

# Ecovillage Design Education Glarisegg 2021

July 12 – August 09

Community Schloss Glarisegg, Steckborn, SWITZERLAND



# Content

1	Course Overview .....	3
2	Team.....	5
3	Participants .....	10
4	Circumstances .....	11
5	Course Rhythm.....	14
6	Highlights of the Four Dimensions.....	17
7	Financial framework.....	27
8	Evaluation .....	27
9	Outlook .....	30

Authors of the report: Kaleï Clercq-Roques & Jo Bühler





# 1 Course Overview

*Schloss Glarisegg* community was founded in 2003 at Glarisegg castle on the Swiss side of Lake Constance as “a place for encounter and awareness”. The community has more than 60 members by now, using the Scott Peck method of community building as a base foundation, and also welcoming other methods such as forum and possibility management for continuous community development. The community also includes the free school *Läbesschuel* (School of Life), a permaculture garden with few year round erasmus volunteers, a food cooperative, a lake bistro, a meditation house and a seminar center with guest house and campsite. A wide range of courses and seminars are hosted throughout the year, mostly in summer. Many healers and therapists are living in Glarisegg and practice their activity on site.



*View on the Schloss Glarisegg Community in front of Lake Constance in Steckborn, Switzerland*

The Ecovillage Design Education (EDE) program was hosted this summer at *Schloss Glarisegg* for the 6th year. This course is based on the Gaia Education EDE curriculum, organized around the four dimensions of sustainability: social, worldview, ecology and economy, incorporating an approach of whole systems design for sustainability. In a four weeks program, participants learn the basis of designing and maintaining ecovillages and eco-projects. The co-founders and organizers of this EDE, Jashana Kippert and Sonja-Vera Schmitt, have added the component of “Creating a Transformative Culture” vision to the program.

In 2021, we welcomed a total of 23 participants from 7 different countries. The course language was English. Due to the restrictions related to the Covid-19-pandemic, the number of participants was smaller than in previous courses. The course was initially planned for January and February 2021 but had to be postponed due to the pandemic. Since it was held in summer and the seminar center of the community was fully booked, the participants were lodged in tents and the course was held mainly outdoors.

Inspired by the outdoor setting of the course, this year's EDE at Glarisegg was subtitled *"intimacy with nature"* and focused more towards the interaction and reconciliation with nature. The highlight of this intention was a council of all beings held in the middle of the course where participants were giving their voice to different aspects, elements or beings of nature followed by a ritual inspired by the Hawaiian tradition of Ho'oponopono.

The key content pillars of this EDE were permaculture, dragon dreaming, sociocracy 3.0, deep ecology and possibility management. Other highlights on the learning journey were different forms of council, forum, collective presencing, transparent communication, conflict transformation, intimacy negotiation, economy of the common good and empowered fundraising. These content sessions were joined by many somatic sessions that include biodanza, contact improvisation, life dance, 5-rhythm-dance, playfight and authentic voicing.



*Artwork at Schloss Glarisegg Community*

## 2 Team

The team of this years EDE in Glarisegg consisted of the organizers and course leaders Sonja-Vera Schmitt and Jashana Kippert, joined by former EDE participants Annabelle Schapals, Jasmin Sepahzad, Jo Bühler, Kaleï Clercq-Roques and Roos Derks as Assistants. The team was supported for specific sessions by 14 outside seminar leaders. Further on, the course was joined by the filmmaker and former EDE participant Diego Hidalgo Ruiz who was creating a short film in collaboration with several course participants on the subject of “intimacy with nature”.



*The team of organizers, assistants and filmmaker running the EDE Glarisegg 2021.*



## Organizers (also lovingly called “the witches”)



### **Sonja-Vera Schmitt** (Glarisegg)

Is one of the co-founders of the *Schloss Glarisegg* community. She was and is present in the development of the community project with her whole being. Being the initiator of the EDE Glarisegg, she brings her diverse expertise and qualities into the field: community building/mediation, project development, community economies, her involvement with GEN Europe and always exploring the best possibility in logistics and coordination of the course. She is a therapist / teacher of breath, voice and speech as well as a flutist, singer and contact-improv dancer. Since 2005 she has been passionate for Vipassana meditation and sits her 1 - 2 hours daily.



