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NETWORK



Glarisegg's ECOVILLAGE DESIGN EDUCATION

Creating Transformative Cultures
Report 2026



Picture credit: Jeremias Hruby

Contents

Course Overview	p.3
Participants	p.4
The Team	p.5-6
The Course	p.6-10
Highlights and Challenges	p.10-12
Design Studio Case Studies	p.13-44
Lessons Learned	p.44-45
Financial Overview	p.46

Course Overview

Creating Transformative Cultures 2026's course has been born from the initiative of Sonja-Vera Schmitt teaming with Jashana Kippert and Elisabeth Schragg to create together the first editions of this course, 11 years ago. The program is based on the Gaia Education's EDE curriculum with an addition of an overarching dimension called "Creating Transformative Cultures" that adds its own core learning journey, and gives its name to the course. In addition, a 5th week is added to the program as a gathering of all years alumni, to foster connection and initiatives amongst the network of alumni created along the years. Some major changes in the program and overall structure were made and experimented this year, which we will go into more detail in the course description further in the report.

The course is taking place as always in the seminar centre of Glarisegg community, at the Constance lake in Switzerland (visit website to know more about it www.schloss-glarisegg.ch). 2 members of the community are part of the organizing team, and 2 were taking part as participants, as well as 2 Erasmus volunteers started their yearlong volunteering journey in the community by attending the course. The organising team counted 5 persons this year for the first time, supported by 7 team players which were alumni of previous courses. 35 participants joined us this year, with a dog and a 3-year-old child, for the first time.



View from the lake

Participants

35 persons joined us this year to take part in the program. This year's participants group was particularly balanced in terms of age range. The youngest with 21 and oldest with 76 years old, the average age was 36. For the first time, a third of the total participant number was between 27 and 34 years old (it's usually between 21 – 27) and 4 participants were 56 and above, which is also quite rare for our course.

No intentional objective to reach a gender balance was performed this time for the first time, as an intentional movement to welcome people truly moved to join us, regardless of their gender identification.

12 nationalities were represented, with as usual a majority of German and Swiss people, counting also Romania, Belgium, France, Italy, UK, Hungary, Estonia, the Netherlands and North Macedonia.

The group size and wide age range probably participated in the feeling of a very diverse, rich and heterogeneous group.

2 new Glarisegg community members participated in the course this year, as an opportunity to enrich their community experience and interweave the connective tissue between the community and the course. By now, approximately 7 Glarisegg community members participated in the EDE course across the years. 2 participants also applied for 1 year volunteering experience in Glarisegg's community garden as part of the EVS program, and started their internship with the 5 weeks course.



Group picture

The Team

The team is composed of a **core-team** and **team-players**. The core-team operated a major evolution for this EDE 2026 edition. Sonja-Vera and Jashana (2 founders) decided to open the core team of organisers to 3 new persons; Amneh, Annabelle and Kaleï, 3 previous participants and team players.

Amneh and Kaleï together with Sonja-Vera and Jashana met for a year redesigning the whole course, taking in account feedback and lessons from the last ten years, and intending to boil down the vision and learning journey to a clearer version of itself. A brand-new website was designed and published in accordance to this fundamental work (www.transformative-cultures.com).

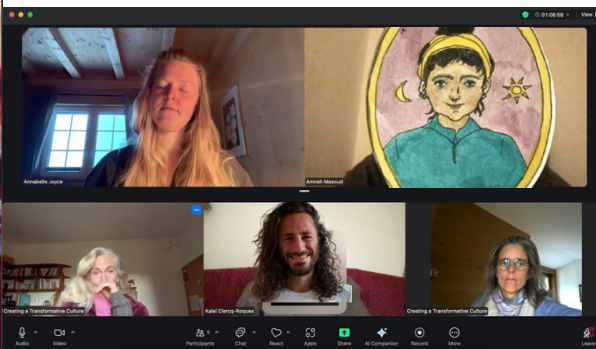
During this reshaping process, the plural form of the initial “*Creating a Transformative Culture*” was decided, honouring the pluralism and diversity of cultures rather than the concept of a single cultural identity that would prevail over the others.

Annabelle integrated the core team a few weeks before the beginning of the course, and Amneh couldn’t be physically present during the whole time for health reasons, which brought the core team members to 4 persons during the course. This new configuration (in comparison to 2 founders the last 3 years) needed adjustments and flexibility to find its own rhythm and collaborative flow. Consequently, this added capacity allowed the core team members to “specialise” more to the areas that they felt more drawn to, rather than having to “be everywhere”. Although it brought sometimes friction or conflicts within the core team, the extension of the core-team was a success and allowed a much deeper ground work before and during the course.

Together with the core-team, 7 team players joined the team to assist and support the course. As per every year, the team players are chosen from the pool of past alumni and agreed to come for the whole duration of the course, in addition to one week before and after the course for preparation, integration, and feedback as a team. The quality of the group experience would not be able to be the same without the support of the team players. Their roles are multiple, and vary depending on their willingness and interests. Team players integrate participant’s collaboration group, to guide and accompany the forming process, as well as supporting implementing the basics of the “*Creating Transformative Cultures*” principles, before the group takes off on its own.



The Core team



Core team meeting online



Team players

The core-team:



Sonja-Vera



Jashana



Annabelle



Amneh



Kaleï

The Team Players:



Jasmin



Iva



Timon



Len



Patrick



Buket



Anna

The Course

Course learning journey:

The learning journey has been reshaped for this new edition, as less focus was set to identify and divide sessions between the 4 quadrants of the sustainability wheel. Instead, the 4 weeks were organised around the spiral of the Work that Reconnects from Joanna Macy, where each of the 4 “stations” was guiding the intention during a whole week. Starting with: *coming from gratitude, honoring our pain for the world, seeing with new and ancient eyes, and going forth*. As Joanna Macy puts it herself beautifully in words:



“The central purpose of the Work that Reconnects is to help people uncover and experience their innate connections with each other and with the systemic, self-healing powers of the web of life, so that they may be enlivened and motivated to play their part in creating a sustainable civilization.”

Joanna Macy

Every week started with an opening session to the station of the spiral of the Work that Reconnects, and all sessions of every week was designed to support and deepen the intention of each station. The last session of every week were designed as a closure and integration time for the week's intention, honouring all that we've learned and experienced together within the week, with a collective or individual reflection time.

Emergent sessions were also added to the program this year, at the beginning and the end of each week. These sessions were designed to harness the potential of the group process wherever it was at specific times, and either help it deepen, ground, or accompany the group to become aware of itself through a collective presencing practice. The structure of each session was adapted to the specific intention and sense of where the group is at this very moment. Emergent circles as in Community Building practices, embodied exercises, role play, triad sharing, journaling ...

