



gaia  
education

Design for Sustainability



Final Report

GEN-Japan  
Mini-EDE  
Youth



gaia  
ede



Gaia Education  
Ecovillage  
Design Education  
Programme



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# CourseOverview



## Course Overview (150-300 words):

Cherry blossoms and spring flowers were blooming beautifully in the Satoyama Forest, wet from the gentle rain. The GEN-Japan Gaia Youth, Mini-EDE Youth program was successfully held in an intensive camp format, at As One Suzuka Community and the surrounding Suzuka City-designated biodiversity area, from March 25th to 29th in 2023.

11 new participants and 4 young staffs of alumni experienced the innovative listening-conversations as the key of social building. Even though they had different nationalities including Chinese, Viet Nam and Mexico, they become familiar very quickly beyond their differences.

And they could observe that the effectiveness of this conversational formula is evidenced in a practical community living by more than 150 people at As One community. They were very inspired and moved, saying “ Human has a bigger possibilities than we think.”

They learnt the communication is a base for the sustainability in building flexible relationships, managing businesses, and organizing and running communities; it works very well to transfer from relationships of division and conflict to those of harmony and cooperation towards the realizing regenerative societies.



This time we attempted to train new staffs. 2 staffs were alumni of EDE and Gaia Youth, and 3 new faces of alumni joined as sub-staff to become the full-staff in future learning the program management. No one was injured, and the participants were impressed by their listening attitude and teamwork, which was unwavering no matter what happened during the period.

We used As One Community for the learning contents as a prototype. As the result they can have alternative model for their future attempts.

Despite using the existing infrastructure of Suzuka city, it has achieved a low-impact, low-carbon way of life, at about half the Japanese average, by creating close relationship like a large family.

**GEN-Japan** has organized the EDE program annually since 2017; the intensive course for young people was launched from 2022, in response to the increasing participation of young people, in particular from 2020, and their demand for a regenerative way of life in a new era.

### Participants (50-150 words):

The 11 participants had different nationalities including Chinese, Viet Nam and Mexico, who can speak Japanese and English. 17-year-highschool student and 33- year artist joined together. Participants are university students, instructor of yoga studio, entrepreneurs, a member of Community Development Cooperative, freshmen of companies, and musician and activists. They are eager to learn how to create the regenerative community as well as the learning space on each site. They aim to become a can-do person for the next society and hope to keep in touch together for learning and training for themselves. They are creating their networking and introducing their friends to the next program.

### Course Rhythms (50-150 words):

The first day: Noon Opening, Checking in, Orientation, Introduction themselves, Observation of Forest, 17:00 Bath and Break 18:00 Dinner, 19:30 WS of Communication of Exploration, 21:30 Reflection and Exchange .  
The second to the fourth day: 6:00 waking up and walking, observation at Forest, 7:00 Breakfast, 8:30 WS or Lecture or Explorative communication 10:00 Reflection 10:15 Break, 10:30 WS or Lecture or Explorative communication, 12:00 Lunch and Rest, 13:30 WS or Lecture or Explorative communication, 15:00Reflection, 15:15 Break, 15:30 WS or Lecture or Explorative communication,17:00 Bath and Rest, 18:00 Evening dinner, 19:30 Communication of Exploration, 21:30 Reflection and Exchange meeting





The fifth day: 6:00 waking up and walking, , 7:00 Breakfast, 8:30 Tea Ceremony 10:00 Presentation of each “whole design” to create communities. 11:30 Evaluation and Reflection, 12:00 Lunch, 13:00 Reflection of Learning and Living, 15:00 Diploma, 15:30 Final Report and Survey, 16:00 Departure

## Highlights & challenges of each dimension

### Social Dimension(150-250 words)



From separation and conflict to unity and understanding; the social dimension was the core of GEN-Japan’s program. It is why because good relationships transform our world view that is usually formed subconsciously and guides our views of happiness and principles of behavior.

Good relationship is being formed by daily communication with people. The quality of society is the quality of relationships. We believe that from separation and conflict to cooperation and understanding. To appreciate differences leads to a way of life that fits a circular and symbiotic planet.



#### TOPICS: self-exploration

- What is conversation/dialogue?
- How is “Heart to Heart listening conversation”?
- Why cannot we communicate smoothly and regeneratively?
- How is the conversation without hesitation or opposition?
- Without any “Should” ?

### LIFE Map

helped them to understand each inside history and background. This activity encouraged them to get focus on their heart.



