START A STUDY CIRCLE TODAY
Visit us online to learn how to start a study circle and order the curriculum CD today: www.isec.org.uk

OUR ONLINE RESOURCES INCLUDE:

- **Step-by-step guidelines** for starting a study circle in your community
- **Downloadable introductions** to the program materials & study circle process
- **Downloadable guidelines** for facilitating group discussions
- The **complete list of readings**
- **Tips and materials** to help you recruit study circle participants
- **Information** about ISEC’s other initiatives including our Global to Local, Ladakh Project and Local Food Programmes.

“**The readings challenge me to reconsider things I ignore or take for granted, and help to counteract the mesmerising effect of everyday life in urban America.**”

Diana Young, Berkeley, CA

ISEC depends entirely on private donations. Please think of supporting our work. Your check should be made out to ISEC, and sent to one of the addresses above. Thank you.
THE ROOTS OF CHANGE

COMMUNITY STUDY FOR LOCAL ACTION

Roots of Change is a ground-breaking study circle program. Our curriculum includes voices of the world’s leading political, economic and ecological thinkers. It lays out in a series of readings, both how we’ve arrived at our present predicament and what we can do about it. The emphasis is on education for action: helping us see the big picture, unearth root causes and identify strategic positive actions. No academic background is required.

The program has three main goals:

• to encourage a broad analysis of the origins and workings of the global economy;
• to promote discussion of the impact of globalisation on participants’ own communities, as well as others around the world;
• to generate strategies for effective local action and global partnership.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

ISEC helps set up small study circles (6-12 members) and provides a series of readings to generate discussion. Study circles usually meet once or twice a month to discuss the readings and forge strategies for effective local action. There are no ‘teachers’, though most groups choose one of their members – sometimes on a rotational basis – to act as facilitator. ISEC staff are available throughout the program both for logistical and intellectual support, and to facilitate the move from education to action.

THE CURRICULUM IN BRIEF

Over the last 500 years, numerous, predominantly local and human scale societies have been transformed, becoming increasingly industrialized and globalized. In the process, both the distance between people and power, and the separation between production and consumption have grown. As a result, people have become increasingly alienated from each other and from the natural world. These broad, structural changes —and the forces that have animated them—are at the root of many of the crises we face.

The first part of the Roots of Change curriculum (‘500 Years of Progress?’) unravels this history. In the process readers will be treated to a selection of powerful voices that question a number of widely-held assumptions about progress, growth, wealth, and development. Deep questioning of this nature can be exciting and liberating, but it can also be overwhelming. In recognition of this, the curriculum also includes the Hope Trove, full of beautiful and moving excerpts of poetry and prose on hope, on working through despair, on expanding our boundaries, and on personal/social transformation.

The second half of the curriculum (‘Resistance and Renewal’) provides readers with a broad understanding of the steps needed at the local, national, and international levels to shift the world in a more sustainable direction. We have taken pains to showcase examples of resistance to the dominant order, as well as renewal, through brilliant ideas and initiatives that prefigure a much more humane, healthy, and happy future. For every critical exposé in the first section, we include in the second, new ideas and tangible, instructive, living solutions that will inspire. Where the curriculum ends, the journey of action begins.

LEARNING FOR A CHANGE

Since the Roots of Change program began in the early 1990s, participants have gone on to initiate inspiring projects in their own communities – from farmers’ markets and coops to alternative currencies and local food councils. In doing so they joined millions of others around the world who are resisting the destruction of people and the planet, while renewing their local economies, communities and cultures. Rather than leaving things to the ‘experts’, it’s time to heed the words of Alice Walker: “we are the ones we’ve been waiting for”.

“Taking part in an ISEC study group was very supportive and empowering, giving me the confidence to get involved in local action.”

Pam Hine, Totnes, UK