### **Jashana Kippert** (Hawaii)

The co-founder of EDE Glarisegg is a lover of learning. Jashana has degrees in Environmental Science, Anthropology, a Master's in Social Ecology and a Ph.D. in Philosophy. In her twenties, she was involved as an activist in attempting to stop the war in Guatemala. That struggle brought her to the alternative community movement with a commitment to become part of the “solution”. She has lived part of her life in Findhorn, later built up a community project for regenerating land and securing food supply in Hawai'i and currently lives with a small community on the island.

## Assistants (all former EDE participants)



**Annabelle Schapals** (Germany)

“Creating and holding space for growth, transformation, and exploration seems to be the most valuable contribution I can make in this world. Passionate about alternative education, interpersonal communication, and holistic health, I practice and teach yoga, sing, cook, organize and teach. I continue being amazed by the abundance and magic that is collectively created and experienced when there is space. Space for connection, honesty, and curiosity. When each individual is invited to share what is.”



**Jasmin Sepahzad** (Germany)

“Participating in the EDE 2020 meant for me to commit to living a life according to my values of community, sustainability, connection and authenticity. What I have experienced in the time in Glarisegg, made me a more courageous and vulnerable person. I dare to show up, I dare to stand up and I dare to live up to my dreams more. It’s the magic of authentic community that enables us to truly be ourselves. An experience that inevitably will lead you to living a more meaningful life.”



**Jo Bühler** (Switzerland)

“Ever since my childhood, I feel the pain of an open heart growing up on a planet taken hostage by a destructive civilization. My attempts to face reality have brought me from activism to journalism, from weltanschauung literature to nomadic lightness, from permaculture to communities, from body work to hand analysis, from a broken to a loving heart, from

deserts to jungles – always longing for regenerating our way of interacting with life.”



**Kaleï Clercq-Roques (France)**

“Taking part in the 2019’s EDE opened to me so many doors within myself and widened my field of possibilities, I now feel honored and joyful to serve others taking part in this magical journey. I’m fascinated by community dynamics, collective intelligence and everything that contributes to the growing and spreading of this truly transformative culture. I believe that the ability to dream and work together is the answer to a lot of the challenges humanity is facing today.”



**Roos Derks (Netherland)**

“After lots of movement around the world, and finishing a master in Cultural Sociology, I decided to dedicate my life to research, in a practical way, how we can live as humans truly connected to each other and to the land we live on. In the social realm this means for me learning tools to process deeply, communicate authentically and decide together effectively.”



**Diego Hidalgo Ruiz (Spain)**

“Passionate by the marriage of ancient wisdom and modern research for the awakening of human consciousness and its potential to shift our current world situation, I’m a Spanish filmmaker who, since 2018, dreams to manifest a filmmaking project that could bring light about the indivisible bound between the individual, collective and environmental healing, I deeply believe, our world needs.”



## Seminar Leaders

Karin Jana Beck and Matthias Gerber from Stimmvolk (Indigenous Singing), Mara Heer (Biodanza), Anne Lohmann (Transparent Communication), Christine Dürschner and Martin Salanda (Possibility Management), Teodora Radulescu (Dragon Dreaming, Empowered Fundraising), Daniel auf der Mauer (Conflict Transformation), Katharina Wiesner (Intimacy Negotiation, Economy of the Common Good), Sonia Koller (Forum), Claudio Berreta (Food Waste), Matteo Tangi (Playfight, Possibility Management), Andreas Tröndle (5 Rhythms Dance) and Petra Heid (Ethical Chocolate Factory).



