

A Neighborhood Eco-Center

Lifehouse is a neighborhood Eco-Center whose purpose is to assist people living in your neighborhood conduct their daily affairs in accordance with their concern about the environmental crisis. While it is true that not every problem can be solved by changing our daily activities, much can be done through individual action within our homes and community. The society we want and need can begin to take shape by becoming involved with our neighbors now.

A lifehouse can be a public focal point for such activities. It could have as much information as can be easily gathered on every issue that has to do with living a lifestyle that is in harmony with ecological realities. In most cases lifehouses will be in someone's home, but it could also be in a garage, a store, or in an office. A lifehouse would have such things as reference material (i.e., information on propane, cans, recycling, etc.), a shared library, newsletters, appropriate magazines, papers and journals, bulletin boards, petitions, lists of organizations, and announcements of all upcoming meetings, events and hearings. Either there or at another location would be storage facilities for newspapers, cans, glass, etc., and a composting area, communal tool shed, and "free" store. Hopefully fences will begin to come down; garden space and labor would be shared; trailers, boats and vehicles could be shared. neighbors could count on emergency assistance; shopping could be done communally: fruit trees put in. Canning parties, taking up concrete, construction of arbors, and weather-proof bus shelters, purchase or lease of a large garden plot outside town, building of a tot lot, petitioning city officials to recognize lifehouses and their environs as a unit and reshape vehicular access and through traffic accordingly--these and many more projects could be dictated or provided by local needs, resources and talents.

Getting it started: Talk to your neighbors about the ideas listed here. Most likely, several people within a few doors of your house would like to help you start such a neighborhood center. An interesting point to keep in mind is that all those various officials who we feel are not acting in our best interests live in a neighborhood somewhere! I know of no better way to bring home the positive nature of our prospective future than transformation of our dwelling places from high-density, private retreats to sources of inspiration and guidance as we collectively face the many faceted environmental crises.

Just stamp or write your name, address, and telephone number on the back of these pamphlets and hand them out. The nearest Ecology Action group and/or other group concerned with these issues can supply you with the needed information. Ecology Action will publish a Lifehouse Bulletin, beginning in May (after our Survival Walk). Phone us at 843-1820 or write to P.O. Box 9334, Berkeley, Calif. 94709. All of us at Ecology Action want to know of your success and temporary disappointments in helping us better facilitate the requisite cultural transformation. The bulletin will be a sharing of projects that have been successful and a listing of available leaflets, pamphlets, briefs and films. We hope to reduce the consumption of paper by having neighbors share single copies through the lifehouse bulletin board and the library.

The Ecology Action Educational Institute will concern itself primarily with developing techniques that can be applied through the lifehouse concept. Hopefully this will bring into existence a life style that balances our needs and aspirations to the characteristics and limitations of our life support system.

LOAF STYLES

NON-RIISING QUICK BREAD - 1 loaf - a hard bread, good for teeth and gums, too

3 C. flour - any combination, using at least 1 C. whole wheat flour; other flours are rye, soy, gluten, buckwheat, brown rice

1/2 tsp salt

1 1/2-2 C. water

Optional: raisins, nuts, cornmeal, cooked rice or oatmeal; etc, can be added for variety

Form into round loaf and bake at 350 for 1 1/2 hr. on cookie sheet (can be started in a cold oven).

RAISED HONEY-WHOLE WHEAT BREAD - 2 loaves

1 C. milk 1 1/2 C. warm water

1/4 C. (1/2 stick) butter or margarine 2 pkg. or 2 Tb. yeast

3/4 C. honey 2 C. sifted flour (any combination)

1 Tb. salt 5 1/2 C. unsifted whole wheat flour

Heat milk in small saucepan until bubbles form around edge. Remove from heat. Add butter. Stir till melted, then add honey and salt. Cool to lukewarm. In a large mixing bowl sprinkle yeast over warm water; stir till dissolved. Pour in milk mixture. Add all of sifted flour and half of the whole wheat. Beat with wooden spoon till smooth. Gradually add remaining flour; mix in last of flour by hand till dough leaves sides of bowl.

Turn dough out on lightly floured board; cover with bowl; let rest 10 min. Knead (wedge) until smooth, about 10 min. Place dough in lightly greased bowl; cover with damp cloth and dry towel. Set in a warm place (about 85) free from drafts (or cover with a blanket or sleeping bag). Let rise till double in bulk, about 1 1/4 hr. To test, poke fingers into dough; it will leave a dent when doubled. Punch dough. Turn out onto lightly floured board; divide in half. Cover with towel; let rest 10 min.

Shape into loaves. Place seam side down in greased loaf pans or on cookie sheet. Cover with damp cloth and let rise in warm place till double in bulk or until dough has reached edge of pan.

Bake in preheated oven, 400, 40-50 min. If bread is too brown at end of 25 min., cover with brown paper. Tap loaf with finger tips; if it sounds hollow, it's done. Cool on a rack.

Yours for organic, nonplastic, joyful eating,

THE MOVING COMPANY (for plays and workshops)
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ECOLOGY ACTION EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE
(for information on Lifehouse, organic gardening, recycling waste, etc)
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