



# report

2 September, 2018 – 15 March, 2019

## Awakening Leadership Training



**EDE**

ECOVILLAGE  
DESIGN  
EDUCATION



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## Wing/Advanced EDE Awakening Leadership Training



## Course Overview

This Advanced EDE was part of the third Awakening Leadership Training, a collaborative effort which took place from 2nd September 2018 – 25 February, 2019 (plus Gaia Education TOT from 27 Feb-13th March 2019) in Thailand. The EDE framework was integrated into this programme which expanded modules of learning with increased emphasis on self-cultivation and social transformation. The 5 areas of learning were:

- Self-discovery, healing and cultural integrity (Worldview Dimension EDE)
- Interpersonal dynamics: Power sharing and compassion (Social Dimension EDE)
- Eco-political Economy (Economics Dimension of EDE)
- Ecology & Design (Ecological dimension plus Design in EDE)
- Skilfull means for Social Transformation (Including Training of Trainers)



ALT participants embarked on a journey to learn deeply about themselves, the present society and our natural environment





Over the timeframe, participants took a journey grounded in critical self-awareness. Different forms of mindfulness and reflection were embedded into the daily rhythms of the programme. From this they learnt to be present, to understand themselves as a way to understand others and vice versa, and they gained the confidence and courage to find their way forward. They got to spend time in nature, to explore inner healing, and practice diverse forms of inner inquiry. This all helped to bring awareness to a sense of interconnectedness, and a commitment to contribute to the wellbeing of our world.



Candles lit by participants during the inauguration ceremony

*I was looking for some answers to big questions – how to connect my inner happiness with the world around me and the problems of the world. I was looking for how to connect inner and outer change.*

*I now feel I am more connected to all the parts of myself. I am more committed, more inspired, and more able to cope with my inner and outer reality, and more grounded as an agent of change for myself and for the rest of the world. – Pierre, France*

They learnt together and from each other, strengthened by their diverse cultural backgrounds and life experiences. They built their own community of good friends and care together, and had the time and space to practice possibilities of what community can be and how it can transform society.

*The way the teaching was given flowed so naturally that I felt like I was just enjoying my time with a group that I had just met. Yet, day by day I felt more connected with my new friends, the quality of our communication deepened and I felt my heart opening to embrace the people and the experiences*



*around me. I feel enriched by all the knowledge received that is now well absorbed and integrated inside me. This is due the participatory methodology that not only involves the mind and rational thinking but equally the heart and hands in a way that every theory is immediately put in practice, followed by a reflection on the experience. Like that, each lesson became alive and meaningful.*

*Now I feel myself awake and ready to embark in this amazing journey of inner and outer discovery that is the ALT program, with the joy to see myself surrounded by empowered and aware people who share the same dream. – Claudia, Brazil*

## Participants

While 5 participants completed the whole course, over 150 participants joined at least one module of learning. The programme aligned with a parallel Thai Awakening Leadership program, and participants from both programmes coalesced during certain modules of learning, for greater interaction and diversity among the learning community. As well as co-learning with Thai participants, there was also a significant group of Chinese participants joining the ecological modules, and Myanmar participants joining throughout the programme. While many participants are active in the social realm in differing capacities (lawyers, trainers/facilitators, NGO workers, environmental educators etc.), there was also number of participants seeking direction in how to walk their path with sustainability and authenticity at its core (business sector, school teachers). Another significant group of participants were grassroots actors, working directly with marginalized communities across the Asian region.



Participants attending the Deep Democracy module

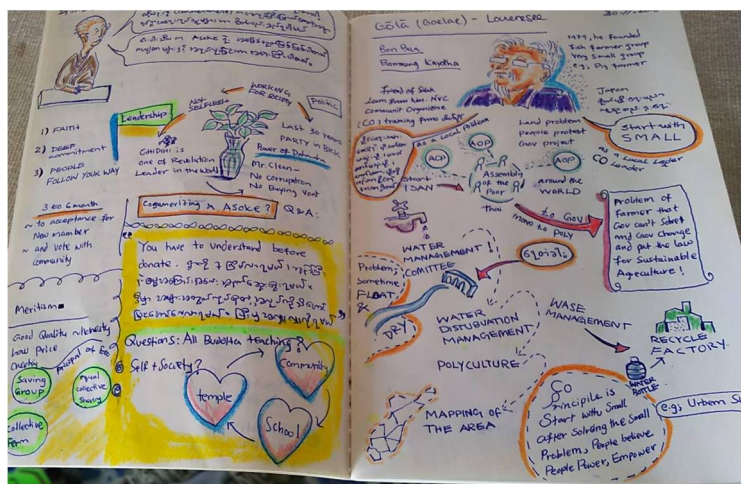


This diversity in life experiences and worldviews was truly enriching to the learning process. Relationships grew among people who would never have possibilities to meet, and opened up opportunities for deep friendships grounded in empathy and understanding.

