothing, gear, heat, water, shelter, and cooking. We will learn about the principles of Leave No Trace defined by the Center for Outdoor Ethics, local plant identification for food, craft, and herbalism, learn about healthy communication, nutritional teas made from trees and plants engaging in creative projects that inform HOW we cultivate healthy relationships with ourselves and the natural world.

Imaginative Body as Home - *Meghan Rigali & Addison Tate*

This interdisciplinary course explores imagination and creativity as a human super power, body systems, and cultivation strategies or practices to harness the brilliant technology of our imaginative bodies to connect us in our daily lives. We will learn, practice and cultivate a variety of mind-body intelligences, ways of accessing Flow State, creativity, and imagination through yoga, drawing, meditation, metal working, printmaking, poetry, theatrical performance, celebrations of world cultures and causes throughout the year. We will explore the visual image as ancient yet ever relevant art of passing knowledge down through the generations and as personal expression. Our goal is to create understanding and awareness about how to live in a human body empowered by joy, imagination, self care, insight and stamina.

Seasonal Ecology - *Yulia Klimento & Addison Tate*

From the lush greens of late summer, dazzling fall colors, blanketed winter landscapes and new buds of spring, this class will explore this unique place and how it fits into the larger ecosystem it is part of. “Ecology” is the study of organisms and their relationship to each other and their environment. The land where New Roots makes its home creates a wonderful classroom at all times of the year, and we intend to make great use of the differing conditions that each season presents. We will be looking at principles in biology, chemistry and physics (evolution, cellular processes, energy of life, heat transfer, etc) as well as studying specific “strategies” for dealing with cold, food and other challenges that the environment and the seasons provide. Activities will range from sensory observation, group discussion, land stewardship projects, games, art, and writing. By understanding the intricacies of life, we can better understand how we can participate & facilitate regeneration. There will be a focus on observation of animal homes, habitat and behavior to inform the biomimicry that human strategies have developed, structures and technologies that our species has adapted to be able to thrive. Ultimately the goal is to place ourselves back into the web of life in order to remember how to be good stewards and caretakers of all our relations in the places we call home.

Vermont History - *Ian Gramling*

Throughout the year, students will create, play, and learn their way through Vermont’s unique and rich history, starting from the prehistoric people of thousands of years ago through the Abenaki, Revolutionary War, sheep farming and abolitionists, up until the 1960’s and 70’s. Kids will be able to explore local and state, and even occasionally, national history through various historical methods and basic traditional and experimental archeology. With Atlatl and metal detector in hand, long lost stories of this land will come back to life.

Ninja Training Academy - *Ian Gramling*

The Ninja training course class series is designed to give students a well rounded look at the life of one 16th century Japan’s most feared figures, the *Shinobi*, or Ninja. Training will prepare the mind and body for the rigors of being a Ninja and carrying out missions. The teachings and techniques from historic Ninja treatises of the turbulent 16th century and later will be adapted for modern times, and used as the basis for a series of exercises and lessons covering fitness, nutrition, espionage, and martial arts, culminating in a final mission to put their skills to the test.

World Indigenous Cultures - *Ian Gramling & Meghan Rigali*

In this class we will explore different indigenous people both in the United States and around the world. Students will learn about their cultures through hands-on activities and cultivate a sense of respect among all people.

Old Stories, Old Songs - *All Teachers*

Wherever campfires cackle stories are told and songs are sung. In their classroom in the woods New Roots Students will get to explore the age old traditions of storytelling and singing. They will learn about the world's diverse landscapes and cultures through hearing (and maybe telling) ancient stories. And they will get to enjoy the pleasure of lifting their voices up to the pine trees in song!

Carving, Charcoal-Burning, and Journaling - *All Teachers*

In this course, students will delve into the organic arts! They will practice carving skills to craft different writing and art utensils and make inks from various natural pigments, including charcoal. Our focus will be experiential learning as students deepen their connection with the more-than-human world through hands-on projects; however, they will also have the opportunity to journal and reflect upon these experiences using the tools they've made.