

# SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE AND ECOVILLAGES AS MEDIATION TOOLS FOR DEGROWTH PROCESS

Mildred GUSTACK DELAMBRE ( [mildred.core@gmail.com](mailto:mildred.core@gmail.com) )

FOUR ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF AN ECOVILLAGE BY ROBERT GILMAN (1991):

1. Human-scale, **full-featured settlement** (food, leisure, social life, education, business, residence)
2. **Human** activities are harmlessly **integrated** into the **natural** world
3. Supportive of **healthy** human **development**
4. Continuity - Durability : It can be successfully continued into the **indefinite future**

CORE/ETHICS PRINCIPLES OF PERMACULTURE

- EARTHCARE: recognize Man **as a part** of Earth, **not apart** from it.  
 **husband soil, forests and water.**
- PEOPLECARE: support and help each other to develop **healthy societies.**  
 **Look after self, kin and community**
- FAIR SHARE: ensure that Earth's **limited resources** are used **equitably** and **wisely.**  
 **Set limits to consumption and production; redistribute surplus.**

## The Permaculture 'Flower'



Illustration 1: 1st Permaculture French Meeting (Sambourg 21-23 August 2009)

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE CONCEPT BY LAVE & WENGER (1991)

- A group of people who share an interest, a craft, and/or a profession
- **Information** and **experiences** process : members **learn from each other**
- Opportunity : **develop themselves** personally and professionally.

1. Naturally evolved group : due to the member's common interest
2. Specifically created group : goal of **gaining knowledge** related to their field

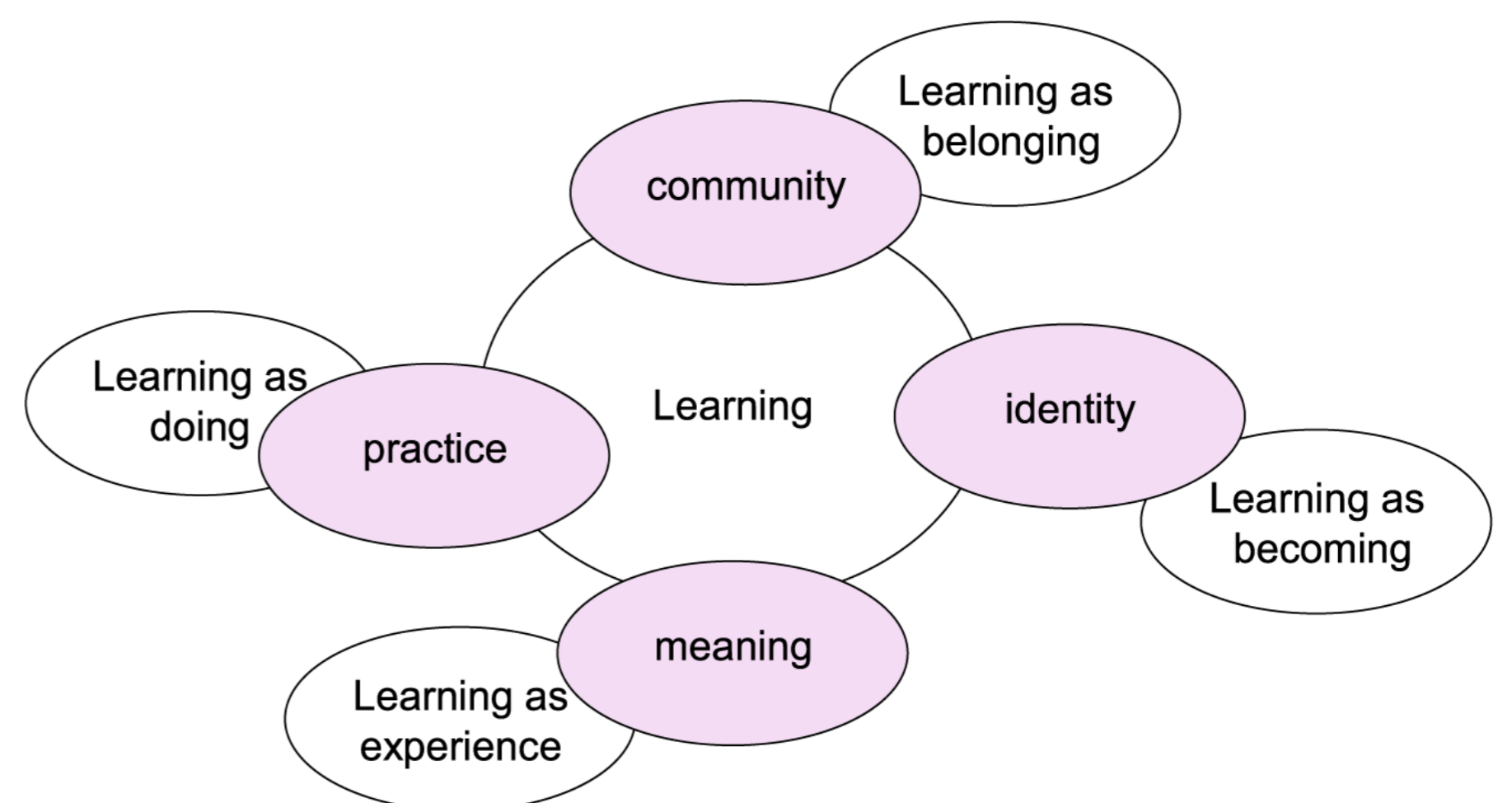
COMPONENTS OF SOCIAL LEARNING BY WENGER (1998)

**MEANING:** Ability to experience the world as **meaningful**

**PRACTICE:** Shared historical and social **resources** frameworks and perspectives that sustain mutual engagement in action

**IDENTITY:** how learning changes who we are

**COMMUNITY:** Social configuration in which our enterprise is defined and our participation is recognized as competence



Source: Wenger (1998)

Illustration 2: Components of Social Learning

RISKS, FAILURE REASONS AND CHALLENGES:

1. Unclear or **unauthentic** objectives
2. Lack of **coordination** and **planning** are big causes of failure
3. Communities Instrumentation leads to **impoverishment of exchanges**
4. Refusal of **critics** and reject of "external" ideas
5. Poor and **superficial shares** and discussion brings **dissatisfaction** to the participants
6. The **competition** between individuals in certain occupations can play a negative role

CONCLUSION

- ✓ ACTIVE NETWORK
- ✓ LINK-BUILDER CHARACTERISTICS
- ✓ MEDIATION AND SOCIAL LEARNING ZONE
- ✓ EXERCISING AUTONOMY AND SELF-MANAGING

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