*A lot of the skills I learnt came from the other participants, and that is why this participatory approach is fantastic, because it really brings out the best in each one of us. – Pierre, France*

## Course Rhythms

Every day began with movement-based practices, and each learning day was introduced with half an hour of meditation together in the classroom, which the students also helped to lead. Learning sessions began with group re-caps of the previous days' learning and reflection on the emotional energy of the group. Six-seven hours of study made up the rest of the learning timeframe, with another half hour of guided and self-directed deep relaxation in the middle of the day. Journal writing was introduced for half an hour at the end of each day, to continue the flow of self-awareness and reflection. Wellbeing circles were held intermittently, as a lot of reflective sharing also took place during modules.



Participants' notes and journal writings became more and more intrinsic as time went on



Sometimes the time called for celebration

The long-term group of students (with the 5 EDE participants at its core) were given space to practice and experiment with self-governance. They were handed responsibilities such as organising Hands-on work, writing up reflective articles for posting on social media, and welcoming new students to ensure a sense of community and trust continued throughout the timeframe of the programme. Having space for decision making and taking responsibility strengthened their own skills in social dynamics.



Student council meetings as part of participants' experimentation with self-governance

A significant portion of the course was spent at Wongsanit Ashram, an intentional community and ecological training space that has hosted EDE trainings since 2008. One month was spent in an indigenous Karen community in N Thailand, where participants stayed with families and ate together with them. Some participants also joined their daily livelihood activities on free days, which included rice cultivation and market gardening. The final parts of the training included exposure visits in S Thailand, including homestay with local communities, deepening learning experiences through sharing daily lived reality of people and having the space for dialogue and sharing together.

*At Wongsanit Ashram, the lush nature, the ecological buildings and the delicious vegetarian food that is partially locally grown gave the perfect frame for our learning. Everything there says: 'here we walk our talk'. – Claudia, Brazil*

## Worldview Dimension (10 Sept – 12 Oct)

### Modules:

- Ecological Wisdom from Asian Traditions
- Paradigm Shift and Emerging Cultural Values
- Mindfulness, Inner Growth and Leadership
- Path of Inner Healing and Transformation
- Art and Self Discovery

Preceded by a one-week community building introduction, 'Building a Community of Good Friends', the worldview dimension was placed first as a foundation to help participants ground their





own perspectives, and utilise that as a basis to explore further learning in and outside the classroom.



Building trust and foundations for a community of good friends

The first module tried to show a new way of looking at the world: from valuing bigger, faster, and more to experiencing the benefits of living slow, small, and simple. By giving attention to culture (also by rediscovering its practices) and understanding of the economic mindset, participants could critically assess the downfalls of limitless growth and start thinking differently about progress, by seeing a new vision of well-being - an important lesson for anyone aiming to live a full life.



Japanese tea ceremony part of Slow is Beautiful module





The module on Paradigm Shift was both experiential and intellectual, taking an excursion into the values, belief and energies driving the old paradigm. This included one of Bangkok's newest and most luxurious shopping malls, as well as the city's red light district, a major tourist attraction. Time was spent mindfully exploring, observing and sensing the energies and personal feelings. The last experiential visit into old and new paradigms was to a community of (mainly) farmers to give participants a sense of their transformative community development model. These visits helped prepare participants to relate on a deeper level to the classroom material, including historical background of the old paradigm and formation of new paradigm, with forays into new science.

*Through learning, I am no longer doubtful about an "alternative" path, because there are so many people working with new ideas towards a paradigm shift. With good friends and holistic worldview, I believe we can support each other to co-create something new - it might be small yet amazing. That is why we are here at ALT program. I am excited to learn more!*  
-Azusa (Japan)

The final 3 modules focused on self discovery and transformation of consciousness through mindfulness and trauma healing, with each modules' experience building onto the next one, allowing for deeply transformative processes within the learning space to open up. These modules also provided different pathways into self-exploration, so that participants could experiment, explore different ways of knowing, and acknowledge the different aspects of themselves as they were revealed. This flow of modules was most powerful in terms of inner transformation, and participants continued with some of the practices as a group and individually over the remainder of the program.



Masks: Participants exploring different parts of their personality during Art and Self-Discovery

*If you could get rid  
of yourself just once,  
the secret of secrets  
would open to you.  
The face of the unknown,  
Hidden beyond the universe  
would appear on the  
Mirror of your perception.*  
~Rumi



**GOOD PRACTICES:** Flow of modules that highlighted self cultivation for deep transformative work;  
Safe space developed by facilitators to allow participants to explore and express deeply;  
Diverse range of practices for self cultivation, allowing participants to explore and identify pathways suited to them;

**CHALLENGES:** A packed schedule of modules cultivating inner knowing and healing didn't allow enough time for emotional recuperation and rest.

### Topics Covered:

Shifting from the Economic Paradigm; Framing Knowledge on Worldviews; Old and New Paradigms; New Science; Meditation - 4 Foundations of Mindfulness, Loving Kindness, Body Awareness practices, Intuition; Art Therapy - Soundscapes, Self Discovery and Expression; Trauma Healing – IFS, movement-based therapy.

