

Environmental Education for a New Era of Constructive Thinking

By Yvette Taylor 2025



Lawrence Anthony

EARTH ORGANIZATION

BECAUSE NONE SURVIVE ALONE

The Lawrence Anthony Earth Organization™ (Earth Org) was established in 2004 by world-renowned conservationist Dr. Lawrence Anthony and humanitarian, Barbara Wiseman. Lawrence's work is well documented in his three bestselling books: Babylon's Ark, The Elephant Whisperer and The Last Rhino's.

Earth Org is an internationally renowned non-profit that, through the implementation of science-based solutions and character-building education, works to resolve environmental conflict and enhance the health of the planet for the benefit of all life.

Who We Are



Mission Statement

The Earth Org is an independent, non-profit group which seeks to reverse the decline of the plant and animal kingdoms and our environment through education and action.

Who We Are

- We have hosted 1200 grade 7 learners (aged 12-13) from 20 underprivileged schools on a three-day environmental school camp in the Umkomaas valley. The camp is life changing for these young people as it instils a sense of pride, dignity and self-worth.
- We trained 125 unemployed woman and youth from the KwaXimba area in partnership with the Southern African Wildlife College. Accredited courses on nature conservation and hospitality.
- Recycling education in 20 schools in partnership with the South Durban Basin ABM.



Track Record

- We participated in the Sustainability Expo for 8 years, attended by approximately 15,000 youth, annually.
- Hosted 900 learners at the Climate Change Response Exhibition (CCR Expo COP 17) expo in Durban.
- Participated in the Happy Hearth Festival at the Pietermaritzburg Botanic Gardens for the last 10 years. This 2-day event is attended by over 1,600 learners, annually.
- As a member of Project Rhino, we have been part of the facilitation team for three World Youth Wildlife Summits, which hosts 160 learners from all over the world.



Track Record

- We aim to build character, personal integrity, and a better understanding of the importance of a balanced give and take in every aspect of life, from one's relationship with one's parents, teachers, school and the natural world.
- We undercut our messaging – we were educating on the environment but many people have pressing life problems, so we changed focus.



What Did Experience Teach Us?

- The modern world has increasingly driven a wedge between us and nature.
- To create awareness and change the way people think, so that nature and caring for the environment moves higher on the list of life's priorities.
- Our own survival is interwoven with, and interdependent upon, the health and survival of those life forms and things around us.



What Did Experience Teach Us?

- The aim is to get the learner to look at the affect that they have in the world, and the potential they have to increase their own positive impact.
- By getting them to understand how they can improve their own life through more constructive decision making and actions they realize that they have a growing sphere of impact.



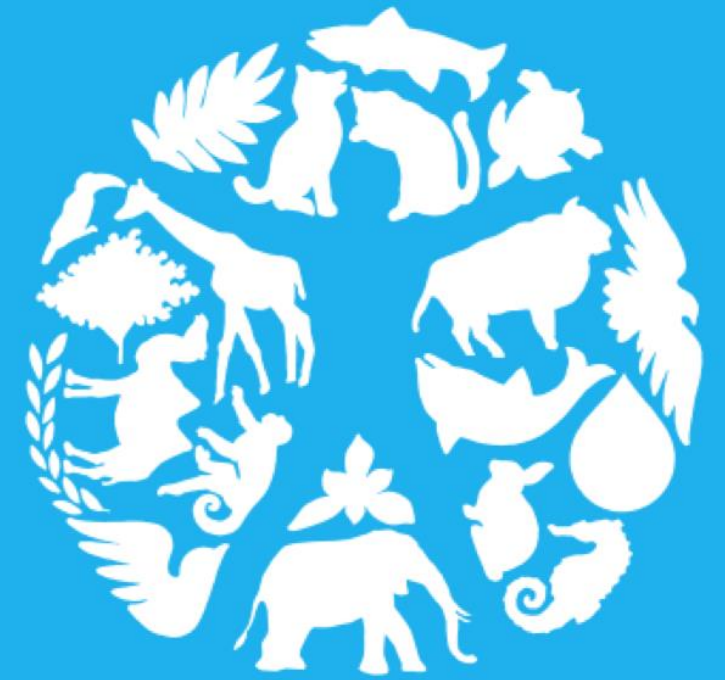
What Did Experience Teach Us?

The late Dr. Lawrence Anthony coined a new term to describe how all life forms, animals and plants, whether they are aware of what they are doing or not, live longer, and are healthier and stronger when they work to enhance the life forms and things around them that they depend on or are affected by in some way. That term is Cooperative Ecology™.

Cooperative = means to work together towards the same goal.

Ecology = is the science of how living things survive through their relationship with other living things and the rest of the world.

Cooperative Ecology™ (CoEco™) = when all the parts of an ecosystem work well together to make things better for everyone and everything in that ecosystem.



CoEco[™]
Cooperative Ecology

Defining Cooperative Ecology

We built awareness out from self. The learner looks at how they can be proactive and create a better world for themselves.

They learn how to improve their relationships with their family, their school, their local community, and the natural world.

The program starts with simple but precise exercises that get students to look at the things family members do for each other to make their lives happier, healthier, and safer.



A New Focus

The concept is broken down into four steps:

- 1) Make a list of everything you can think of that your mom (or other main caregiver) does for you that makes your life better, happier, or safer.
- 2) Now make a list of everything you can think of that you do for your mom (or main caregiver) that makes her life better, happier, or safer.
- 3) Now think of something you can do for your mom that will make her life better, happier, or safer and go do it.
- 4) Now observe if your own life got better in any way as a result of doing that for your mom.

Then we do these same four steps on their Dad, or another adult family member. Then on their siblings. Then on their teacher. School. A community business. A garden or local place in nature.

A New Focus



With this foundational understanding of how they can improve their own life through more constructive decision making and actions, we then take them to the next level by having them go out into nature and observe how the entire world operates on this principle.

Through this activity, students gain a far better understanding of how the world works through balanced exchange, and they begin to take more actions to improve conditions around them and to safeguard and improve the natural world.

Reconnecting with Nature



Helping You Helps Me!

This book takes young people between 9 – 12 (depending on literacy levels) through a series of exercises, each aimed at getting them to look at the effect that they have on the world, and the ability they have to increase their own positive impact.

The purpose of this educational program is to bring about, in society, a new era of constructive thinking.

Young Learners



The program has been piloted in the Western Cape, Cato Ridge, Verulam and in the USA.



Program Implementation

WHAT DO THE LEARNERS SAY?

"After going through this book, I changed my life, now I respect my mother's reputation and her presence in this world. My mother has seen that I am a changed person she even respects my opinions and my values." L Ngcobo.

"Because I always do something for my mother or and family, animals, environment and others. I always clean the environment and my body also my home." A Ngcobo.

"The important lesson I learned do not harm animals live in the clean environment." M Mshengu.

"I gain too much things like how to take care of the nature and animals." B Phetha

Educator, "Leaners showed changes in them with regards to helping others, you actually start helping yourself. Also how the world is so connected and that somehow we can either impact the world in a positive or negative way by our choices. That by starting with small things that surround you, can make a world of difference. Thus they received better awareness about how interconnected we are and by destroying the environment in Africa it could totally impact another part of the world."



Pilot Results

- Learners who fully understand how they fit into the natural world and the effect that their decisions have on it.
- Learners who are equipped to make decisions which have a positive impact on their family and, community as well as the environment.
- An understanding of balanced exchange, “give and take”, with their family, community and the natural world.
- An understanding of key environmental principles and how they can be part of changing things for the better.



Outcomes

Let's teach children about the interconnectedness of all life so that we can bring the world back into balance.