They were inspired by the innovative self-exploration-conversations as the key experience throughout the camp. They tried listening to people to understand him/her, and tell others one's own heart. Each one can be interested in others. And understanding about each other is gradually deepening. They could start a practical and concise discussion holistically. It starts naturally to try doing something and reflecting to the whole

And then they could be aware that there is common, inherent desire for happiness among themselves.

Naturally participants became to cooperatively support each other from their heart. They could be aware of natural motivation to be respectfully listening to each other.

## From Quotes of Social Dimension

I could learn how to make a good relationship. Very interesting how people could change from their inside. Soothing and communicating each other, Hope to the future.

## Economic Dimension (150-250 words)

Participants are very interested in and excited by the As One community's economy system. Vegetable production is around several percent of Suzuka city's total production. Their farming and food processing (Suzuka Farm Co.Ltd. and Lunch Box producing and delivering company) help the city's local economy to be stable, support local food cycling system, and as the result they are trusted by local companies and people. Those community businesses support daily income of the community living. Based on the explorative communication they had vivid and safe atmosphere among them at the workplace: which support mistakes and weakness, maximize each one's individual potential. They encourage and empowers together at their best.







Another challenge of As One Community made participants very excited and also confused. New economic experiments between community members that do not involve the exchange of money, like a big family, they do not use money, and freely take something from the Joy corner.

## From Quotes of Economic Dimension

Economics of Love in the base.  
Could be tips to establish my own company.

Share economy between more than 100 people is possible.  
Workplaces are like playgrounds for adults.

At the As One Community, first, I could not grasp the reality at all. But getting along the tour, I felt so excited, it is like my pure dream from childhood.  
It goes to against to capitalism.

## Ecological Dimension (150-250 words)



I was found that we have lots of nature even if it is in the city. We got practical tips to sustain the nature from the perspective of supporting natural power instead of forcing nature to be what human wants.

In the ecology dimension, we learned how to preserve nature through observing the watershed from the Satoyama forest of Designated area of important ecosystem by the city to the seashore. And, by the total design of community we have possibility to make environmental impact can be reduced around half of Japanese household average, minimizing waste and food-loss.

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And, by the total design of community they could learn to have possibility to make environmental impact can be reduced around half of Japanese household average, minimizing waste and food-loss.

## From Quotes of Ecological Dimension

Slow but Sustainable and Authentic

Sitting and climbing trees in the forest was wonderful enough enjoy to be with friends naturally

‘I could learn the community total design is very important to solve the global warming problem.’

‘I learned that living within walking distance, creating jobs, and thus avoiding food loss, energy loss, and giving solutions to environmental problems.

It is the heartfelt and rational conversation and discussion for humanity without making enemies to solve the global problems. That is essential.

## Worldview Dimension(150-250 words)



A real story with social engaged mentality was given by Masashi Ono at the end of the lecture, who has 40 years experience totally to create communities building. They could learn what the essence to keep such mental strength is. There are spiritual exchanges between a pioneer and younger generation, as well as lot of tips for their growing as change makers.





The essence of these 5 days was that the youth could find out true himself and true inherent ability with others who are going to create a new society. We started this important learning by the true communication of the social dimension. By the experience of safe and secure atmosphere among participants beyond differences, we could catch our inherent essential ability to bond naturally each other. They found that it is essential to fulfill peaceful natural condition with no anxiety. If there is any fear or anxiety in the bottom of heart, it would cause misleading our intelligence. We need to get to study and learn about true essence of human beings and society Japanese Tea ceremony in the traditional tea room was held in the end of the program. Almost all of them have never experienced such true traditional ritual.

### From Quote of World View

‘ I was found that people in the present were brainwashed by fictions: Border, Nationality, Possess, Should-do way of thinking and some others.



Human is kind and wonderful./ We will be possible to realize the ideal.

My next step is to listen to my soul and live honestly in it. International / Chinese / Japan younger generation will be as one. I will host such a gathering.





## Lessons Learned (50-300 words)

Overall review by programe organizing team.

Three facilitators were freshmen and they tried to their best: “It was my first experience of a familitator in. Best communication were nessessary among familitators in advance.”

Necessity of strong bond among facilitators. To tell the participants the world without any conflicts, our behaviour and relationships had to be a role model. It was "easy to say hard to do". I learned that honesty and sincerity of oneself enabled the facilitators to keep community healthy open and trustworthy.

We need to check the mental condition before registration.

### **The reflection of a facilitating leader, Soichi Miyahara**

This is the first time I have participated in this programme as a facilitating leader. I realised that I was not good enough. I felt that the participants left the programme satisfied, but I feel we can go deeper.