### Youtube

#### **Building a Community of Good Friends:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dDvzzU04TI&t=316s>

**Paradigm Shift:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9RkBwf9kE8&t=1s>

**Art and Self Discovery:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NORSKHIfA3Q&t=160s>

## Social Dimension (15 Oct – 6 Nov)

### Modules:

- Compassionate Communication
- Conflict Transformation
- Deep Democracy
- Buddhism and Process Work

Ongoing community building was emphasized during this dimension, creating the space for learning, experiencing, inquiry and experimentation. Community building was an important foundation for the ongoing learning journey, and was continually encouraged as participants flowed in and out of the programme. Trusting each other and being vulnerable brought out the quality of good friends, and allowed everyone to see what is possible in living together. Participants were able to practice deep listening, compassion and empathy, as well as celebration and exploration of common values.

*I have more attention and more awareness of the subconscious, and what is going on inside and outside. We are victims of conflicts, we have so much hurt, pain and fear. Now I know that needs are behind the conflict, and I accept and feel free to express more of my identity. I have learned from conflict, gained knowledge and have become stronger from within. I need compassionate communication in my life. – Sokchea, Cambodia*

Within the community, diversity was explored through creating a safe space where people felt free to express themselves, find beauty and uniqueness within each person, and begin personal journeys to understand self and each other. Expressing vulnerability and moving out beyond comfort zones





allowed participants to step into new roles and behaviours that helped them to grow together. Non-violent Communication, Process Work, Deep Democracy and Conflict Transformation were important learning modules to facilitate this process.

*In Deep Democracy; we learn how to feel, how to listen deeply, how to take human energy seriously. How to flow with that energy and listen to what is 'not said'. Starting our own journey of the 'unseen' world. – Machima (Thailand)*



Gaining confidence during a group Deep Democracy process

**GOOD PRACTICES:** Strong levels of trust built through activities encouraging vulnerability and expansion of comfort zones; Active participation throughout from experiential activities and praxis, co-creation of the learning framework and setting ground rules.

**CHALLENGES:** Negative impact on group energy after changing study location to Bangkok city full time.

*Topics covered:*

Self Cultivation – Self Awareness, Edgework, Archetypes; Social Awareness – Roles, Rank, and Marginalisation, Trust building; Group Dynamics, Deep Democracy, Conflict Transformation, Non-violent Communication



## Youtube

**Compassionate Communication:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FJipsZ3nfQo>

**Conflict Transformation:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kpa8MCoFopo&t=12s>

## Eco-Political Economy Dimension (8 Nov – 7 Dec)

### Modules:

- Eco-political Economy
- Gender and Social Justice
- Asian Political Thought
- Local Solutions: Alternatives in Practice

Understanding the political systems and situations (East and West) is essential to shift into an alternative paradigm. Eco-political Economy week was dynamic, where participants learnt from a national Green Party founder, together with Thai political actors readying for the upcoming Thai elections in 2019. Along with Asian Political Thought, discussion revolved around the major political and economic systems underpinning societies in Asia and around the world. Large concepts were examined —capitalism, socialism, democracy, authoritarianism and beyond—and how they affected each of participants families, homelands, and ecosystems. Though participants hailed from different corners of the world, they all knew what trauma looked and felt like under the collective heft of these systems.

Gender and Social Justice was a powerful opportunity to learn about current ‘power-over’ culture and social systems, which cause inequality. Participants could share their own stories of facing injustice and how they have overcome the situations. Coupled with this, useful skills such as body based mindfulness and listening were introduced so that people can cultivate power within and heal each other.







## Group exercise for experiencing structural violence and discrimination as part of the Gender and Social Justice module

*I would like to see the world where all individuals live with confidence and express themselves freely in an equal, power-sharing society. I want to practice these methods to be more aware of what is happening inside and outside of myself to be a better service to society - Azusa, Japan*

Local Solutions encompassed an exposure visit to some interesting and powerful examples of community organizing and self-governance across the NE of Thailand. Setting out to explore whether alternative ways of living and governing were possible and to meet pioneers in praxis, beginning with the 'community' as society's foundational unit. It included visits to examples of community economy models, holistic community development, spiritual community and intentional community living. A lot of inspiration was felt through learning directly from these communities, their lessons learned over decades of action, and the pioneers who had committed their lives to putting into action their values and visions for a better society.



Participants arriving to Northern Thailand after a night on the train



Hands on work: Integrating into community life wherever they arrive

*Sometimes, I felt the urge to renounce the life I had built and instead, give myself to these communities instead. But the more we travelled, the more I realized that the greater urgency lied in me getting to know my own piece of land—that instead of growing one community into an all-expansive model or institution, it was more important to grow many, many possibilities in every corner of the world. That was our work—to reinvigorate our homes and lands, to soil and wet our hands, and to redefine what our security and success meant. – Doreen, Taiwan/US*

**GOOD PRACTICES:** Introduction of 'big picture' systemic change with practical examples from Asia. Introduction of Asian Political Thought as a challenge to 'there is no alternative' mindsets; multiple models of alternatives in practice

**CHALLENGES:** Heavy content and diverse levels of background understanding meant less participation and benefit from content for some participants. Feedback showed that participants would have benefited from more reading materials and background reading.



