

THE SEVEN FIELDS OF PRACTICE

Ruskin Mill Trust’s ‘Practical Skills Therapeutic Education’ (PSTE) works with Seven Fields of Practice to provide our students with a truly holistic and integrative education. Whilst being distinct, the Fields of Practice form an educational continuum that assists in the structuring of the student journey. So as to best serve our students, the Seven Fields of Practice are subject to research up to Master’s and PhD level and inform our staff training.

Practical Skills Therapeutic Education and the underpinning Seven Fields of Practice have been developed and inspired by the work of John Ruskin (1819-1846), William Morris (1834-1896), and Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925). The Seven Fields of Practice are 1) Spirit of Place, 2) Practical Skills, 3) Biodynamic Ecology, 4) Therapeutic Education, 5) Holistic Support and Care, 6) Holistic Medicine, 7) Transformative Leadership and Management.

FIELD 1 SPIRIT OF PLACE (GENIUS LOCI)

Spirit of Place acknowledges and works with the heritage and uniqueness of locality. In each of our educational provisions the landscape, including its geology, flora and fauna, and history of human activity are worked with holistically to develop our situated student curriculums. Our provisions are consciously prepared educational environments that enable students to build positive relationships with their surroundings. Working with Genius Loci means that students and staff awaken to and connect purposefully with their immediate environment.

FIELD 2 PRACTICAL SKILLS

The field of Practical Skills, which is founded on craft and land-based activities, is designed to support students’ cognitive, emotional and physical development, and embeds functional skills. With Practical Skills activities students engage in sourcing material from the locality, forming it with their own hands and making an item of service for others. In this way the student reconnects to the earth, themselves and their community. Through Practical Skills students develop the capacity to think creatively, solve problems, make enquiries, follow instruction and work independently.

FIELD 3 BIODYNAMIC ECOLOGY

The field of Biodynamic Ecology has much in common with organic agriculture. However, Biodynamic Ecology also recognises that each farm and garden is an integrated and interdependent dynamic organism that interplays with wider, more subtle, cosmic influences. Biodynamic Ecology adopts an ethical approach to the ecological and social environment, and students engage with a seed-to-table curriculum to celebrate nature’s rhythms through the seasons. Students are encouraged to eat healthily and engage with food and nutrition in the farm and garden, and at the table.

FIELD 4 THERAPEUTIC EDUCATION

The journey of the students at Ruskin Mill Trust places an emphasis on facilitating wholeness where there is fragmentation, and movement where there is stagnation. The transformative process is underpinned by the concept of phasic human development and applied sensory integration. The field of Therapeutic Education works with the progressive stages of human development to assist our students to engage with age-appropriate activities, and re-step missed opportunities in their development.



Ruskin Mill Trust works with Seven Fields of Practice



Celebrating achievement through practical skills

FIELD 5 HOLISTIC SUPPORT AND CARE

The field of Holistic Support and Care stands behind the 24-hour educational curriculum and, in particular, the life of students in their residential provision. It is here that students actively engage in home-making and the development of basic living skills. The 24-hour curriculum is based on the idea that family life and the challenge of semi-independently living is as much a learning experience (and support for the development of healthy life processes) as the activity of developing Practical Skills.

FIELD 6 HOLISTIC MEDICINE

Ruskin Mill Trust offers a range of holistic therapies to support students' health and wellbeing. The rationale for working with the field of Holistic Medicine is again in accordance with the whole human being approach. Holistic medicine is a field of specialism and is promoted through collaboration between practitioners, support staff, doctors and nurses.

FIELD 7 TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Ruskin Mill Trust recognises that our students are on a pathway to self-leadership. As a holistic organisation we acknowledge and appreciate multiple intelligences such as emotional and aesthetic intelligence, and situational awareness. To assist in the student journey towards 'self-generated conscious action' our staff are required to consciously role model positive relationships with other human beings as well as their environment. This role modelling, and our educational approach as a whole, contributes to our vision that each individual has the potential to shape their own future through experiencing meaningful relationships with universe, earth and people.

“ Fine art is that in which the head, the heart and the hand of man go together.

John Ruskin



Working with the principles of focus, grasp and step



Engaging in purposeful activities