And this time Gaia Youth was held with three friends I met at this programme a year ago. I was very happy to work with them. I would be happy to continue organising Gaia Youth with them. I would like to challenge myself to see what kind of programmes we can create with these friends. Gaia Youth was also an opportunity for the four of us to connect with each other deeply. I am very grateful for this precious opportunity.

Thank you very much.

Souichi Miyahara



## Staffs/Facilitation

### **Hiroko Katayama**

Female Born in 1955

Graduated from GEN Japan EDE 2017 Graduated from TOT 2018 in Thailand of ALT in Thailand

Graduated from E-EDE course (World) Executive Director of GEN-Japan, A plan designer, organizer and educator of sustainable education program. She joined As One Community in 2009 for learning the social management by the ScienZ Metho; she has experienced the personal development and social system development can occur in unison toward regenerative societies. Based on her more than 35 years community living, she has planed and started creating the innovative educational programs for practical development of sustainable relationship and the social systems free from conflict or opposition, where everyone can live as each is. She has innovated and run "The College for Sustainable Community Building" since 2014 and " The Lesson of listening to people" since 2015. GEN-Japan's EDE program has been organized by her since she joined the TOT.A member of Environmental Council of Suzuka city. Founder member of Kyoto Institute for Sustainable Social Systems;KIESS (2000- -), Bachelor of Education from Hirioshima University, Study on Civil Publicness of Jürgen Habermas at Literature of Waseda University Research Course for professionals Theses: JFM in India ( traditional forest management of India, 2002 KIESS Report ), India's special micro-credit; Self-Help-Management, KIESS Report 2003 Essays:What is "to be scientific"? Translation: Neem A tree for solving global problems (Ryokuhuu Shuppan 2005 National Reserch Council US)

### **Soichi Miyahara**

Male /Born in 1996,

GEN-Japan Secretariat. CEREMONY QUESTER with ethnic and traditional instruments. GEN-Japan's 4th Gaia Education (EDE) in 2020 at As One Community; Experienced full programs of As One ScienZ School for community building in reality

GEN-Japan Gaia Youth graduated in 2021 March and became a staff intern after that. Experienced a whole-body connection with diverse societies, cultures, lifestyles, ideas, people and nature during a boat trip to 23 countries after graduating from primary school; since 2016, through fieldwork with indigenous tribes in the Amazon River basin in South America, he has started exploring holistic environment of ceremony, where people are connected as one.

### **Toshiya Suyama**

Male /Born in 1998

GAIAYOUTH coordinator. Through books, travel and encounters with people, he explores the nature of a 'rich' society. Believes that a peaceful society where people and nature coexist starts from the peace of mind of individuals, and is exploring the possibilities of introspection and dialogue. .

Born in Okinawa Prefecture. Graduated from Akita International University with a BA in International Liberal Studies and International Cooperation Studies from the University of Tokyo, and completed GEN-Japan 2nd Gaia Youth in 2022.





## **Mayuka Momokita**

Female / Born in 1999

GAIAYOUTH Coordinator.. Born in Gunma Prefecture. Graduated from Waseda University, School of Cultural Planning. Completed the first GEN-Japan Gaia Youth in 2022. Aims to create a new society under the theme of 'the world we want to leave for our future children', based on her experiences as an international volunteer in mangrove forest conservation in Southeast Asia and at children's homes during her university years.

## **Sota Kidokoro**

Male / Born in 1997

GAIAYOUTH Coordinator. Experienced a round-the-world trip as a backpacker while still in school. During his travels, he realised that social and environmental issues were an extension of his own life and took a permaculture course to reconsider his lifestyle. He later graduated from the Regional Development Cooperation Volunteers of Okawa Village, Kochi Prefecture, at the end of his term of office. Born in Tokyo. Graduated from Meiji University, Faculty of Law, and completed the second term of GEN-Japan's Gaia Youth in 2022.

## **Takuki Okada**

Male /Born: 1996

Graduated from 2017 GEN-Japan's EDE Withdrew from Meiji Gakuin University in Tokyo. He had experienced lots of voluntary work in Philippines, Nepal and Northern Thailand as a member of Habita for humanity. He is the fourth grade student of ScienZ Academy of As One Community that aims developing younger people who can build regenerative communities.

## **Staffs/ Living and Office**

### **Fumimi Sato, Mitsuko Yoshida**

Female /Born in 1958

Graduated from EDE Japan in 2017. GEN-Japan's office and secretariat. Web-designer

### **Michio Kitagawa**

Male /Born in 1954

The university of Tokyo (Sociology), Graduated from the EDE Japan in 2017. Facilitator of GEN-Japan EDE: Social division. GEN-Japan's office and accountant.