## Topics Covered:

Global Economic System and Neo-liberalism, Capitalism and Socialism, Green Political Theory, Gender, Power Dynamics, Feminism, Structural Violence, Community Organising and Social Movements, Community Economics, Holistic Development

## Ecological Dimension (10 Dec – 18 Jan)

### Modules:

- Deep Ecology
- Foundations in Ecology
- Eco-Crises – Climate Change
- Hands-on Work
- Vision Quest
- Ecological Design

There were four modules on ecology: Foundations in Ecology, Ecological Crises, Deep Ecology and Ecological Design. The one-month dimension took place in an indigenous Karen community in N Thailand, where participants stayed with families, and took part in community livelihood activities during the days off. It was a fully integrative experience, following the rhythms and interacting with the daily life in a traditional community. This whole experience deepened all aspects of the study, bringing in the unique worldview of Karen people and their relationships with the environment. This brought a rich ecological learning dimension to participants through connecting to the daily-lived experience and worldview of the community members, and being exposed to other ways of connecting with nature - specifically through natural science, ecological design, and deep ecology practices.



Exploring the magical forests in the lands of indigenous Karen community in Northern Thailand





*"It was quite a unique experience to do a deep ecology workshop in Paga'gayaw (indigenous Karen) lands, being able to learn with them how to listen to the whispers of the powerful nature which they are immersed in. I'm also glad to have shared this experience with a wonderful group of participants, that were very engaged in holding space for each story and perspective to flourish. All of that skillfully lead by OmSunisa Jamwiset (Gaia Ashram), a deep facilitator, who imbues the workshop with true intention, strong insights and magical gestures." - Dino, Brazil*

Utilising the community and its surrounding natural environment as part of the classroom was also a powerful way for participants to interact, learn from, and explore over time their relationships with the ecological systems around them. By spending one month in the community, observation and felt experience of the surrounding environment was able to deepen.



Being with nature, learning from nature

*Understanding the natural world is key to live in harmony with our surrounding and taking mindful action in the protection of life on earth. After sharing, playing, and reflecting about nature we feel full of energy and inspiration to share and spread the understanding of life on earth. One very personal feeling is that the more I know about the nature, the more I love it, feel part of it and want to protect it. - Pierre, France*





Vision Quest was integrated this year into the Ecological Dimension, to provide a bridge – alongside Deep Ecology – to felt experience of interconnection with the natural environment. It is such a unique, sacred and powerful process, where participants left the world behind and embarked on an ancient journey, where the forest and solitude became their home, and nature offered them guidance far beyond what they would normally experience. On their return after being initiated through the ordeal of fasting and spending time alone in nature, they then shared sacred space together to incorporate and share their vision.



Vision Quest: Looking to nature for guidance, and bringing its gifts back to the community

*I feel more trust, more confident and braver, the Vision Quest has been very important for me on this level. I developed compassion for people, even for people that struggle with me or I struggle with. And I love everyone equally, which is equanimity. I strengthened my commitment for the earth, for the needed changes in the world, which is something quite dear to me. I have new ways of seeing the world, due to all the different perspectives from participants, and of the planet, that I experienced.*

- Pierre, France

**GOOD PRACTICES:** Long-term stay in the community whose worldview and livelihoods are imbued with a strong connection to their natural environment; Natural Science brought in an important aspect of observation and curiosity to balance the more internal experiences of ecology; Utilising the surrounding communities to explore local wisdom and solutions to ecological crises; The profound and unique experience of Vision Quest, held by a very powerful facilitator and the women elders of the Karen Village.

**CHALLENGES:** Difficulties in finding a safe space for the Vision Quest, as it is difficult to get community support for this kind of activity, which is outside of local cultural context. Impact on group energy following a long exposure trip before the start of Ecological dimension.





## Topics Covered:

Ecosystems and Biomes, Weather Observation, Soil and Forest ecosystems, Observations, Tools for Measurement, Patterns in Ecology, Endangered and Rare Species, Environmental Value Systems, Deep Ecology (Work that Reconnects), Permaculture, Site Design, Climate Change and related crises, Bio-diversity, Archetypes, The Hero's Journey, Ecological Wisdom.

## Youtube:

**Foundations of Ecology:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_7cjzz5F\\_O8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_7cjzz5F_O8)

**Ecological Design:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XJAaqnix7vI>

**Vision Quest:** <https://youtu.be/BmV0tkoypj4>

## Skills for Social Transformation Dimension (23 Jan – 25 Feb)

### Modules:

- Cultural Repair and Redesigning Harmonious Organisation
- Sociocracy
- Community Organising for Empowerment
- Applied Drama for Facilitation
- How to Facilitate Deep Ecology

While this dimension is not part of the EDE curriculum, it is integrated into the ALT and includes the Training of Trainers module (separate report). This dimension looked in more detail at skills and learning from good models of practice, especially drawing from their lessons learned.

Models of Good Practice in Sustainable Eco-Communities included visits to:

- Nong Sarai community (during Paradigm Shift module) who have an integrated grassroots approach to sustain their community economically;
- Mae Tha community which is a model of inter-generational efforts for self-governance over their natural resources and social entrepreneurship among returning youth.
- Ban Nam Khem and Ban Taptawan, where there has been extensive community organising to protect their rights and strengthen self governance in the wake of the Tsunami in 2006.
- Koh Yao Noi and Phang Nga province, where they are utilising community-led tourism approaches to protect their livelihoods and create a tourism based on people to people exchange.

