

Principles of Sustainable Development Leadership

(Thomas C. Esakin: 11 November 2008; revised January and September 2012)

A “Sustainability Leader”:

- **Is grounded in an inherent respect for all;**
- **Has an awareness that learning about the collective whole through individual parts** is an essential part of “Leading for Sustainability”;
- **Recognises that each and every person, no matter their station in life, has valuable knowledge to share** related to the advancement of Sustainable Development;
- **Understands that every human being is both a student and a teacher of life,** thus a “Sustainability Leader” does not accept any false separation between teacher & student;
- **Identifies each and every person as a leader in their own right,** an affirmation which recognises that all of humanity can - even must - contribute to the advancement of Sustainable Development on Earth;
- **Is an active listener,** for they intuitively know that they can learn more by listening to others than they can ever learn through hearing their own voice;
- **Actively seeks or facilitates other peoples’ participation in discussions on Sustainable Development/Sustainability,** for they understand that the more people who join together in learning, then the more humans can, both individually and collectively, be active learners for Sustainable Development;
- **Considers all ideas to have value, and so listens to and acknowledges all ideas as such, and does so while also accepting ideas in reference to and by building on previous knowledge;** and
- **Realises ideas of right and wrong as constructs of thought,** which may often have personal or cultural value but may not have universal meaning or applicability.