Karin Jana Beck  
Matthias Gerber



Mara Heer



Anne Lohmann



Christine Dürschner



Martin Salanda



Teodora Radulescu



Daniel auf der Mauer



Katharina Wiesner



Sonia Koller



Claudio Berreta



Matteo Tangi



Andreas Tröndle



Petra Heid

### 3 Participants

This year's EDE was special, not only because it happened during summer and the corona crises, but also because the number of participants was smaller than usual. 23 participants attended the course, with a parity of 11 women and 12 men. One participant had to leave after a few days for family reasons. We kept updating and sending him greetings until the end to include him in our group despite he couldn't be here physically. Despite the difficulty of international traveling due to the pandemic, three participants were able to join us directly from overseas, from Hong-Kong, Canada and the United Kingdom. We gave the possibility of being hosted in a caravan to one participant before the course to complete his quarantine, so he could attend the course like the others. Seven nationalities were represented by the participant's group: Germany (12), Switzerland (5), United States of America (2), France (1), Canada (1), United Kingdom (1) and Mexico (1).



*Wall of pictures with all participants and their description written for the EDE's application.*



## 4 Circumstances

The EDE 2021 in Schloss Glarisegg was planned to happen from January 18th to February 20th with a detailed and sophisticated health concept to make the course possible despite the current coronavirus pandemic and the restrictions imposed by the Swiss government in order to prevent a health crisis. However, due to severely tightened restrictions a few weeks ahead, the course had to be postponed indefinitely and finally canceled. Since the seminar center of *Schloss Glarisegg* was fully booked for the rest of the year, we were searching for an alternative location to still hold the course during summer. Negotiations were on the way with three seminar centers in Germany and France, but all of them were not able to host us in the end for different reasons.



*The campsite with our main course tent in front of the buildings of the Glarisegg Community.*

This leads to Sonja-Vera Schmitt trying to convince the Schloss Glarisegg Community and Seminar Centre to still allow the EDE to happen in Glarisegg in Summer, using a part of the camp site as well as the Kitchen and one Room of the community-run private school *Läbesschuel* during school holidays. After tight negotiations, the community finally accepted. Only two and a half months before the start of the EDE, the participants who had registered for the winter course were informed about the possibility to join a smaller EDE with outside infrastructure but the same content and conditions. Since only



a few of those who had registered for the winter course were able and willing to spontaneously join our summer course, registration was opened for everyone and advertised in our networks. For the course to comply with the current regulations regarding the coronavirus pandemic and in order to prevent any infections of course participants, all organizers, assistants, participants, seminar leaders and guests were tested with a self-administered covid-19 antigen test upon arrival. The whole group was tested for a second time five days into the course in order to increase the level of safety. In addition, regular disinfection of hands was encouraged, particularly before serving meals. During the whole course, no participant got ill to the point of not being able to join the course. The team proposed a continuum in the first week with various questions to make sure our Corona hygiene guidelines were understood and accepted by all participants. Therefore, corona worries and mask wearing could successfully be set aside from our conversations and community life for the whole event.



*The new outdoor showers were built by the assistants of the EDE and Glarisegg volunteers. The compost toilets were built by assistants and participants of the 2019's EDE.*

One week ahead of the course, the assistants joined the organizers on site in order to prepare for the course and build the infrastructure. We had one big tent set up on the campsite and built three outdoor showers next to the outdoor compost toilets in order to have an independent sanitary installation on site. All the participants were sleeping in tents during the whole event. The weather was challenging and a big storm shook and soaked us during the first week. Hence, the big tent that we settled in the camping ground for our sessions suffered the rain and the wind, and we had to use mainly the one indoor room of the community school until it could finally dry. Despite the frantic conditions of the stay, the group remained extremely positive and supportive toward each other. Our

group, from the beginning on, experienced an enriched overview of the many dimensions of what intimacy with nature can provide.



*The EDE 2021 campground on one of the sunny days.*

# 5 Course Rhythm

The course was run over the time of four weeks, with a consistent daily schedule from Monday to Saturday and a free day on Sunday, which participants could use to relax or share skills in an open space setting. The other days were structured by the following schedule:

- 7:00 Optional morning practice
- 8:00 Breakfast
- 8:30 Team meeting
- 9:00 Morning circle
- 09:30 Morning session
- 12:00 Working group time
- 13:00 Lunch
- 15:00 Afternoon session
- 18:00 Dinner
- 20:00 - 22:00 Evening session

4 dimensions of EDE: Social Workshop Ecology Occasions Specials

The EDE Glarisegg 2021 course schedule – zoom in if you see this on a screen.