Along with the exposure visits, there was one module specifically on the theory and practice of Community Organising, and how it has been utilised over the past four decades to empower slum community dwellers and build networks among grassroots people as a basis for national social movements for social justice and equality. The theory and practice of community organizing is a very powerful framework to work to challenge social injustices at a structural level and empower people, and participants could observe it in action and its results by staying with and visiting to slum communities in Bangkok who have engaged with the process over time.



Learning about community organising in practice

We started off the dimension with Cultural Repair, a module which introduced different ways of restoring interconnection and healing with ourselves, our communities, and the natural world using systematic processes of adding back in lost, forgotten, or undervalued traditional cultural elements. Immediately following, Sociocracy presented a model for both decision-making and governance. Within a limited timeframe of three days, participants received practical skills, and effective tools, using interactive small group activities, and role-play examples in order to gain practical experience.

*Sociocracy was a fun and eye-opening experience. At the end I feel empowered and motivated both to learn even more and to apply this decision-making tool in teams I work with, on the scales I can. – Shanya, Thailand*

Applied Drama introduced the art of drama practice in an educational, community or therapeutic context. Participants were brought together into a collaborative process of investigation, research, trial and error, negotiation and dialogue. They were gradually trained to discover their innate skills and how to use theatre and drama strategies and techniques to facilitate and serve the needs of diverse communities and audience they might be working with in the future.

*I personally found that this module magically transformed all the participants little by little from the first activity to the final one. The precious outcome was that all activities could provide broad-individual perceptions since each participant could apply the learning in their own context. – Aunwaya, Thailand*





Taking part in community theatre during Applied Drama module

Almost as a taster of the Training of Trainers module, participants trialled themselves in facilitating Deep Ecology, learning how to facilitate workshops on The Work that 'Re'connects, which is a series of practices exploring our inner responses to the suffering of the world and taking part in the healing of our planet, developed by Joanna Macy.

**GOOD PRACTICES:** Experiential learning through exposure visits and learning directly from community experiences, especially on the topic of community organising; evidencing solutions that work in practice and learning directly from people who have implemented them; being exposed to the wealth of existing knowledge and practices that are in the hands of ordinary people rather than experts.

**CHALLENGES:** Less time for group and individual reflection and interaction with the learning, and exploration of applicability in own communities;



**Topics Covered:** Theory of Community Organising; Asian community and national-level experiences of social movements for change; Applied Drama, The Work that Reconnects.

## LESSONS LEARNT

As this was an extended, 'deepening' EDE program beyond the usual 4-week training. Regular reflections from participants and final feedback and evaluation gave some inputs into what worked well during the course, and what could be improved:

- Shifting the Worldview dimension to be the first area of learning provided an excellent foundation and conceptual framework for exploring further dimensions
- Inner cultivation through daily mindfulness practice and a diversity of modules focusing on inner transformation, is the essential ingredient for fostering new paradigm leadership, as it facilitates the shifting of consciousness in tangible ways.
- Having a multicultural and diverse age learning group really enriches the learning experience through bringing diverse viewpoints and exchange into the group learning, and creating opportunities to explore relationships beyond what we would normally choose.
- The learning environment is an important factor in the learning experience. Contemplative atmospheres and exposure visits where participants stayed and learned with communities, provided another pathway to deepen their learning beyond intellect and into experience. Having some modules in Bangkok was distracting and weakened the group energy and connection. There needs to be a balance between having modules in places where the public can access them more easily, and having them in a contemplative and quiet space away from the wider public.
- Providing structure, daily activities and space that encourage self discipline (e.g. morning meditation, journal writing) gives participants new patterns of living that they take back with them, to continue their own cultivation.
- Length of training is quite important in really shifting new ways of understanding self and the world, and putting it into practice. This year the training was extended due to new modules being integrated into the programme, which made it too long for participants (only 5 registered for the complete programme compared to 14 the year before).
- Due to the long length of the training, there were requests for breaks in between dimensions, to allow for digestion of the learning, as well as celebration before moving on to new dimensions.
- Conceptualising the learning through regular (daily and weekly) reflective mind-mapping is very important skill to cultivate, as it allowed long-term participants to draw together their whole learning experience.





Dimension wrap up following the last module of each dimension

- Having groups of new participants join the programme at certain times (5 modules were co-facilitated with the parallel Thai ALT) added new energy and created a dynamic learning atmosphere.
- Balancing between different types of modules – those that cultivated the head, heart, or hands – enabled participants with different preferences and styles of learning to feel engaged. There is no uniform selection of modules that appeals to all participants in the same way.

