

## **Radical Simplicity – Radical Spirituality**

### **A weekend retreat with Jim Merkel, author of *Radical Simplicity***

Imagine you are first in line at a potluck buffet. The spread includes not just food and water, but all the materials needed for shelter, clothing, healthcare, and education. How do you know how much to take? How much is enough to leave for your neighbors behind you -- not just the six and a half billion people, but the wildlife, and the as-yet-unborn?

In the face of climate change and wars coupled with a stressful daily grind, many people feel the need to transition their own lifestyles to align with their spiritual values and transform our unsustainable culture. This workshop will engage your heart and mind in taking the next steps.

Since the release of *Radical Simplicity* in 2003, Jim's book has been used in dozens of college classes, translated into Spanish, inspired a video titled *Radically simple* and has been assigned first-year reading at Longwood University. Now in its third printing, its content is ever-more relevant in the face of global insecurities.

### **Who Should Take this Course?**

Do you seek a life of purpose, service and personal sustainability? Are you shaken by the current economic and ecological climate? Do you feel chronically stressed? Do you hunger to contribute to humanity's most pressing challenges? Do you feel excited about the possibilities of increased freedom and wholesome low-impact living?

The all-too-powerful consumeristic dream hasn't delivered the security and happiness it promised. Even the most dedicated 'alternativo' might find a globally sustainable lifestyle illusive and feel alone in working toward change. This retreat will engage you in the art, science and practice of deeply sustainable and equitable living.

### **Course Details:**

The weekend begins by examining the characteristics of a sustainable society and our personal spiritual foundations. We will acknowledge progress and discuss what must be changed. The steps of simplicity saints will be discussed and shared alongside saintly steps by those in attendance. We will introduce tools for sustainable design such as ecological footprinting, permaculture and Biomimicry. Participants will explore changes in their personal lives that will have significant benefits for themselves, their families and the Earth.

This course will assist you in:

1. Understanding how simplicity and sustainability lead to long-term peace and security and healthy culture and ecology.
2. Saving money and time.
3. Establishing a personal sustainability goal.

4. Applying ecological footprinting and *Your Money or Your Life* to assess your progress.
5. Aligning actions with your spiritual truth.
6. Learning how locavore living and permaculture build resilience and decrease vulnerability to ‘the economy’ and globalization.

### **Course Delivery:**

This course aims to balance the practical with the spiritual, information with experience, doing with being. There will be time to make friends and build community, time to be in nature, as well as time to learn through lectures, slide shows and from other participants. Participants are encouraged to read *Radical Simplicity – small footprints on a finite Earth*, prior to the course.

### **Course Leader Information:**

**Jim Merkel** is an American Author, volunteer, and engineer that moved from involvement in the military industry to pioneering in simplicity. His book, *Radical simplicity: small footprints on a finite Earth* offers a path to deeply sustainable way of living respectful of all life. His recent work helped Dartmouth College earn high grades on the Sustainability Report Card issued by the Sustainable Endowments Institute. Jim founded the Global Living Project and currently writes, lectures and consults with campuses and municipalities on sustainability initiatives. His loves include gathering wild edibles, being in the wilds, playing bass and digging potatoes.  
[www.radicalsimplicity.org](http://www.radicalsimplicity.org)

“Jim Merkel offers a special mix of practicality and idealism: a workable mix. I defy you to read this book [Radical Simplicity] and not come away thinking of ways your life might change for the better.”

Bill McKibben, author of *The End of Nature*

“Jim Merkel has written the most persuasive argument I have yet seen for all of us to radically change the way we live day-to-day. Radical Simplicity joins the evidence of science to a fertile imagination. This is a profoundly important book.”

Howard Zinn, author of *A People's History of the United States*