## Optional morning practice

Self-organized by participants, they had the opportunity to lead and introduce others to their own practices. Probably due to the infrastructure circumstances, we have seen less self-organized common morning practices than in previous EDEs. However, quite a few yoga, qi gong and meditation classes were still offered by participants despite the limited spaces and many participants did their own morning practice - often including a refreshing but - compared to the winter months - very inviting swim in the lake.

## Team meeting

The organizers and assistants met every day for half an hour all together as a team. Usually we divided the time to take 15 minutes of “check-in” and sharing and 15 minutes of logistics. In order to have more time as a team and give space to interpersonal



processes or conflicts, we had additionally regular meetings on wednesdays and saturdays during lunch break as well as a few spontaneously called meetings to settle specific issues or plan sessions.

The whiteboard is titled "MORNING OFFERS" in blue marker. Below the title is a table with four columns: "WHAT?", "WHO?", "WHEN?", and "WHERE?". The entries are handwritten in blue marker.

WHAT?	WHO?	WHEN?	WHERE?
Mantra singing	Carmen & Daniel	Monday 7:45 - 8:15	Klangwerk

*Participants prepared a board to announce their morning practices*

### **Morning circle**

This routine community time is an important moment of gathering. Starting with a different song each morning, somebody reads a poem for the day. A round of looking into the eyes of the neighbors is also the opportunity for a round of “welcomes and goodbyes” of people to briefly present themselves to the community or to announce their leaving. After a common stretch by holding hands together “up to the sky and down to the earth”, the Day Director (one of the assistants) reads out the announcements that were collected in a basket. Morning circle is also the opportunity for birthday celebrations with our lifting ritual.

### **Sessions**

Session time is divided into three slots per day; morning, afternoon and evening and sums up to ca. 8h per day from Monday to Saturday. Most of the sessions are non-optional and were designed in an interactive way. Sessions were facilitated by the team, community members and specialized external facilitators.

### **Working groups**

As in all previous EDEs in Schloss Glarisegg, the participants were generally responsible for cooking, dishwashing and cleaning the common spaces, supported by the assistants. Integrating feedback from last year, we tried another way to weave participants integration and assistant support in the overall journey through the EDE. In order to integrate even better the working times into the daily schedule and encourage

participants to work together in a more transformative way, an additional slot called “working group time” of one hour before lunch every day was introduced to the schedule this year. The working groups were divided into three groups of 7 to 8 participants that took turns in being responsible for cooking on one day, cleaning as well as dishwashing the other day and integrating their experience mostly during group sharings the third day. This allowed not only for the group responsible for the cooking shifts not to miss any session of the schedule, but also to merge the working group into a home group feeling, where they could everyday land and bond together, having an opportunity to express themselves and be heard in a smaller group. The working groups organized their working shifts independently and mostly used sociocratic tools for decision making. The three groups were joined by one assistant that was also fully part of the groups and participated in the sharings. It created a direct link between the participants and the team. Working times were usually opened with a brief check-in and intention setting, and closed by a check-out and short reflection on the experience. Over time, the working groups took over more responsibility and were less reliant on the support of the assistants.



*Group picture of all participants (except Sebastian), organizers and assistants of the EDE 2021.*

## 6 Highlights of the Four Dimensions

The following descriptions are meant to give a short overview over the highlights during this course in the four dimensions of the Gaia Education EDE curriculum: the social, economic, ecologic and worldview dimension as well as the design dimension bringing those four together in ecovillage design.

### **Social Dimension**

A lot of social tools were presented during this EDE, such as forum, sociocracy 3.0, Dragon Dreaming, possibility management, Scott Peck community building, transparent communication, Authentic voicing, conflict transformation, embodied leadership, rank and hierarchies as well as different forms of council, sociocratic decision processes and fishbowl conversations during a weekly reflection time. This scheduled reflection time was introduced following last year's feedback to offer the group an opportunity to be seen and listened, express tensions or gratefulness as well as integrate and digest the richness of the week.



