

The Found World: a learning adventure at Eden

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The Eden Project field trip as a 'living educational laboratory'

Complex and contested topics: Sustainability, ecological crisis, SD , project success

Participatory pedagogy : students “as full equal partners and co-researchers” (Fals-Borda, 1995, p. 1; also P Freire and L Evans)

To explore and **experiment together** (students, lecturers and hosts) with:
ecological ethics and humane understanding of *limits*/green citizenship

biological, cultural and linguistic diversity

complexity, apprehension/anxiety

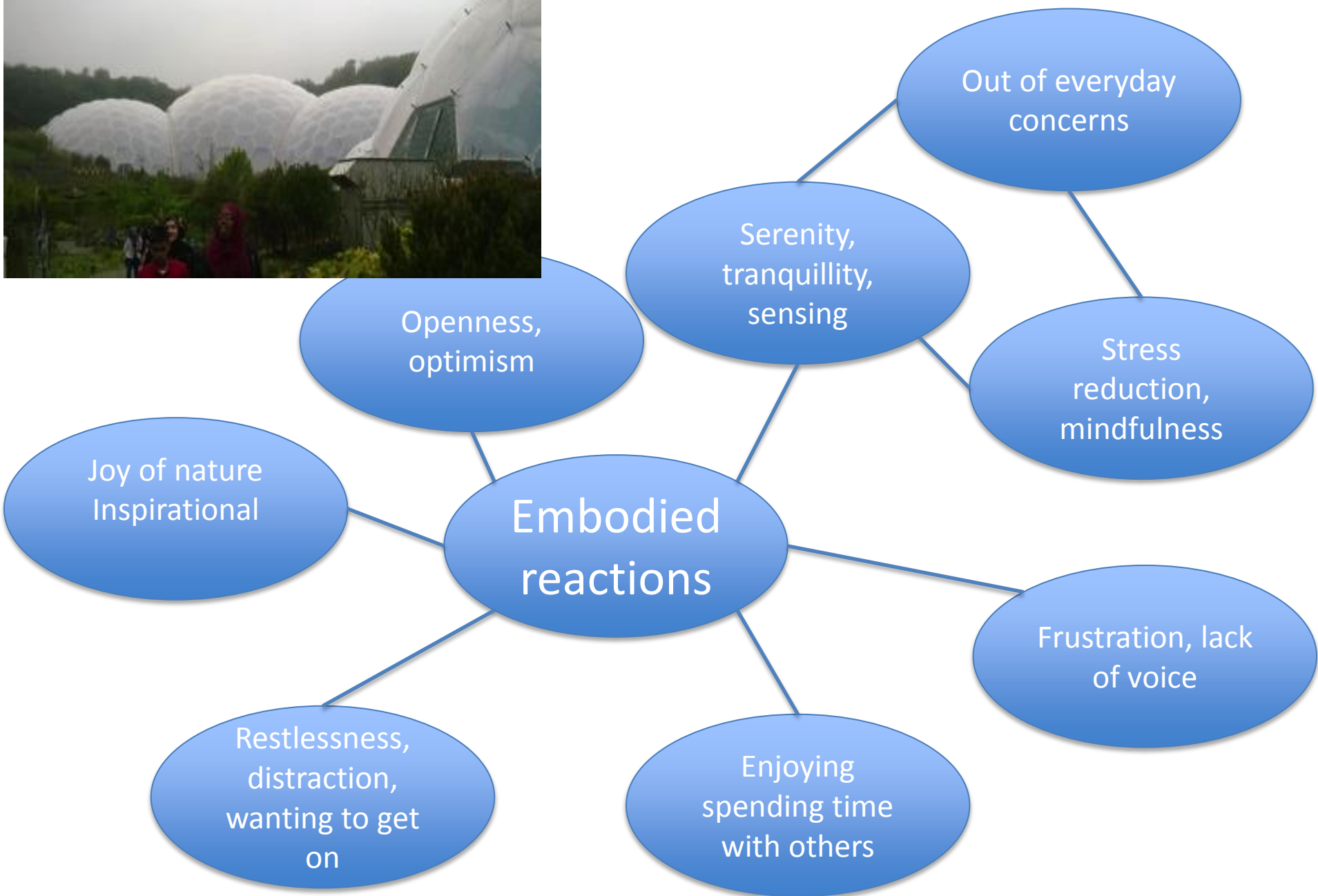
Creating space for **radical and critical dialogue** between:

- Moral, spiritual and political perspectives
- Pragmatic engagement with technological and behavioural solutions

An emergent process of **conscientisation** (Freire, 1970): knowing and learning for action

The process of collective visioning

- Making sense of the experience as a collective story
- Collective field notes of lived experience
- Post trip reflections prompted by four questions
- Open coding
- Meet to reflect on emerging themes
- Collaborative writing, enabling dissenting voices