Another major shift of this year's edition came from the decision to have a 3 days intensive Community Building experience by Scott Peck, inviting an external team of facilitators together with Edward Groody, who learned directly from Scott Peck. The 3 days were entirely allocated to this practice and led by the team of Edward Groody. It has set the community building circling guidelines as a red thread through the whole course. It's the first time that the community building by Scott Peck – which is a tool used since always by the Glarisegg community – has been extended to sessions with the whole group. In previous years, collaboration groups would gather and open circles within their own groups.



Community Building Circle

A clear intention of having more time to breathe and integrate the content for the participants within the course, as well as a more nervous-system-friendly structure invited us to a more sober program, with less different sessions in a “chocolate box” style, and rather giving the opportunity to work more in depth the topics and methods we introduced the group with. The emergent sessions closing the week served in this direction as a moment to reflect collectively and integrate what the group moved and learned each week.

Course Rhythm:

7:45 - 8:30	Morning Practice
8:45 - 9:20	Breakfast
10:00 - 10:30	Morning Circle
10:45 - 13:00	Morning session
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch
14:00 - 15:00	Break
15:00 - 17:30	Afternoon session
17:45 - 18:45	Collab Group sharing
18:45 - 19:30	Dinner
20:15 - 22:00	Organic

This year some changes were made to the overall course rhythm. An active intention focussed on more time for integration and between each session aiming to bring more breathing times in the overall structure. The session times were shortened, and a later start in the day allowed more time for breakfast and morning practices.

The Sunday became a program free day, and every week 2 evenings were free of any program.

The evenings were exclusively allocated with embodied practices and no cognitively heavy information.

More time during the lunch break allowed the participants to rest or meet with their collaboration groups to prepare dinner. Every day, at the end of the afternoon program between 17h45 and 18h45, collaboration group could meet, either for sharing or for their community care tasks. Every participant could propose a morning practice and invite others to join in the morning.

Our established morning circle is the moment to present the program of the day, share some important notice for our community life, and address some important questions or decisions. A day director takes care of the flow of the morning circle and finally passes it over to whomever facilitates the morning session.



Morning circle

Collaboration groups:

After arriving, the participants have 3 days to settle and get used to the place and each other, before gathering in collaboration groups, starting to cook for each other and starting the program. During this time, the team players prepare the meals and the venue to be ready to hand it over to the participants as theirs. The team players spread into each forming collaboration group to guide and support this transition and the kick off start of each group.

Collaboration groups are the evolution and fusion of previous “home groups” and “project groups”. As they form, they will form a group to take care of the community tasks, such as cooking and cleaning our common spaces, as well as sharing and integrating their individual journey in smaller group. In addition, they will also form a project idea and implement it within the time of the course.

This year, we already preselected three main project areas to choose from; Facilitation, Social Activism and Hands-on. For the facilitation, the group would design and facilitate a session in the 4th week. Social Activism would design and perform an action in or outside the community ground, and Hands-on would choose a hands-on activity that would support or bring value to the community place. Each participant could choose from the beginning in which of the three areas they would prefer to invest themselves.

We ended up with 5 groups, 2 facilitation groups, 1 Social Activist group and 2 Hands-on group. Every group would gather every day in the allocated collaboration group time, between 17h45 and 18h45, and invited to use this time for sharing/circling, or take care of their community care tasks. Several sessions plus a whole day were allocated for each collaboration group to develop and implement their project. Every group presented the result of their collective journey during a presentation at the end of the 4th week.



The Yellow Chicken group sharing final feedback and reflection

Team meetings:

The big team (core and team-players) met every morning from 9:00 to 10:00, to check-in and address important matters for the day to come. Twice a week the big team would take time to meet for a longer time - usually 2h - to address the open topics needing our attention, or take care of our inter-relational bond. The core team met every day at the collaboration group time, to check-in and adapt the schedule, take important decisions or take care of anything else needing our attention.



The team playing a card game

Highlights and Challenges

This year's edition brought a lot of new experiences due to the novelty of the changes brought to the structure, the learning journey as well as within the core team itself.

The core-team formed by Sonja-Vera, Jashana, Amneh and Kaleï met often and regularly during the year to redesign the course, distil and refine the vision of the course and extracting the essence of all the feedback received in the previous years. It was a great time investment and a great opportunity to bring a fresh air within the team and the course.

Amneh's health situation confronted all of us with the challenge of her being unable to participate physically during the course as a core-team member, which led to the decision of hiring Annabelle to re-compose a team of 4 core-team members during the event. The arrival of Annabelle, although rather spontaneous and her not having been part of the refining process during the year, was a success. She later integrated the core-team fully and officially.

The integration process of new members and the opening up of the working dyad Sonja-Vera/Jashana led to some active process of letting go, personal and inter-personal challenges, frictions as well as graceful moments. Overall, all agreed that the opening to new members was a necessary and successful process. After the course, Kalei decided to leave the core-team to focus on other projects, leaving the core-team composition to the fantastic 4, Sonja-Vera, Jashana, Amneh and Annabelle.

Another great highlight and challenge of this year was the integration of the 3 days intensive Community Building brought by an external team. The 3 days were intense for the participants as well as for the team, and quite disruptive of our general structure. Additionally, finding a flow of communication and easing in together between the course team and the external team of facilitators of Community Building represented quite a challenge.

The opportunity to experience Community Building by Scott Peck with the whole group was one of the highlights of the course, a general feeling shared by the team as well as the great majority of the participants. The transition moment between after intensive 3 days was an orientational challenge both for the team and the participants.

On another note, having the presence of a small child was a true highlight of the course. A couple participated in the course together with their toddler, alternating the care of the child between themselves and other participants. The trust and capacity of the community to take care of the child together with the parents brought a real sense of capacity and generosity to the family, and aliveness to the whole course community. It worked very well, and the parents were delighted to have made this experience of community and support while having opportunities to invest themselves deeply in the course.

Another participant was accompanied with their dog, as an emotional nervous system support, and found also great support to be able to integrate their furry friend as part of our community. All of this brought a sense of "realness" to our temporary community, without straining the group.



The implementation of the spiral of the Work that reconnects was landing really well amongst the participants, and the focus of each station and specific intention within each week gave a solid red thread during the whole course. It often complemented the intention of each individual session, giving it depth and context. The foundational work of Joanna Macy is a very fitting ground to support community building, ecovillage design, and the overarching "Creating Transformative Cultures" framework.