*Weekly reflection time*

During the first days, the sociocratic tool was introduced by Roos to the participants. The working groups were the first live example where they could practice and experiment with this tool, and they were given the task to find a name for their group, a vision, and



choose a representative. Each representative of the three working groups plus a representative of the organizing team formed another group, as a double link sociocratic structure. The representatives were given the responsibility to harvest the topics and proposals raised in their respective groups, and address them in the group of representatives to, if necessary, start a decision making process for topics concerning the whole group. If raised topics couldn't make it to a decision, they would be addressed back into the working group to be amended or form new proposals.

The Dragon Dreaming Tool guided by Teodora, accompanied the first project group sessions to invite participants to use this tool to organize their project group time. 4 sessions were dedicated to deepen the tool and go through a dreaming circle, setting goals, defining a main mission and creating a Karabirrdt. The possibility management sessions were proposed by two Glarisegg community members, Christine Dürschner and Martin Salanda. They covered the basic introduction of the map of feelings and box distinctions, and an introduction to anger work. An entire afternoon and evening were assigned to a Scott Peck community building session. Divided into our working groups, each one had a main “facilitator” to present the guidelines and accompany the process.



*Embodied leadership session with Jashana*

Anne Lohmann proposed a session to explore transparent communication, a tool from Thomas Hübl to express ourselves from a more intuitive and felt place. Sonja-Vera led a session of authentic voicing, inviting participants to express with their voice the deepest nature of their body. Daniel Auf Der Mauer held a Conflict transformation introduction

during an afternoon session, and an extra evening session as well where we could navigate through collective presencing our innermost challenges and vulnerabilities.

In the second half of the course, Forum was offered twice with an external experienced forum leader, Sonia Koller. Embodied leadership was guided by Jashana as a way to experience how it is to lead and be led and reflect toward the feeling and meaning of leadership and what it could become. The often unspoken topic of rank and hierarchy was raised and reflected upon Sonja-Vera's input and offered different perspectives on how this affects our lives on a daily basis in how we perceive ourselves and others, and how others perceive us, raising the awareness of societal privileges in social dynamics.



*Indigenous singing night with Stimmvolk*

### **Economic Dimension**

The opening of the Global Economy with Jashana confronted us with images and selected videos of the world wide web. Inspired by Joanna Macy's "*Work That Reconnects*", collectively witnessing these representative pieces of the state of our society gave space to feel the emotional charge of sadness and anger related to this topic. "*It is my experience that the world itself has a role to play in our liberation. Its very pressures, pains, and risks can wake us up -- release us from the bonds of ego and guide us home to our vast, true nature*" (Joanna Macy).

Further in the course, alternative economic models were discussed in a session about the economy for the common good with Katharina Wiesner. Then, our relationship to money was investigated with Jashana in a somatic and interactive session that focused on lighting hidden dynamics in how we relate to money. Finally, a session covered

mindsets, methods and strategies of empowered fundraising, and proposed a binome role-play to practice the act of “asking money for our heart project”

Claudio Berreta presented us some key information to weave global economy with global ecology and helped us understand the multifactor reality of food waste, backed with his PhD research on food waste in Switzerland. Finally, Petra Heid presented her work at a fair trade organic chocolate company as a concrete example of an international business factory run by a sustainability based mission.

### Ecological Dimension

Since this EDE happened in Summer and was specifically entitled “*intimacy with nature*”, the ecological dimension had the biggest weight in the course among the four dimensions. It was represented mainly by five permaculture sessions, where participants learned in depth about the permaculture principles and design methodology and had several possibilities to get practically involved in the community permaculture garden by setting up a garden compost pile and a permaculture bed. Further we’ve learnt in different sessions about self-sufficiency, ecovillage design and global chocolate production, its impact on the environment and agroforestry solutions for more sustainable cacao production. During a project-pitch session, participants and the organizing team shared about their experiences with environmental movements such as GEN, Extinction Rebellion, Earth Restoration Camps and Positive Deep Adaptation.