*I really appreciate that you put worldview as the first dimension of learning, because it's the dimension I relate most with and it helped me with all the learning through to the end; I could look at the social, ecological and economic dimensions, but I framed it through worldview. - Machima, Thailand*

## Some Reflections on What Supported Personal Transformation

*I feel enriched by all the knowledge received that is now well absorbed and integrated inside me. This is due the participatory methodology that not only involves the mind and rational thinking but equally the heart and hands in a way that every theory is immediately put in practice, followed by a reflection on the experience. Like that, each lesson became alive and meaningful. - Claudia, Brazil*



*I felt I could connect a lot with nature. Before ALT I knew that nature could help me but I couldn't feel it. But during the journey we went to very beautiful places, and we spent time with people who are deeply connected to nature, and this has supported me a lot to listen to my inner voice, so that I don't need to be confused from outside voices. – Azusa, Japan*

*We have been talking about the edge, how that place has diversity and potential; and I really feel that I learnt a lot from my friends, teaching me so much, and I feel that we all learnt from each other. When you look at each of us, we ourselves are the products of our culture, our nation, our education, our life struggles, and we bring that to the classroom, so the learning from each other is very rich. This is where I found the knowledge really comes from. – Machima, Thailand*

*I feel the Worldview dimension is crucial. In my opinion, it's the main work we need to go through, because all the rest is a result of what is going on inside of us. I think our society is very damaged inside, and worldview allows us to go through the journey. I liked everything, the possibility for my own inner healing and growth. – Claudia, Brazil*

## KEY LEARNING OUTCOMES

*I can feel that I found my vision, my family in this environment. What we believe and think in our normal lives isn't always accepted, but it is here, with people with the same direction and intention in life. So I feel at home. I feel a lot of freedom. For the first time I can see and deal with my trauma. I can look and see what is going on inside myself. So it's like a freedom, along with other brothers and sisters going on the same journey. Its freedom to know what is going on inside ourselves and outside. – Thien, Vietnam*

*I love to be here very much, because it's the space to be who I am. I don't need to hide my weaknesses or strengths. The space welcomes me whatever I am in this present moment with these lovely friends. So I appreciate this space. I am more aware of my identity and integrity, of allowing everyone to be themselves – Thitsar, Myanmar*

*What I gained the most is interconnectedness, beyond concept. Before I spent so much time protecting myself and working on myself to project myself in a certain way. Being in these learning modules, I experienced interconnectedness, not just as a concept. Not only inside the classroom, but in this moment in time, a lot of energies are working to bring us here. So now I am working on connecting to the outside. – Machima, Thailand*

*I have new ways of seeing the world, due to all the different perspectives from participants, and of the planet, that I experienced. I think I experienced something close to true happiness during the training, and from that I can see the direction and the vision. It's not always there, you have to work on it constantly, but I got a taste of that. The change in myself is as important as the change outside. By changing myself is no less important than doing big campaigning work. – Pierre, France*





*I feel deeply grateful for everything we learned and everyone who participated in the learning. For me its very strong, it has changed a lot about my direction in life. I know this is exactly what is missing at this stage in my life. Many things I knew from university, but something was missing, the spiritual path. A lot came up for me that I could rediscover inside myself. It's the best thing to happen to me. – Robin, Switzerland*

*I think I was afraid to leave at the end of ALT and take my own journey because I feel scared. But I also have found my strength during Vision Quest, that I can do it, that I am strong enough to follow my own path. Now I feel I am really to take my own path, but I could only reach this point because I came here and there were people who could understand, who were accepting of people like me. – Azusa, Japan*

Overall, there was clear self-transformation of participants and facilitators through the learning journey. Not only the full-time participants, but other participants who joined for selected modules or dimensions also benefited greatly from the ongoing participation from the longer term participants. Together there was a continuous co-creation of a compassionate energy field which opened possibilities for each participant to deepen their learning experience and personal transformation through allowing for vulnerability and trust.

Inner reflective work provided a foundation of integrated learning across all modules, and a means for exploring diverse pathways for personal growth. As a result, the learning was grounded in experience beyond intellectual understanding, through connection of head, heart, hands and spirit together.

Some of those deep practices led to a greater acceptance of the suffering as part of the cycle of life, and also how to self-heal. Facilitation skills learnt were also about how to help others heal their wounds too. Working with the range of human emotions, there were also opportunities to learn and work with conflict, which led to changing attitudes, through realisation of conflict as an opportunity for growth and healthier relationships. Many of these practices opened participants to accepting the polarities, the shadow sides, which exist in themselves and others, and accepting and opening to them as part of the richness of human experience.

New learning arose by being exposed to a broad set of cultural perspectives, through the diversity of participants from around the world and their unique life experiences, and the diversity of resource people, who drew on teachings from their own experience, as well as both Asian, Western, new paradigm thinking and beyond. This is the learning process of edge-maximisation that enriched participants tremendously.

While not every module was participatory in nature, the general structure that gave space for group work and reflection meant there was a general shift in how the knowledge was generated. This clearly built confidence in the participants. They were able to develop their own conceptual understanding of social, interpersonal, and personal perspectives through the framework of the four dimensions of sustainability plus the added dimension on Skills for Sustainability, and identify the connections between them all. Regular mind-mapping also supported this process of integrating learning into frameworks that are useful and applicable outside of the classroom, while daily recaps and a final consolidation of the learning, increased their skills in critical thinking, and public speaking.



Another major outcome was the disciplined daily practice in mindfulness that participants can bring back to support themselves in their lives. Daily practice over the course has supported them to create new patterns and behaviours that incorporate mindfulness and being present to themselves and the world around them.

Seeing many examples of regeneration of local wisdom practices and cultural values as solutions that already exist, is very inspirational and gave confidence that alternative sustainable models are practical, down to earth and are not confined to only middle-class but available and workable to ordinary citizens, even farmers without much cost.

All in all, participants are awakening and empowering themselves by going through the process of this programme. Personal awakening means knowing the strengths and weaknesses within, being able to accept oneself as who they are and learning some skillful means to use their strengths for the wellbeing of all. Social awakening means understanding clearer the structural violence with its consequences at various levels in the society. Ecological awakening means fuller awareness of the ecological crisis including its layers of causes we are facing all over the globe. The social and ecological crises are neither separated from each other nor from our modern way of life.

Empowerment means participants have empowered themselves to do daily self-cultivation with self-empathy and cultivating compassion for others. Compassion combined with deep comprehension of social and ecological issues has become a deep motivation for taking action for the betterment by using ones' own strengths and various skillful means for social change encountered during the programme. In other words, together we are setting up a social movement where more wholesome individuals are working to build wellbeing communities, then networking to co-create a more healthier society and resilient planet earth.

## **Mater of Arts in Holistic Sustainability (SEM College)**

ALT MA programme – accredited by Bodhisatva University, Florida – provides a unique combination of Coursework (ALT Modules) and Project Work, individually tailored to participant's needs and requirements. It is not solely a knowledge-based, but competence-based degree focusing on both inner and outer work for change. It brings together the integrated learning from the ALT programme coursework, and related prior experience, in order to develop an individual research project in the area where the participant wants to effect change.

Learning is self-paced, as it's intended to enhance the work of change agents, not to be a burden on top of busy schedules. SEM College supports humanized education without discriminating on "academic" ability. In practice this means students are free to choose between different mediums presenting results of their final project: written thesis, video documentary, drama (written and performed), workshop(s), art exposition etc.

TUITION: \$1,200 + \$500 (14 day-long Building Research Skills Module)

See our website to learn more, or email us at [SEMCollege.MA@gmail.com](mailto:SEMCollege.MA@gmail.com)

## **Beyond ALT – next steps and participant actions**

This year we have begun to offer a Masters Program, based on coursework of the ALT, plus a research project that contributes to positive social change. It is expected that participants from the past 3 cohorts of the training, plus social change agents from within our regional network will be main targets for the program, as prior work in the social sphere will also be count towards certification.

In terms of results of the training, participants from both this cohort and from last year are involving in diverse transformative learning platforms:

A participant from NE India has set up a Heritage and Language Learning Program, to inspire underserved local





youth to gain confidence in themselves, and explore meaning and purpose in their lives and their wider Karbi ethnic group. A participant from US, has joined her for the past 2 years, to co-facilitate a module on Mindful Connection and Social Change for youth joining the 3-month program. They integrate NVC, deep ecology, decoding globalisation, gender awareness and setting long term goals, all embedded in a contemplative learning process that encourages mindfulness as a foundation for social change.

This year we were lucky to connect with a community of independent learners from Vietnam, The Soil Project – with 2 participants joining the ALT for 2 months. This has inspired the set-up a Thai Soil Project, following a similar trajectory of providing space for students interested in creating space and connection for collaborative and self-directed learning journeys.

Together, Soil Project Vietnam and Thailand, and Heritage and Language Learning Project will join to co-facilitate an Asian Youth Empowerment training on Holistic Leadership Facilitation in Vietnam later in the year.

Two Myanmar participants also joined the Soil Project Vietnam and facilitated an Art in Everyday Life – Self Understanding Through Art workshop in Vietnam for Vietnamese youth, to share life stories, peaceful energy, and experience art and connection.

In Myanmar a further two participants collaborate in training through Theikha Myanmar, to share back what they learnt during ALT. They facilitate learning on paradigm shift, mindfulness, trauma healing, NVC and self-discovery through art, over 3 months for underserved Myanmar youth.

One participant from the Buddhist Peace Fellowship (US) who joined the Local Solutions module, has been invited back to support a native seed saving project with youth in one of the exemplar sustainable communities, Mae Tha.

Participants have taken part in the Extinction Rebellion in London during April.

Three participants (from Hong Kong, Taiwan and US) have co-facilitated a youth empowerment training run by INEB, part of their Young Bodhisattva trainings to empower Buddhist youth from around Southeast Asia to gain confidence and explore the interconnection between Buddhism and social action.

This is a snapshot of some of the actions that have been inspired by ALT, that continue to spread the energy and compassion of the training, and bring values-based educational opportunities to people searching beyond mainstream education for meaningful learning and new paradigm thinking.

