

Sustaining All Life

Introductory Classes and Support Groups



INTRODUCTORY CLASSES

Sustaining All Life and United to End Racism are offering a series of **introductory classes on Re-evaluation Counseling** (see reverse)—the theory and practice that inform our work. The classes will take place September 10 - 14 at the San Francisco City College downtown campus, at 3:00 p.m. (except Tuesday when they will be near La Raza Park and Friday when they will be at 1 pm at SF City College downtown).

Participants will learn our theory about the nature of human beings: our inherent intelligence, goodness, and cooperative, caring, and enthusiastic nature; the negative feelings and rigid behaviors we develop as a result of early hurts and societal oppressions; and our natural ability to heal from hurtful experiences using the process of emotional release.

Participants will also be paired together to listen to each other in equal turns. One person listens with respectful, non-judgmental attention while the other talks about the topic of their choice. Then the two switch roles. In the safety and confidentiality of these short “sessions,” people can access both past hurts and current upsets, including experiences of oppression and environmental injustice; and the burnout, discouragement, and stress sometimes felt in working against climate change.

People will be encouraged to appreciate themselves, take pride in their accomplishments, and set goals for themselves and for the “big picture.” Classes will be taught by an experienced international Re-evaluation Counseling leader.

Those who gain mastery of the tools can apply them in their daily lives and in their activist work. The overall goal of Re-evaluation Counseling is to fully recover our think-

ing so that we can act more intelligently on the challenges that face us.

There are people practicing Re-evaluation Counseling in most states of the United States and in ninety-two other countries. So if participants want to join an RC class and Community near to where they live, they will likely be able to contact a Re-evaluation Counseling leader there.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Sustaining All Life and United to End Racism are also holding **daily support groups** during the week of the Global Climate Action Summit. These groups will give people the opportunity to listen to each other about their lives, their work on climate change, and their experiences this week. These groups will happen immediately after each of our scheduled events at San Francisco City College, downtown campus, and you are invited to attend at any time.

Coming together and sharing in a group led by an experienced support-group leader can create the safety needed to rid ourselves of the stresses and pressures we experience in organizing and as members of oppressed groups. It can help ease the worry and discouragement we sometimes feel as climate activists. It can help us be more effective in our work to end injustice and the destruction of the environment.

The support groups will be led by experienced international leaders in Sustaining All Life and United to End Racism. Participants will have equal time to be listened to respectfully as they share their successes and challenges while appreciating themselves and their efforts. They will learn skills that they can use in their home communities to help themselves and others recover from oppression and stress. Individuals may attend one time or as often as they wish.



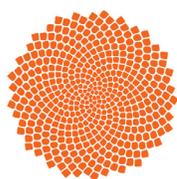
The Work of Sustaining All Life and United to End Racism

It is possible to limit the effects of human-caused climate change and restore the environment—and some big changes are needed if this is to happen. *Sustaining All Life* and *United to End Racism** believe the environmental crisis cannot be resolved without ending racism, genocide toward Indigenous peoples, classism, sexism, and other oppressions. The impact of environmental destruction and climate change falls most heavily on people targeted by these particular oppressions. Making the changes needed will require a massive movement, spanning the globe, of people of every background fighting the effects of both climate change and racism.

In *Sustaining All Life* and *United to End Racism* we believe that the barriers to building a sufficiently large and powerful movement include (1) longstanding divisions (usually caused by oppression, and especially racism and classism) between nations and between groups of people within nations, (2) widespread feelings of discouragement and powerlessness among the populations of all countries, (3) denial of or failure to engage with the environmental crisis, and (4) difficulties in effectively addressing the connections between the environmental crisis and the failures of capitalism. *Sustaining All Life* and *United to End Racism* work to address these issues and others.

The role of oppression

Our societies are based on exploitation and oppression demanding growth and profit with little regard for the effects on people, other life forms, or the Earth. Oppressions (such as racism, classism, sexism, and the oppression of young people) inflict tremendous injustices, limit access to resources, and damage the lives of billions of people. Once targeted by oppression, we are pulled to act out on others the hurts that we have experienced. Much of the emotional damage done to humans is the result of this passing on of hurt. Though humans are vulnerable to acting out oppression, oppressive behavior is not inherent, but arises only when a human has been hurt emotionally. Oppressive societies manipulate this vulnerability to establish and maintain economic exploitation.



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The importance of healing personal damage

The emotional harm done to us in our societies by oppression interferes with our ability to think clearly and sets groups of people against each other. This makes it difficult for us to think about and respond effectively to the environmental crisis. People would not cooperate with a society that exploits people and damages the environment if they had not first been hurt.

Healing from the hurts that help to hold oppression in place and lead to other damaging behavior is not quick or easy work. Many of us resist it or we may have survived by numbing ourselves to the damage we carry and by assuming that we will never be free of it.

In *Sustaining All Life* and *United to End Racism* we have learned that it is possible to free ourselves from these hurts. We can heal from hurtful experiences if someone listens to us attentively and allows and encourages us to release the grief, fear, and other painful emotions. This happens by means of our natural healing processes—talking, crying, trembling, expressing anger, and laughing. By releasing distressed feelings in a supportive network, we can stay united, hopeful, thoughtful, joyful, and committed. This in turn strengthens us in building our movements to stop the effects of climate change and racism.

* *Sustaining All Life* (SAL) is an international grassroots organization working to end climate change within the context of ending all divisions among people. *United to End Racism* (UER) is a group of people of all ages and backgrounds, in many different countries, who are dedicated to eliminating racism in the world and supporting the efforts of all other groups with this goal. UER and SAL are projects of and use the tools of Re-evaluation Counseling. Re-evaluation Counseling (RC) is a well-defined theory and practice that helps people of all ages and backgrounds exchange effective help with each other in order to free themselves from the emotional scars of oppression and other hurts. By taking turns listening to each other and encouraging emotional release, people can heal old hurts and become better able to think, to speak out, and to organize and lead others in building a world in which human beings and other life forms are valued and the environment is restored and preserved.

For more information, see:
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