*Roos presenting food forest principles*



The organizing team attempted to design everyday life during the EDE in a way that gives opportunity to learn about different aspects of ecological living. We bought a large part of the vegetables used in the kitchen from nearby organic farmers, and participants had the chance to join the collection of foods from their farms. We also received left-over bread from a nearby bakery and went dumpster diving at supermarkets in the surrounding area, as a deliberate act to counteract the destruction of perfectly edible food and to become aware of the dimensions of food waste in Switzerland. In the kitchen, participants had the chance to learn from each other about ways of self-sufficiency, i.e. by baking sourdough bread, producing fermented foods and cooking with seasonal and regional foods. We further improved and used two compost toilets on the campground. A compost team made up of one assistant and several participants took care of the compost disposal and was able to learn about humanure and composting.



*Examples of the still perfectly edible food that we found in the trash bins of local supermarkets*

### **Worldview Dimension**

The worldview dimension was, of our course, strongly inspired by Joanna Macy's work that reconnects. A key element that covered this dimension was our midterm full moon co-created ritual with some participants, consisting of a *council of all beings*. In preparation for this co-created ritual with the participants, we all went on a silent quest into the forest in order to find out which natural element, being or aspect we would like to represent in a council that was meant to be a ritual where we try to connect to nature and let her speak to us as human beings. Later we created masks and costumes that would represent the chosen aspect. Disguised as those chosen elements, beings and aspects of nature, we gathered at an ancient ruin on a hill close to Glarisegg. There we held a ritual, starting with inviting the spirits of all four directions, followed by an introduction held by a group of humans who were there to listen to the spirits of nature.

All those representing an aspect of nature then stepped up and shared what they felt like saying as a representative of this natural aspect in front of humanity. The council was ended by one assistant representing death guiding everyone through a metamorphosis where they put down their masks and regained their human identity. Passing through the portal of Transformation, every human being was invited to take responsibility for supporting the end of the story of the separation between Humanity and Nature. We then all went through a ritual inspired by the Hawaiian tradition of Ho'oponopono, where we stood in front of each other and expressed what we were sorry for and what we asked to be forgiven for, followed by expressing our love and gratefulness towards each other as beings of nature.



*The masterplan for the ritual, the mask making and the full moon ritual at the ruins up the hill.*

### **Design Dimension**

The design dimension was realized through the applied work on projects that the participants brought with them. At the end of the second week, we had a morning of project pitches, where we saw more than 10 presentations of participants sharing their project dreams, whether still a seed or already in action. We continued with a World Café, to find out more about the project ideas and perhaps already start dreaming together. At the end of the day, four groups had formed. The work on the projects began with a guided Dragon Dreaming process of finding a common vision and mission as well as defining and organizing actions in a Karabirt. It then flowed into self-organized working processes where tools and lessons learnt throughout the course could be applied. Support from the team was available when needed. In total, the groups spent at least 18 hours on their projects, and additionally had a weekly evening of sharing and being together. The last few course days were all about finishing up the work on the projects:



last decisions needed to be taken, group tensions resolved, presentations wanted to be prepared and rehearsed and project reports finalized. On the last day, all groups presented their projects and had a final chance for reflection, appreciation and celebration. Below is a short quote and visual impression of each project group.

### **Durga's Tiger Land in Ecuador**

(Anton, Carmen, Clemens, Daniel, Vanessa)



“We used Dragon Dreaming as our collaboration tool and Sociocracy for decision making. We also used sharing circles for emotional process work. In the beginning we did not take enough time to get to know the group members, so after two days of project group time we had to gather as a group to clarify the expectations of each group member. We also could not decide about the concrete topic of our project. The two possibilities we had to decide was either we are moving on the land, or we are in a consultant position. Therefore, we had to redo the planning phase of the Dragon Dreaming process. We also restructured the way we use Dragon Dreaming and we adapted it to the needs of our project circumstances. For celebrating our project processes, we did body movement, swimming in the lake and cuddling circles.”