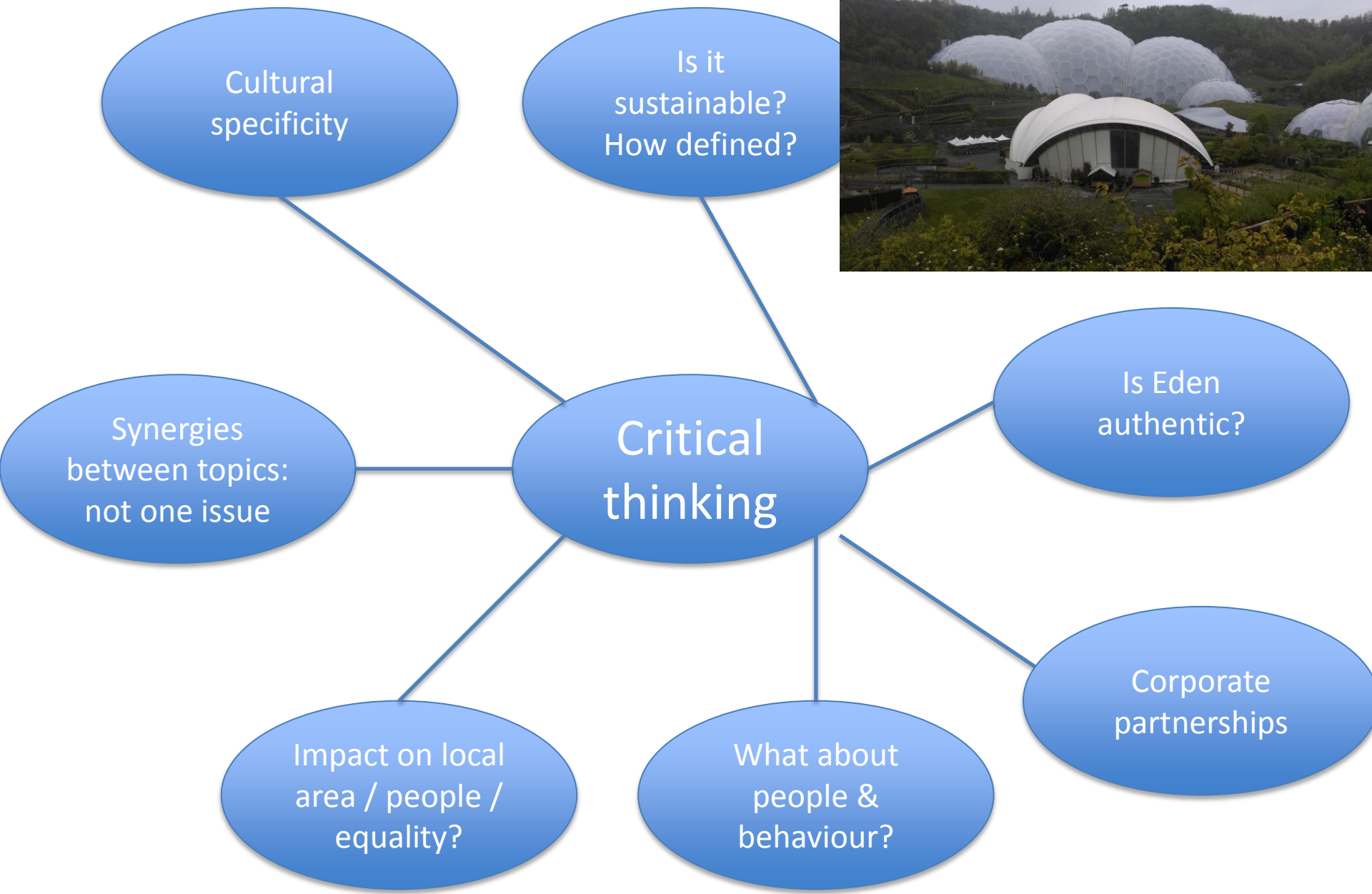




Figure 1: "Pit to paradise".
Official Eden Project website

Conscientization/Critical Consciousness

Learning for action as an adventure, a participatory, “reflective process that brings to consciousness knowledge one may have acted on but not fully realized or elaborated, making possible future, purposeful action” (Lyons, 2002, p. 96)

- it is relational and so is practical action
- it is ‘painful’ , a bodily felt sense of anxiety, ‘letting go’ of assumptions to face the emergence of new possibilities and unpredictability
- inseparable from epistemological anxiety – multiple truths
- involves situational ethics

Conscientization/Critical Consciousness (eco-virtue ethics)

Compassion, solidarity, multi-centrism, value-based learning, teaching by example, and 'cunning wisdom' (*'combining toughness and tenderness'* Curry, 2011, p181, passion and principle) are needed for practical action amid tensions:

- the cross-cultural language of sustainability
- 'New environmentalism' Ideology?
- Community development
- Corporate collaboration
- the corrupting influence of money on the democratic process and public policy
- Pragmatic optimism: A mystical formula of commercial and social enterprise

Our students are both impressed and sceptical, cutting through the rhetoric of sustainability to conclude that at core, the Eden brand is “selling us a connection to nature”. But they are impressed by Eden’s successful dialogue with big corporations like McDonalds and BP, believing that such pragmatism is imperative if we are to realise a sustainable future.