*This course changed my life. I would say I already come from an alternative education background, but here it started from the inside – If you realise about your thoughts and emotions, how to work on yourself, with your friends and community, then you can start to work on sustainable, regenerative projects. – Robin, Switzerland*

*This training was a game-changer for me. I have been working for community for 8 years, but before coming here, I was at a point that I was stuck. And now I know that it's not only the work in front of you that you need to focus on. When you are mindful and aware of what is*



*going on at a global level, and what is going on inside yourself, and how they are connected.  
This course pointed that out for me.*

*We will be going to Switzerland, and we will work on eco-village restoration, working with what  
is already there, using all these tools to work on community and work on ourselves – an holistic  
way of work, an holistic way of living, an holistic way of being. – Machima, Thailand*





## FINANCIAL REPORT

This is an adapted financial report from the one year (Jan-Dec 2018) annual report produced by SNF finance office. It takes into account the costs accrued during the timeframe of the training and income specific to the training. It should be noted that there are also ongoing salary and operation costs during the 6 months when the training is not being held, that are not included in this report.

### FINANCIAL COST ESTIMATE FOR AWAKENING LEADERSHIP TRAINING

#### 1 year costs (September 2018-March 2019)

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>USD</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
International Participant Payments	94,051	
Thai Participant Payments	12,714	
Donor Funding for Public Events/Modules	16,265	
Income from INEB Donation	50,000	<b>173,030</b>
 <b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
ALT Training Costs	130,820	
Operation Costs (6 months)	2,700	
Staff Salary (6 months)	28,183	
Payment to Gaia Education	1,014	
		<b>162,717</b>
 <b>TOTAL INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>10,313</b>



## Overview Schedule

### Awakening Leadership Training Programme

(2 September 2018 – 15 March 2019)

	<b>Registration &amp; Orientation</b>	2 Sept 2018	
<b>Module 1</b>	The Big Picture & Building a Community of Good Friends	3-7 Sept 2018	Price : \$450
	<b>Emerging Worldview, Self Discovery and Healing (EDE Worldview Dimension)</b>		
<b>Module 2</b>	Slow is Beautiful – Ecological Wisdom from Asian Traditions	10-14 Sept 2018	Price : \$575
<b>Module 3</b>	Paradigm Shift and Emerging Cultural Values	17-21 Sept 2018	Price : \$435
<b>Module 4</b>	Mindfulness, Inner-growth and Leadership	24-28 Sept 2018	Price : \$450
<b>Module 5</b>	Path of Inner Healing and Transformation	1-5 Oct 2018	Price : \$450
<b>Module 6</b>	Art and Self Discovery	9-12 Oct 2018	Price : \$400
	<b>Interpersonal Dynamics: Power Sharing and Compassion (EDE Social Dimension)</b>		
<b>Module 7</b>	Compassionate Communication	15-19 Oct 2018	Price : \$450
<b>Module 8</b>	Conflict Transformation	22-26 Oct 2018	Price : \$450
<b>Module 9</b>	Deep Democracy	29 Oct-3 Nov 2018	Price : \$600
<b>Module 10</b>	Buddhism & Process Work (Seminar)	5-6 Nov 2018	Price : \$230
	<b>Eco-Political Economy (Economic Dimension EDE)</b>		
<b>Module 11</b>	Eco-Political Economy	8-12 Nov 2018	Price : \$390
<b>Module 12</b>	Gender & Social Justice	14-16 Nov 2018	Price : \$340
<b>Module 13</b>	Asian Political Thought	19-21 Nov 2018	Price : \$230
<b>Module 14</b>	Re-evaluating Liberalism (Seminar)	22-23 Nov 2018	Price : \$245
<b>Module 15</b>	Local Solutions: Alternatives in Practice	26 Nov-7 Dec 2018	Price : \$700
	<b>Ecology and Design (Ecological Dimension EDE)</b>		
<b>Module 16</b>	Deep Ecology	10-14 Dec 2018	Price : \$450
<b>Module 17</b>	Foundations of Ecology	17-21 Dec 2018	Price : \$450
<b>Module 18</b>	Eco-Crises - Climate Change	24-28 Dec 2018	Price : \$450
<b>Module 19</b>	Exploring and Experiencing Practical Hands-on Work	2-4 Jan 2019	Price : \$260
<b>Module 20</b>	Vision Quest	5-11 Jan 2019	Price : \$500
<b>Module 21</b>	Ecological Design	14-18 Jan 2019	Price : \$470
	<b>Skilful Means for Social Transformation</b>		
<b>Module 22</b>	Cultural Repair & Redesigning Harmonious Organisations	23-25 Jan 2019	Price : \$260
<b>Module 23</b>	Sociocracy	27-29 Jan 2019	Price : \$260
<b>Module 24</b>	Community Organising for Empowerment with Exposure Visit to Practical Examples	31 Jan-12 Feb 2019	Price : \$800
	<b>Mindful Facilitation for Empowerment : Training of Trainers (ToT)</b>		
<b>Module 25</b>	Applied Drama for Facilitation	16-20 Feb 2019	Price : \$400
<b>Module 26</b>	How to Facilitate Deep Ecology Workshop	23-25 Feb 2019	Price : \$280
<b>Module 27</b>	Mindful Participatory Facilitation + SDGs & Edge work	27 Feb-13 Mar 2019	Price : \$1,000