## Urantia – Blossoming the Countryside

(Arne, Sonja, Leonie, Mara, Manuel)



“People are leaving the countryside and moving to the cities. This rural exodus is a big problem, as e.g., the cultural activities on the countryside are decreasing and craftspeople are not able to recruit a new generation of successors. Young people are disconnected from nature, from other human beings and from themselves. Depressions and a sense of a meaningless life are rising. We need a new culture that leads from alienation to connection, from fear to trust. The climate crisis is a huge problem, which needs grassroots movements to increase the efforts fighting against it. We want to empower the young people in these processes by bringing a holistic education into their lives that motivates them to engage in a transformative culture on the countryside. For this matter, our goal for the project group was to create a clear vision and prototype for an educational and living project.”

## Appenberg Community and Safe Space

(Sarah, Anna, Leoni, Vera, Julia, Sophie, Bryan)



“A group of 7 dreamers from the Ecovillage Design Education (EDE) course at Glarisegg 2021 gathered and used the tools of dragon dreaming to manifest a collective vision of an ecovillage at Appenberg containing a safe space for those in need. First, dreams were collected from every individual. From there, a dream circle was created to unify the themes and set the shared objectives of the group. Then the dreamers indicated which objectives were necessary to fulfill for 100% of their own individuals dreams to come true. [...] From this set of collective objectives, we distilled the following goal as the vision of the Appenberg community: Build a community of social diversity at Appenberg with shared values and practices as well as holding a safe space for whoever needs it. [...] The EDE group employed sociocratic methods in order to make group decisions. Sociocracy provides tools for presenting clarified proposals to groups, and allows space for concerns and objections to be heard.”



## Alternative Youth Hub

(Marcus, John, Stéphane, Leon, Lewis)



“Mission statement: *Create a sacred avant-garde educational hub, where the new generations bloom, rooted in community building and authentic being.* The HUB is holding sacred space for a gentle regeneration of our global symbiosis in profound intimacy with nature. A space working like the heart, where intentional communities, corporations, governments, ethnic communities, native communities, philanthropists, individuals and organisations come together to a common grounding. Here, they will thrive in self-regulation and an empowered lifestyle, where capacities and needs create a system of trust-based flow. This will be a space that can expand and contract, root deeply and also be replicated and sprouted easily. Our vision is to create an autonomous system that decentralises access to resources, power and energy, where the soft and the hard needs are met. This will be a space that empowers marginalised people in order to develop interdependence and encounter a more balanced and fair way of interacting.”



## 8 Evaluation

This year's EDE in Schloss Glarisegg was particularly different from any previous course, mainly due to the circumstances of it being an outdoor course with improvised infrastructure and a much smaller group of participants. The infrastructure required a lot of attention by the team, particularly during the first two weeks, and also weakened their resources through several nights with poor sleep due to heavy thunderstorms, mice invading tents, noise from moments of ecstatic love in neighbouring caravans and a situation that was generally challenging our comfort zones. However, despite the fact that the course was held with only a fraction of the infrastructure usually available to the EDE, participants largely welcomed our effort to make this course possible and arranged themselves very well with the situation.

A major difference to previous courses can also be found in the composition of the team, which consisted of Sonja-Vera and Jashana as only two organizers, since Elisabeth, who was part of all previous EDE courses in Glarisegg as a co-founder, did not join this course any more. This situation changed the dynamic in the team, where the assistants took a more important role in balancing out tensions and processing differences amongst the two organizers and were to a much higher degree involved in planning the course and the sessions. This was very positively welcomed by the assistants and seen as an empowering experience, allowing them to bring more of their capacities into their role.

In this course, the participants found themselves in working groups that also had the function of home groups and were given a lot of time to share and reflect about their experience. This was perceived very positively by the participants and the assistants who had accompanied them in their journey. It was seen as a good structure to create more integration time and include every participant in a smaller social structure where they could express themselves more freely with challenging or uncomfortable topics. The presence of an assistant in these groups created an ideal link between the participants

and the organizing team, inviting to an eye to eye relationship. Through this double role of being fully included in a body of participants as well as part of the team, tensions and concerns could very easily be identified and transported between the two circles.