The first week held by "coming from gratefulness" station, was also the week welcoming the 3 days intensive Community Building. While the core-team would have rather chosen a later moment within the program for

it, it wasn't possible and we accommodated as well as possible. It wasn't necessarily fitting perfectly with the intention of "coming from gratefulness", nevertheless was held within the container of the Community Building. It challenged the setting up of our group container in some ways by disrupting the freshly established structure and bringing rather intense moments of togetherness right from the start. Nevertheless, it gave a very efficient and powerful set of tools and reference experience for the participants to feel themselves within the group as individuals, as well as a community. The basic set of tools and practices to deepen inter-relational contact between themselves offered a real "sourdough" to grow the community bond.

The second week, "honouring the pain" offered the chance to open conversations and sensitivities to world events and ecological consciousness, bringing direct and very real examples topics and movements in our circles, as well as feelings and emotions related to the state of our world and planetary health. Welcoming the load of information and feelings, the great highlight of this week was the Grieving ritual, that set a very deep sense of humanity and depth to our collective journey.

The third week "seeing with new and ancient eyes" was the start of the project design case study, as well as opening up or deepening of tools and practices. A full day of holotropic breathwork coronated the week, opening up to our millenary old body wisdom.

The 4th week, "going forth" was the implementation of project designs, applying the tools and wisdom gained so far, and transition to the end of the program and accompany participants to project themselves into the next steps of their journey.



Gathering around the fire

Design Studio Case Studies

Report of the Green Horses - Social Activism:

Project Report: The Green Horses & their path to Social Activism

The sweet start

The Green Horses – Sebastien, Savitri, Anda, River, Martin, Kamnusch, Meret and Buket – found each other through shared interests, passion, fate or luck. What we had in common was a desire to carry out a project focused on social activism. However, this project was still some time away. First, we got to know each other as a group. At our first meeting, we held a conversation about our needs at that moment and shared our experiences of being in groups and communities; even in that first session, we found ways to be present together in the moment, to support one another and to find ways to co-regulate. We felt the openness to explore our connection and the curiosity about where our journey as a group and our shared vision can lead us.

The foundation

This formed the foundation for our journey as a group. Through regular, personal sharing of feelings, experiences and thoughts, and through cooking and cleaning, we increasingly found our footing as a group. In the process, we also came to understand the dynamics at play and the roles we each took on within them. We were able to gain a deeper insight into the qualities, unique traits, insecurities and desires that different individuals bring to the table.

During our meetings, we tried out a wide variety of check-in and sharing tools, and we also put into practice exercises for giving feedback and resolving conflicts. We also incorporated sociocracy into our decision-making processes. This allowed us to apply and practice what we had learnt in the sessions directly in real-life situations. All of this brought us closer together and allowed for fruitful group processes.



Building a cuddly & supportive foundation with the superpower of co-regulation and transparent check-ins

The shift to the project

At some point, we began to focus more specifically on our social activism project. During our planning meetings, we tried to give different people the space to facilitate the conversation. To kick off the project, we reflected on and shared our personal strengths, weaknesses and learning edges with one another. Then, in the next session, we shared our respective ideas and wishes for the social activism project. We each wrote our ideas, intentions and wishes on Post-it notes, presented them one by one and organised the Post-it notes by theme. This allowed us to quickly identify synergies. It was important to us to focus particularly on our shared intention: we want to foster meaningful moments of hope, peace and connection. From there we developed ideas for more concrete actions.



Sharing our project ideas, finding synergies and getting into our minds

It quickly became clear that we wanted to take to the streets and engage with people in a peaceful manner. Fortunately, there were a number of shared interests, which we selected and explored in greater depth. We were also able to link the specific ideas that remained into a common theme. The umbrella term that brought all the actions together was: intentional relating spaces. Through Buket's previous experience, we gained a vision of how we could then give this a clear form and present it to people on the street. We had the idea of designing a *menu* that we could take out onto the street, and give people options on different offers or joyful, meaningful, connecting moments. We set up four working groups to share out the responsibilities: message, logistics, the menu, and the hook. We also assigned the menu items to different people according to their interests. We finalised the menu and were excited and inspired by the result:

- Ground: movement practice, deep listening
- Dream: drawing utopic worlds, poems for nature
- Hope: conversations of hope
- Ritual: song shower, burning shame



The tensions

When our group's focus shifted from interpersonal group processes to the concrete collaborative project, this became evident in the group's dynamics. It wasn't so easy to get into the mode of working together, tackling tasks and putting things into action. We had less capacity to nurture our needs and take care of our connection. For a while, there was tension due to differing needs. We had to exercise patience and build up our capacity to cope with discomfort. In particular, tension arose from differing views on how much time we wanted to spend on planning and refining our ideas, how much time we wanted to devote to resolving group tensions, and how quickly we wanted to move on to concrete action. We were able to reflect on some aspects of these challenging dynamics, for example through an exercise on embodied leadership.

The Momentum

At some point, there was a pivotal moment of shift: one in which we felt a sense of clarity and empowerment to implement our ideas relatively spontaneously the following day. We clearly divided up the tasks and prepared everything. For some, this was a great joy that generated a lot of energy; for others, it brought excitement as well as anxieties and insecurities. In any case, the evening before our action was a time when we once again felt that we were all pulling in the same direction and wanted to move contribute to a change together. We were also able to be there for one another and to respect and acknowledge the different experiences all of us had within this process.

The Action

The next morning, we dressed in bright colours and packed all our props into two cars. We set off at 10.00 am, heading for Konstanz. Despite a few difficulties, we arrived and found the main shopping street. At the end of the street, we spotted a fountain decorated with colourful flags. And next to it stood a bronze statue in the shape of a horse. We really liked this part of the street, as it was a prominent spot and seemed made for us; beside the horse statue, we felt right at home. We set up our table and chairs. We laid blankets on the steps of the fountain and made ourselves comfortable. We quickly started juggling our balls or simply playing around with them, throwing them to each other and then to passers-by too. The balls were our way of connecting with people. Many people were surprised, curious yet reserved, and some didn't stay with us for longer. And yet we felt that we had brought a little joy, or at least a surprise, into their everyday lives. Others stopped and had a brief chat with us. A few were more open and took an interest in our menu. First, we sang for two women. Then we drew pictures of the young woman's dreams for the future. We listened to people, played games with them and wrote poems.



*Singing shower to
our first
interested people*



Creating a colorful scene and meaningful moments in the streets of Konstanz



Tea, drawing, playing and holding both joy and the heavyness of the discussed topics

After about three hours, the police arrived, as we had deliberately not obtained a permit, and they asked us to clear up, which fitted in with our schedule anyway. After a conversation with the two police officers and explaining the circumstances, Sebastian came up with a wonderful idea and turned to the police with the question: "May I make a request? Can we sing a song for you?" And to close our action, we actually sang a song for the two police officers, a song that had accompanied us throughout the whole EDE. Together we stood in a circle and sang:

This love will carry, this love will carry me,
 I know this love, carry me, love will carry me.
 This love will carry, this love will carry you,
 I know this love, carry you, love will carry you.
 This love will carry, this love will carry us.
 I know this love will carry us, love will carry us.



*Living and leaving
the action more
joyful than before*

The reflection

We had the chance to re-live the moments by show-playing the whole process to the rest of the EDE group during our reflection time. Savitri's sweet voice narrated our journey and we enacted the moments. We finally did our debriefing in front of the big EDE group and each shared their greatfulness, perspective, learnings and challanges.

The last collaboration meeting we spent by each being indulged in 7 minutes of continuous appreciation which will forever stay in our hearts.



*Refelcting on our
process and outcome,
sharing our chllenges
and insights with the
whole EDE group*

We each take home a bit of everyone, such as: Sebastians' contagious singing mood, playfulness, honesty and directness; Savitris' gentleness, taking charge attitude and care, Kamnushs' laughter, and perfect mix of lightness and groundedness, Merets' imense empathy, care-bearing and attention to integration, Rivers' spontaneity, love for creating and moving, Andas' goofyness, innocence and standing-up for others, Martin's perfectly ballanced analytical and emotional being, and last but not least Bukets' resilience, joyfulness, love for humanity and appreciation for being alive.

Report of Miriam:

Experience Report: Ecovillage Design Education (EDE) at Schloss Glarisegg

A Path Toward Wisdom of the Heart and Lived Inclusion

Introduction: Holistic Learning as a New Experience

The Ecovillage Design Education (EDE) program at Schloss Glarisegg introduced me to a level of interpersonal communication and self-reflection that I had not previously experienced in such depth. I was deeply impressed by the way the learning content was conveyed—not purely on a cognitive level, but through the integration of emotional, social, and spiritual intelligence. This holistic approach to learning was new to me, even though I had been introduced to similar ideas through stories, retreats, and individual seminars.

After exploring the Global Ecovillage Network (GEN) from home through online resources, videos, and reports, I felt a strong desire to experience the practical implementation of these visions firsthand.

Background and Motivation: Identity Beyond Performance

My background is shaped by 38 years of experience in community-based projects, my work as a nurse, my studies in religious education, and further training in art and creative therapy. I have accompanied people in care settings, supported individuals with special needs, and formed friendships with people who have experienced displacement and forced migration.

However, my own illness profoundly changed my perspective. How can we remain meaningfully connected when we become weak?

In Glarisegg, I wanted to explore an existential question: How do I show up in a group when my identity is no longer based on being strong, healthy, and fully capable of acting independently?

I wanted to sense what reveals itself in essence when I simply contribute as a human being—with all my vulnerability and fragility.

Questions around inclusion and an integrative worldview have guided me through various projects, always accompanied by the inquiry: How does genuine wisdom of the heart emerge? What do we learn through experiences of physical limitation and, ultimately, through our mortality? And in what kind of framework can this unfold?

Content: Nature, Peace Work, and Indigenous Wisdom

The EDE created a space in which ecological awareness and spirituality were understood in a broad and inclusive way. Nature was not merely a backdrop, but an active teacher.

I was particularly touched by singing peace songs from around the world, through which a universal language of connection seemed to emerge.

The teachings of Indigenous peoples, which invite us to understand ourselves once again as part of a larger cycle of life, deeply resonate with me. These perspectives surfaced repeatedly in group processes and were also shared in depth by individual participants.

I feel called to further explore a spirituality that consistently serves peace and healing.

This diversity of content was embedded in complex and practical group processes that went far beyond what conventional educational institutions of my generation were able to offer. I was overwhelmed—in the most positive sense—by the new forms of education the younger generation has made accessible, and which I was able to discover for myself. I would like to continue diving deeper into this field.

The Group as Mirror and the Protection of Boundaries

The group dynamic became a valuable mirror for me. I recognized where destructive patterns from earlier phases of my life had originated, but more importantly, how personal responsibility today can counteract them.

Self-care was an essential aspect of this experience. Due to my health, I was not able to participate in all parts of the program. It became an important learning process to acknowledge when my energy was depleted and to allow myself professional support when necessary, rather than overburdening the group. This honesty is a cornerstone of healthy community building.

It was new for me to observe how deeply participants supported one another and became significant companions on each other's journeys through difficult processes. Although I could only take part in many of the small group exercises to a limited extent, I still gained a great deal through observation and reflection.

One area that remains challenging for me—and that I wish to practice—is accepting help and expressing myself when I reach personal limits. The participants' ability to articulate their inner worlds revealed to me a new dimension of communication that I had never encountered before. I can write in a journal or open up to close confidants, but engaging vulnerably within a larger group and exploring these complex communication processes felt profoundly fascinating.

There were countless small, moving moments. I recognize that I have only just begun to practice this new level of awareness myself. From the very beginning, I sensed how deeply these learning experiences affected me. I had to absorb them gradually, as they opened entirely new perspectives and questions. That was deeply nourishing.

Bridging the Generational Divide

In my social environment, I observe with concern how communication between generations is often marked by silence. Many people of my age group settle into fixed positions rather than exposing themselves to the existential questioning brought forward by younger generations.

At the EDE, I witnessed how a new generation weaves together knowledge from psychology, special education, and ecology into an integrated worldview. Many societal conflicts could be avoided if both sides cultivated empathy for the lived realities of the other.

The EDE helped me strengthen my ability to speak up in moments of disagreement and to break through the danger of falling silent.

I arrived in Glarisegg directly from a gathering with friends of my own age, where we were accompanying our parents—now between 80 and 90 years old—at the end of their lives. This situation compelled us to confront the painful legacy of war trauma. Themes we had avoided throughout our lives through busyness and activism are now resurfacing in the context of end-of-life care. Our parents were children of war.

As a result, transgenerational trauma work has become a topic of discussion within our circle of friends.

How can we build a bridge from our historical experience to the horizons of the next generations? What can we learn from our past?

How can we create new forms of community when traditional family structures no longer provide stable support? How do we establish a healthy framework for authentic personal development?

In many contexts within my environment, we ask ourselves what healing alternatives might look like. I found it powerful that within the EDE, both healthy and unhealthy community experiences were openly discussed. At what point does a community become toxic?

Vision for the Future: A More Colorful Social Fabric

My intention is to counteract the prevailing spirit of functionalization and isolation. We need spaces for experimentation in order to shape our society in ways that are more vibrant, healthy, and sustainable—for young families, seniors, people with support needs, and migrants alike.

For visionaries to remain capable of action, a broad and integrative field of themes, such as that offered in the EDE course, is immensely helpful. It also allows me to realistically adapt my own life concept to present circumstances: What do I truly need? What am I genuinely able to contribute?

Conclusion: From Activism to Presence in Stillness

After many years of intense activism, I now find myself entering a new phase of life. The EDE clarified how essential silence, creativity, writing, and nature have become for me as spaces of regeneration—for myself and for others.

I recognize the necessity of honoring my own limits instead of repeatedly crossing them in the name of a higher cause. For me, this also means embracing the freedom to let go: I no longer need to stand in the front row in order to be effective.

Today, I redefine my place. I can participate from the background and offer presence without losing myself in constant doing. This mindful restraint is a conscious decision in favor of a sustainable way of living.

All life is oriented toward growth and renewal. I now find this renewal in stillness and in deep reflection on what I was able to experience at Schloss Glarisegg.

In the future, I would also like to create protected spaces for creativity within small communities—places where others can regain strength and process their experiences.

Report of the Pink Cows - Hands-on:

The Pink Cows: Andreas, Ashisha, Joey, Simone, Stephen, Tobias, Zoe + Timon



Group Structure: Open, friendly, loosely structured.

No roles were specified, although roles of course manifested. Simone as creative vision, Tobias as heart, Andreas as brain/engagement meter, Zoe as chef/also engagement meter, Ashisha as mother, Stephen as grandfather, Joey as emotional thermometer/poet, Timon as space holder.

We made our decisions usually by discussion and consensus. We used a blend of Sociocracy, Scott Peck/Community Building guidelines and Way of Council approach. In our group sharings we spoke in turn using the talking stick (either when moved to speak or in turn in the circle). When making decisions we used the Way of Council approach, spoke and listened from the heart when sharing feelings, suggesting and responding to ideas in turn. We did multiple rounds of this until we had some options and we then used temperature checks to reach agreement. It served us well in choosing our project and making adjustments to our process throughout the project.

We were direct in addressing tensions. We started each meeting with a check-in and were quite good at identifying tensions as they arose. This was not easy, of course, but we proved to ourselves that it is possible. Our commitment to prioritizing check ins and

sharing in each meeting gave us a solid foundation as a group and helped us to navigate group dynamics, tensions, address needs etc.

Our formation: Luck visited us early, liked our company and decided to stay. We were lucky with the unique blend of people – what they brought to the group in terms of heart, intention, experience, commitment.

Simone's health condition confronted us immediately. She explained her needs and we responded quickly: Andreas and Stephen donned their masks. We proved ourselves to be adaptable and set the precedent of communicating needs to each other.

Tobias introduced us to a custom of Juppiter Hause where he lives in Zurich: before checking in, the speaker would look each of us in the eye. This helped us to make contact and connect, to feel each person's presence and attunement before even speaking. It also helped us to ground/land in the group, as well as individually. We carried this through our weeks together. Tobias often served us as heart.

Timon observed us carefully, made suggestions when appropriate and was usually content to let us make our own way. He was also included in sharings which helped us feel safe with him in his role as team player but also as a member of the group. We felt his care for us through his sharing and observations.

Whichever member felt moved to hold space would step forward to lead the meetings. We would set the agenda for the meeting – for example, agreeing how much time to give check in, organisation of tasks, cooking etc. This also gave each member a chance to say if they had a specific issue they wanted to share and address. This person would then sound the meditation bowl, calling for a minute or two of silence. We then shared in turn, when moved to speak, with the talking stick.

Our group were adaptive to each other's feelings and needs. For example, when Stephen recognized his limitations and shared them with the group. He received the kind of assistance he needed. As members of the group found themselves tired or irritated, they expressed their feelings and they were heard. Another example - when Stephen's irritation appeared, Joey demonstrated how to disengage from codependency and move into a space of self-awareness, by sharing and owning her feelings.

In the kitchen we found a very competent and inventive leader in Zoe. We had fun together during our kitchen shifts. When members missed duties for whatever reason, this was communicated to the group and the slack was taken up.

Ashisha was good at reminding us what had agreed to, what was needed and when we were committed to meet and to work together.

Andreas was ready with information, energy, tools and a meeting space.

With this lucky mix of personalities we developed quickly into a loving microcosm of the EDE.

Project Overview: the Project process displayed our dynamic well.

We were a hands on group and knew from the outset that we wanted to do something for Glarisegg. Timon brought in a wish list, provided by Sonja-Vera. The most prominent idea was to work on the path between the Guest House and the Kuze. We used the Way of Council approach to explore the idea, sharing our opinions in turn. We did several rounds, then used temperature checks to filter down the options. When we realised that the path idea was too complicated and we wouldn't have enough time, Joey asked if we had other ideas. Here, the idea appeared of a hut in the forest built out of forest materials. Several of us liked this idea immediately, but the idea needed more discussion along with our existing ideas. We compiled a list and then pitched each idea in turn, using Way of Council to give pros and cons of each idea and used temperature checks to reach some agreement. Joey took notes and summarised the results and we organically came to realise that the forest sanctum was the project we all agreed on.

Implementation and Results:

That very evening we went out in the dark. We agreed quickly on a site by holding hands in a circle and sensing the energy of the space.



In the morning, Andreas got us access to tools and we enthusiastically started to gather materials. The work proceeded by inspiration. Ideas came from here and there. When Simone found our pace and energy overwhelming, she once again served to slow us down and draw us together. We rigged up Andreas' hammock and made a place for her from which to watch and to make her suggestions.



Together we set structural posts and between them weaving posts. Everyone got involved whether it be building the structure, gathering materials, weaving or decorating.





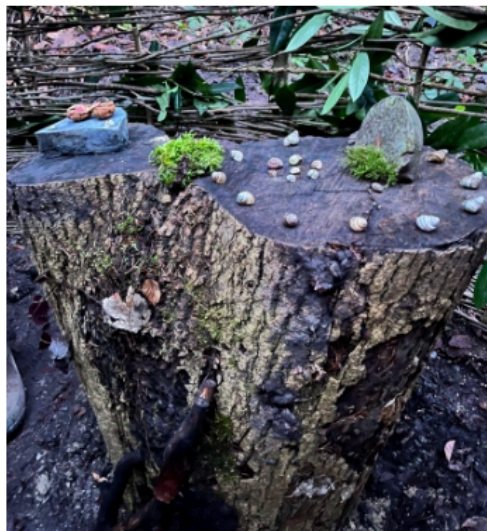
Ashisha made it her business to eradicate invasive laurel bushes and use them as materials for the sanctum.



Zoe in her free time and others brought things along.



The structure evolved. An altar was created from part of a tree trunk we found. Tobias gathered stones from the lake to create stepping stones leading to the altar.



Its décor evolved, largely I think, out of Simone's inspiration with tools and materials provided by Andreas.



A closed roof was tried and failed. The idea of an open roof between walls topped with branching limbs emerged.



Joey wrote for us a beautiful poem which summarised our process. In her modesty, she almost demurred to read it during the ceremony but we insisted. To inaugurate the space, Ashisha added shamanic drum and rattle and greeting of north, east, south and west. This was characteristic of our way, bringing our talents into the project unexpectedly and weaving them together just as the walls were woven together.

Sanctum

We began in a circle,
no walls yet,
only voices.
Ideas laid gently in the middle,
concerns softened by listening,
encouragement passed hand to hand
with the talking stick.
A council before a structure,
a vision before a form.

By moonlight we walked,
quiet feet and loud laughter,
letting the land choose us.
Branches offered themselves,
fallen and waiting.
Nothing taken without noticing.
Nothing gathered without thanks.

Morning came with fire in our bodies.
We rushed in with energy and momentum,
but our hands were moving faster than our words could explain.
And Simone felt the stretch,
the pace tugging at something tender.
Through Joey's noticing, a bridge appeared—
between doing and being,
between pace and care.
We were gifted a reminder to be heart keepers and to keep the group awareness alive.

Andreas spoke for the forest,
another steady reminder;
this is sacred ground.
Not a project to conquer,
but a relationship to honour.

Ashisha moved with fierce devotion,
tackling the invasive beast from the land,
spending the whole time in service—
a quiet, relentless act of love
for what wants to thrive here.

Stephen saw the shape before it existed,
the master architect of sticks and space.

Zoe, our gatherer, our best and sometimes secret weaver
— “you just have to know where the stick wants to go” and she did.

Tobias lifted, carried, grounded,
strength offered without ego.

Simone observed, felt, beautified the nest.

And Joey moved where was needed,
threading us back to the vision,
holding the whole while holding each part.

When energy was low we made a hammock—
a soft arc of trust—
Where Simone could rest and laugh with us,
suspended between trees and sky,
offering ideas from a lifted perspective.

When creative choices called for care,
we returned to the circle and found each other.
We moved together, letting the details emerge.
The entrance facing east to greet the sun.
The top left open,
so eyes can meet the sky.
Dreamcatchers bloomed.
The Altar grew from the forest's gifts.
Water stones found their place.
Seats appeared, for welcome.
A bow, born from the circle itself,
now waits to hold future offerings.

What stands now is quiet.
A sanctum.
A listening place.
For reflection,
for meeting oneself honestly,
for remembering the land.
For community.
For visitors and explorers.

It is not finished.
It is alive.
It will change with seasons,
with weather,
with hands we have not yet met.
It will receive dreams,

intentions,
small offerings of hope.

This space was built of branches,
but more so of fun and love,
respect and trust, care and vision.
Of shared leadership,
mutual support, encouragement and flow.

A sanctum built with our hands but co created with all of you —
It stands in the forest, with us,
breathing.

Feedback and Reflection: The result was quite impressive. The EDE community was pleased, and Sonja-Vera informed us that we had inadvertently accomplished healing in a wounded spot. We received many expressions of gratitude and appreciation from the EDE group. We were mutually appreciative, each of all the others.



The main challenges were, of course, different for each of us. Letting go of the need to manage and shape. Becoming willing to express and own discordant feelings. To hear and acknowledge those feelings in others. To slow down and acknowledge the disparate needs of participants. To persevere when things were difficult. To say NO when NO was meant. This allowed Yes to become all the more powerful.

Report of the Yellow Chickens - Facilitation:

Project Report of the Chicken Coop (Yellow Chickens)

Group Culture

Members: Patrick, Anna, Téo, Loona, Lou, Maël, Elouan (child of Lou and Maël), Casimir, Jeremias, Filippa

Our Group culture was heavily centered around care for ourselves and for each other which led to an agreement already in the first week of the EDE that we will always prioritize our self-care and recovery over the duties in the group. This created a natural rotation of some people taking breaks and others carrying the lead and focalizing which was according to the energy level everyone had.

Loona and Filippa carried the role of the secretary during the collaboration project time and the other roles such as meeting facilitator, kitchen focalizing, heartkeeping were taken accordingly to the capacity of the team members. For taking decisions, we used the following tools: sociocracy, temperature checks and intention rounds.

Conflicts were often resolved by listening empathetically to each other, taking radical responsibility for our own behavior and taking care of our needs before stress and exhaustion gave way for conflicts and tension to arise.



Group Process: The chicken coop's journey

Settling in and getting to know each other in the beginning was very harmonious. We very quickly figured out that we had a very special group with people being absent from the meetings regularly due to sickness, overwhelm and childcare reasons. We realized early on that because of this, there will be a stable instability of the attendance of the group members. From the beginning this made us focus more on care and support and brought forth a deeper understanding and commitment towards each other.

We had three main events which influenced the group: The arising and resolving tension about a topic of kitchen hygiene between Filippa and Patrick. Casimir deciding to leave the EDE in the third week and later redeciding to stay. Téo experiencing burnout and stepping back from all the collaboration group activities and duties in the beginning of the fourth week.

Project overview

Our intention was to find a hands-on project idea which we can all feel a spark and aliveness with. So we explored following options: fermentation (making kimchi and/or sauerkraut), building a wooden meditation seat, supporting the Glarisegg community with some hands-on work such as raking the leaves, creating a keepsake for the whole group and the team, baking sourdough bread, making a bonfire for the group and cooking snacks on it.

We took a lot of time to discuss, feel it out and eliminate the ideas which were not plausible to achieve in the time we had. Then we had one very concise and productive sociocratic meeting where we passed the following proposal: "Our group project will be making wooden necklaces as mementos for all the EDE 2026 participants and team and if we have time left over, we will do fermentation". Very quickly it became evident that we will not have time for fermentation so that did not happen.

The vision for the wooden necklaces was to have an item that connects us with each other and with the land where we experienced many meaningful moments and connections during the EDE.

Implementation and Results



The oak tree from which the wood came

We created 3 prototypes to figure out the best way to drill holes into the wood and to adjust the technique of the necklace production accordingly. After that we cut a the branch of the oak near the lake. We cut the wood into slices, drilled the holes and let them dry slowly over 48 hours, so that the wood doesn't crack. In the mean time we crafted the yarn part of the necklace. After the 48h we brought together the wood and the yarn to finish the necklace. All of this went quiet smoothly and we were exactly on time for the gifting of the necklaces, which we did during the closing session on Saturday after the fourth week. The result of our project was that all 47 of the EDE 2026 participants and team members received a necklace made of a wooden piece and yarn to take home as a memento.



Feedback and reflection

We didn't actively collect feedback but the what we received in casual conversation was quite positive and it was a joy to see people wearing the necklace during the growing together days. Our main challenges were related to distribution of the tasks and time management. We learned new crafting skills, for some it was how to spin yarn and for some how to cut and drill wood.

Report of the Blue Dogs - Facilitation:

Our group consisted of Biljana, Dani, Illona, Rita, Ben, Mirjam, Jasmin, and Nala, our four-legged companion. During the process, some members stepped back from the group, which required us to adapt and reorganise. While this brought challenges, it also strengthened our connection and collaboration. We made decisions collectively, communicated openly, and supported one another throughout the journey. By the end, our group had developed a strong sense of trust, care, and what many of us described as a family feeling.

After exploring many different ideas, we chose to create a space for stillness, self-reflection, and integration. Participants entered individually and were invited to open a box containing a mirror, revealing that the experience was ultimately about themselves. The space included mirrors, blindfolds, journals, and reflection prompts, offering opportunities for self-inquiry and rest. Following a period of silence and contemplation, participants came together to share reflections and close the experience through collective song. Our intention was to create both a safe container and a gentle landing space where participants could integrate their EDE journey with care, presence, and connection.



Report of the Orange Cats:

Report of the orange cats

Who we are

Dominique, Varia, Gréta, Gioia, Bart, Christine, Jetti



Our Group culture

How would you describe your group culture?

We grew together and learned to consciously face difficulties. There was a strong commitment to stay connected and care for one another. At the same time, staying together was not always easy. Our differences—each of us with our own perspectives, pace, and needs—repeatedly confronted us with the question of what a common path might look like and what would serve the group as a whole. For some, slowness created a heaviness that was not always easy for everyone to bear. At the same time, we consciously invited this deceleration again and again in order to broaden our perspective, search for ways forward together, and enable development.

Were there specific roles attributed?

In the first session, we opened a check-in round and those who wanted to could name the roles they would like to take on. These roles then remained largely unchanged throughout, without being reviewed repeatedly.

How did we take decisions?

We use sociocratic tools, but over time we have moved towards temperature checks rather than yes/no voting, or other shorter variants that arose spontaneously.

How did we solve conflicts or address tensions?

Each individual became increasingly open about what was going on inside them. We encouraged people to speak up if something was bothering them or if they needed something. We gave space to emotions and feelings so that they could be expressed.

We gave priority to individual processes. That was more important to us than developing the project further. Individuals sometimes left the group and were accompanied by another person from the group so that they could go through their processes in an even more protected setting. In addition, we repeatedly looked at how we could introduce new perspectives and listen to everyone in order to implement them.

Group process description

Describe the overall journey of your group, from the formation until the end of the EDE:

At the beginning, the group followed a rather formal exchange structure, which structured the process but also created distance within the group. As the process progressed, critical feedback led to irritation, but at the same time enabled more openness and strengthened relationships.

Phases with freer formats, more time for exchange, and body-oriented elements supported connection and ease. We were not always fully present in the group, as each person was challenged by individual physical or emotional stress or exhaustion. At times, this led to individual overload, tensions, and delays in the project work. Those who had the capacity checked in with those who were not able to be very active at the moment to see what needed to be done next.

Shortly before the project was completed, the group was more divided than connected. We made space for individual processes and met again in the evenings in our free time to complete our project. Here, too, there were different needs, as some were tired, but we still completed the project together before the first people left the room. What remained as a resource was the experience that connection arises especially where individual needs for security and comfort—with or without physical contact—have space.

Project overview

Describe the project in more details; vision, intention, domain of action, topics, research, questions....

We started by assigning individual roles (facilitator, timekeeper, etc.) and exploring the team canvas. We collected our results on a large piece of paper and then started brainstorming.

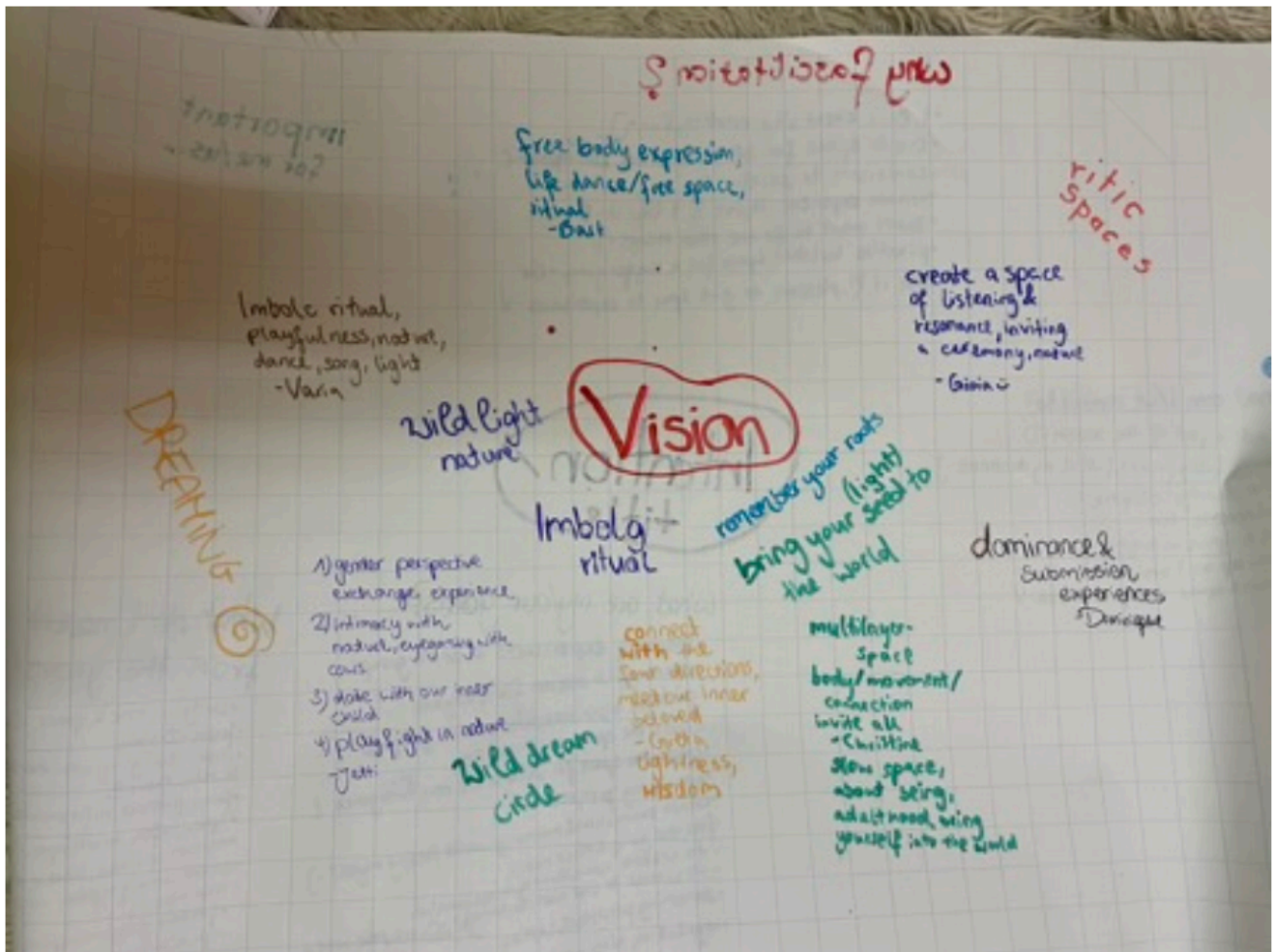


We picked out points that were repeated and were important to us. These points were:

Free Play
Slowness
Bonfire
Dance
nature

It was already clear to us that Imbolc would become an important part of the space, and that embodiment was also important to us.

During the course, we repeatedly asked ourselves how we as a group could create something with these topics, not just one person alone, but something that each individual person could and wanted to help create and maintain.



Ultimately, we had many ideas in theory, and when we started trying them out in practice on Wednesday afternoon, the space became clearer and clearer, and by the evening we had finalized it. In motion, in slowness, and navigating the space together. It quickly became clear to us who wanted to speak, that we would start inside, then go outside, and close the space by the fire.

Implementation and results

How did we implement our project?

We implement our project, in two different ways. First inside and to go in contact with themselves. Navigate the people through their own light and shadow. Vision and obstacles. To move their bodies, feel their breath, be.



Later we went outside, to connect with the nature, and came back and we lit a bonfire. People could write something on paper and give it to the fire. We sang some songs, while this time.



What were the result of our project?

The result of our project is that even if everyone considers similar topics to be valuable, almost every person understands something different by them. That more focus is needed to implement things and, at the same time, personal responsibility so that emotional issues can be addressed. Another result of our project is that things run in parallel and move individuals, which means that each meeting needs to be tailored to the individual. Another result of our project is that it doesn't have to be something “special” to engage the group. It can be simple things that don't always get space in everyday life and thus give people a connection to themselves.

Feedback and Reflection

Did you receive or collect feedback?

We got Feedback, that the space we created was appreciated. That people enjoyed being both indoors and outdoors. The indoor part activated the body, and the second part touched people in a different way. We also received feedback that speaking with the microphone was appropriate, the music selection was good, and it could have been a little shorter. Outside, the cold crept into our legs from below, and the fire provided an opportunity to warm up.

What were the main challenges and growth points?

The most challenging part was moving through the moments of decision-making. Every time we had to choose a direction, something in the field would tighten. It was as if the possibility of conflict would immediately surface, and the group did not yet have the tools or the trust to remain present within that friction.

We used silence as a practice of regulation. Silence helped us breathe, to not react impulsively, to avoid hurting one another. But at times it also became a space that softened things too much — that avoided confrontation instead of transforming it. The harmony was subtly affected: there was a surface gentleness, while underneath something was asking to be named.

The creative process then began to slow down. It struggled to take form. It felt as though there was a lack of courage to stay in the necessary disorder from which something alive can emerge. There were many points of growth. To witness a growing attention to care to truly include, to hold space, to not leave anyone behind.

We experimented with meaningful tools circle sharing, the “popcorn” format each opening possibilities for more authentic listening.

What were the main learnings and reflections?

Each individual has become aware of what it means to create something in co-collaboration. That there is so much more to creating something together than just the project itself. That new ways of being together must constantly be found, and that co-creation is not only about beauty, but also involves tensions that ultimately bear fruit. Co-collaboration requires time, presence, and courage.

**Thank you for the
opportunity to experience
all of this.**

The orange Cats!

The orange Cats

Dominique, Varia, Gréta, Gioia, Bart, Christine, Jeti

Lessons Learned

This year's EDE was full of new experiences and try out, while being the condensed version of 11 years of experiences and practices of *Creating Transformative Cultures*. Opening the framework of the EDE sustainability wheel to the Work that reconnects from Joanna Macy brought a lot of depth and meaning to our intentional temporary community, and a very connective, emotion friendly and honouring ground to meet and relate from. The wisdom of Joanna Macy's work is truly remarkable and complementary with other frameworks inclusive of a planetary worldview.

The relatively small size of the participant group (35 in comparison to 50 or 55 in some years) gave a more intimate context during sessions, and an easier sense of proximity within the whole group. The pitfall is that with less participants, the number of total collaboration group is also reduced, which led to some high load of cooking responsibility in some moments for some groups. In two groups, the cooking responsibility narrowed down to 2 or 3 persons on a regular basis for different reasons, which strained some highly committed people. On the go, some reorganisation and reallocation of some people allowed everything to work somehow, but a more organised system of solidarity and task repartition exchange on this level is still to design and respond structurally as part of the team's responsibility for future editions. Additional external cooks as support for lunch preparation will be implemented for next year in response to this matter.

The collaboration group formation was the smoothest ever recorded, with a good balance between the possibility to choose the topic and area of action for the participants, while giving a clear pre-structure and setting that allow the group not to be lost in lengthy decision process, or focussing in a project that isn't realistically implementable within the time of the course.

Having more members within the core-team brought capacity and resource to the whole big team, and despite the intensity of the workload during these 5 weeks, this time was less intense and straining globally for the team.

For many participants as well as for team members, the collective whole circle of community building brought reference experiences and embodied learning experiences that transferred into everyday practices and nourished the group process. The group sessions where topics could simply emerge gave the group an embodied experience of what Otto Scharmer describes as the transition from Ego-system to Eco-system, giving the opportunity to the group to see itself and download its wisdom and lessons from the emergent future, rather than exclusively from the lessons and experiences of the past.



Financial Overview

The financial outcome of this course was a mixed experience. A lot of participants gave less financial contribution than the usual minimum, together with a relatively small number of participants, it led to a tighter budget in the kitchen (around €9000) and retributing the core-team members. A handful of participants gave a high-end sliding scale contribution, which made a big difference and allowed to support others to give less than the minimum to cover the bare running costs.

This year nevertheless, inviting abundance, the financial retribution of the team-players was heightened in comparison to previous years, from 300€ to 500€. The overall surplus of the course does not allow to give a standard pay to the team-players.

After all running costs and team-players retribution covered, the 5 core-team members shared the €16000 surplus amongst them.

All the numbers were shared transparently by the core-team during a session within the course, opening to questions and feedback.

