

EATING THE CANAL PROGRAMME

SESSION 1:

Note from the artist:

I have been on too many foraging walks where it feels like I might have well just been reading a guidebook aloud to myself. And I'm not sure that's the best way for information to lodge in the memory. Instead these workshops will create more personal interactions with the landscape for everyone involved. And out of those interactions we will gather what we think is important as a group to share further amongst friends and the wider community, more deeply embedding the meaning of the plants to the place.

~ Introduction

Part 1:

~ Learning to see

~ Knowing your plant

To the un-accustomed eye, a canal bank, as with any verge, is just a monochrome of green. But when you take the time to sit with the expanse, the details slowly reveal themselves to you.

The above are two exercises in simply being with ~ and therefore learning to see/know better ~ the canal, lifting the green veil, establishing instincts and feelings for nature.

Tea break

Part 2:

~ Community wisdom

Sharing stories and previous experiences with plants

~ Foraging walk

Guided by the artist, learning medicinal and edible plants, already weaving in some of the discoveries from the previous exercises

Part 3:

~ Snacks from the canal

Tasters of wild ingredients used in cooking (foraged from clean sources).

~ Wild spice packs

Each participant will receive a package of wild foraged herbs and spices to use as they like in their own cooking at home

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SESSION 2:

“Modern maps hold no memory of what the land was before. Few of us have thought to ask what truths a map may be concealing, or have paused to consider that maps do not tell us where we are from or who we are. Many of us do not know the stories of the land in the places where we live; we have not thought to look for the topography of a myth in the surrounding rivers and hills. Perhaps this is because we have forgotten how to listen to the land around us.”

~ Jim Enote, a traditional Zuni farmer

~ Introduction

Sharing anything that came up since the last session

Part 1:

~ Foraging walk

Down the mile straight, compare the two sites, identify any new plants, discuss edibility and how it might be effected by environmental factors

~ Canal tea ceremony

Brews from infusions of canal based herbs (foraged from clean sources)

Part 2:

~ Collating our observations

~ Discuss what is important to share, and how

Initial ideas: signage, maps, podcasts

Tea break

Part 3:

~ Mapping

Draw out a big map together. People can do drawings of the plants, or we can cut out things from the observation sheet and stick them on.

~ Make plans for final celebration/ activation

There will be the option to get together for a thrid time, an invite friends and family to celebrate what we create and the plants along the canal stretch