One of the main tensions during the course evolved around a session working with anger inspired by possibility management which was led by two members of the Glarisegg Community and perceived as an unsafe space by several participants. This situation opened an already running conversation between the two organizers around the questions of psychological process work tools, if they are suitable and if yes which ones would be introduced within the program. With the very limited capacities of the team due to the demanding infrastructure, these questions could not be addressed immediately and created further tensions between several people involved. They could finally be settled through a mediation guided by a Glarisegg Community member and a counseling setting on the first hand, and another space with the participants where they could give feedback to the course leaders on the second hand. However, following this experience, possibility management was the single course feature that was most signaled by participants to be removed from the programme in the final feedback. We took this feedback to look more closely at the different ways and approaches of process work and how we wish to introduce them in a future EDE to prevent a similar scenario.

In comparison to the past years, the Dragon Dreaming tool in the project groups was closely accompanied and guided by an external facilitator during the first three sessions dedicated to the project groups. By giving time in the schedule to navigate deeper the Dragon Dreaming tool, it also brought challenges to some groups who had no proper time to figure out their inner dynamic and gather as a group before concretely dream together.

While there was a lot of work done in preparation of this year's EDE in order to better accompany the project groups on their journey - including an elaborated hero's journey storytelling to invite participants understanding the purpose of the project groups as an opportunity to learn from challenges - most of it couldn't be included in the course, mainly due to the short time in which the schedule had to be rearranged in spring after the new course dates were set. How to better accompany the project groups on their journey therefore remains a question and task set for the next EDE, where a lot of new learnings can be integrated from this year's course experience.

One of the learnings we got is not to confront participants with any new tool or content directly after they had just formed their working or project group. Instead give them time to get to know each other in more informal and less complex settings than a sociocratic process or a dreaming circle. Following the same track, we - the organizing team - had

the amazing opportunity to meet all together for ten days in January. This gave us the time to know each other more, deepen intimacy and build trust amongst us, creating a strong and solid team feeling during the summer event. We also took 5 days together after the event to build down, celebrate and gather feedback - personal, schedule, dynamic wise - amongst us to close this adventure.

An element of clarity arose from the conflictual situation described earlier between the two witches around the question of process work, which could be described in these words: It doesn't work to schedule a session with an external facilitator with the intention to diffuse an emotional charge raised by a previous session with an organizer. It is confusing for the participants group as much as the facilitators, and raises the feeling of insecurity of some participants.

As an alternative to the "food event" organized until then every year at mid-term programme, the ritual of *the council of all beings* took place. This ritual was a real succes, at all levels. It included a group of participants who co-created the ritual with the organizing team, it integrated some very creative moments of mask making bringing another quality into the space, and invited everyone to feel into the connection with - our - nature and move through it within a ritual space. This event brought a very tangible feeling of "we are all in this together" amongst participants, assistants and organizers, and settled a profound sense of trust and connection in the group dynamic.



*Empty spots as memories of our course after the participants had left and the tent was built down.*



## 9 Outlook

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, this year's EDE was not followed by a week of "growing together days", where usually former EDE participants are invited to join the course and integrate the new participants into what we like to call our "EDE family". However, such a chance was given by the Dragon Seed Camp, an initiative derived from a project group during the 2018 EDE (<https://dragonseed.org/>). This year's Dragon Seed Camp took place from August 29 to September 5 and some spots were reserved for the new EDE alumni. There is also a traditional new year's gathering planned for winter in Vellexon, France. And the EDE 2022, which hopefully can happen this time in winter as usual and include the growing together days, is only half a year away from us now.



*Evening fire on the campsite during the EDE 2021*

«The world is not a problem to be solved; it is a living being to which we belong. The world is part of our own self and we are a part of its suffering wholeness. Until we go to the root of our image of separateness, there can be no healing. And the deepest part of our separateness from creation lies in our forgetfulness of its sacred nature, which is also our own sacred nature.»

Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee

