

Gaia  
education



Design for Sustainability



report

2019 April to September

GEN-Japan  
Gaia Education  
2020

Global Ecovillage Network JAPAN



wing  
PROGRAMME

EDE

ECOVILLAGE  
DESIGN  
EDUCATION



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## Wing/EDE GEN-Japan Gaia Education 2020

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Opening Celemony with Keibo Oiwa, Masashi Ono and Kosha Jurbel (April.2020)

## 01 Course Overview

GEN-Japan has been running EDE course once a year since 2017. It was established as constitutional organization of GEN and GENOA, approved as a non-profit organization in Japan in 2016. Its base is located in As One Community; Suzuka City, Mie Prefecture, Japan. Suzuka is a typical medium size city with a population of 200,000, As One Community is well known as a semi-urban eco-community that was established in 2000 with the aim of realizing a society rooted in true humanity, in which everyone can live as they truly are. Currently, about 200 community members are living with good relationship with local communities, working together in their daily activities; their farming products and the daily dishes from the community business are well popular among city dwellers, as well as their voluntary works at the Satoyama forestry are welcomed by the public as preserving a biodiversity area by designated by Suzuka City.

Although we faced a sudden pandemic with covid-19 in March, we could quickly changed the style to Online one. GEN-Japan has the broad networking like Transition-Town movement, Parmaculture movement and their activitie's site as well as Scientists and practitioners doing excellent work in Japan. Making the best use of their support, the program could start on schedule and all of 20 participants willingly joined it from the beginning. Fortunately, from June the pandemic condition became safe and stable, we could run the program on site, by the innovative three-day or four-day a month format including weekend residencies and visits to local projects and case studies, all participants could learn the leading contents and experiments in the direction of sustainability of Japan.

Thanks to our supporters, Azumino Parmaculture garden, TT Fujino, all lecturer! Participants could enjoy learning together but one entrepreneur had to quit in the middle of learning due to his family issue. They could learn the importance of sustainable human relationship building through dialog and exploration to each true mind and heart.

Through the ScienZ Method, the abbreviation of Scientific Investigation of Essential Nature + Zero, a methodology that As-One has innovated for community building, step by step, participants could observe their inside and the root causes of fear to human relation issues like split and conflict among people. At the same time they could observe and experience what a great possibility we human have! It means, they get to know that human will be able to go together and solve them peacefully. The exercise was constantly held in small groups or big circles through all programs.

GEN-Japan believes that it is the basis for achieving the regenerative society to create such local communities and their network, as everyone can live their lives with true heart. And so the main target of Gen-Japan's EDE is to get to learn sustainable human relationship based on the conversation from the heart. Participants could experience that at a show-case community, As One network Suzuka Community. And then realize how important such social environment is! Healthy Society makes our inside healthy. Inside issues are caused by outside circumstances. Participants were encouraged how they can build healthy relationship among people. They could get confidence to learn more on 4 dimensions, both in visible and invisible contents. Here was the new networking created.

And On-Line two hours group sessions were held between every month program, in order to help participants not only to review and deepen the learning points, but also to keep motivation higher.

## 01.1 Participants

In the end of February 20 people had already passed the interview to be participants.

6 males and 14 females are from all around Japan; 21 years old to 64. 4 university students, 2 freelancers, 2 web designers, 1 town planner, 4 housewives, 2 entrepreneurs, 2 IT engineers, 1 principal of kindergarten, 1 experienced interpreter, and 1 architecture,

Their will for learning, ability and influence to others were higher. But one planner was disappointed on the program because he wanted to have more technical lessons for professional. After the conversation with us, he could start his own choice from all program. As the result, the learning attitude and class atmosphere kept higher than the past EDEs.

## 01.2 Course Rhythms

The first day, 12:00 acceptance. 13:00 to 15:00 check-in and exchange of home-works and challenges with breaks. 15:00-17:00 visits with orientation to local sites. 17:00 to 18:15 free time and taking a shower 18:15-19:30 a night meal and rest, 19:30-21:30 practical session. 21:30 social time.

The second day, 6:30 to 7:30 meditation, diaries, connecting nature, 7:30 to 8:30 a breakfast and rest, 8:30 to 10:00 lecture or practical group exploring, interaction with host members with breaks. 10:00 to 12:00 group work. 12:00 to 13:15 lunch and rest. 13:30 to 16:00 open lecture and group session. 16:00-18:00 visits



a local hot spring, rest and stay in nature. 18:15 a night meal and rest. 19:30 to 21:30 practical session. 21:30 social time. (One more day for designing in September).

The final day, the same schedule in the morning. After cleaning 13:30 to 15:00 final session. 15:00 to 16:00 report writing as the reflection.

## 02 Highlights & challenges of each dimension

### 02.1 Social

All subjects were covered comprehensively.

#### 02.1.1 Building Social Body as one by dialogue and conversation based on ScienZ method.

They could find there were different ways of recognition based on each background and inside, from culture, history, and environment of family and diverse condition. Through opening and observing their inside by each self deeply, they could find their own true heart, In addition to this, by conversation in small groups and a big circle; they could respect each difference as human.

Especially by the ScienZ method, dialog both of one-self and others made participants realize how every person is interdependent in reality; nobody likes struggling with others. People naturally like to live together. Their interest transited from the result to the process. They could experience to open their true heart and have a conversation to start being together. They could feel a peaceful atmosphere among themselves even if there were some feeling or emotion of antipathy before.

#### 02.1.2 Quotes





Soichi Miyahara(Male, Designer of aroma); It was exciting to learn that society originally aimed to support anyone to live the authentic self pleasantly!. My relation with family and partner become more comfortable than ever

Mio Zenba (Female, student); When we want to recover healthy human relationship, it is fundamental truth to connect deeply with each own heart at first.

## 02.2 Economic

All subjects were covered:

### 02.2.1 From Globalization to Localization

In the trouble sea of globalization, our focus is how to build and keep the independent island of local economy. The essence of economy is not by monetary exchange but love and trust exchange.

At Transition Town Fujino, one hour distance from Tokyo, participants could learn the typical local currency called YOROZU, which covers more than 400 households, 780 individuals in the city.

And another case they learnt was without exchange money. They were much interested in an inner economy of As-One's "SPACE JOY". 80 Community members and their family use every day without money. Participants feel like a Big One Family.

They got to know the possibility that no one needs money for daily food and necessities including coffee or alcohol or special skills and knowledge, based on love and closeness; depends on each trust through mutual understanding. They learned how the person is satisfied with affection in community members. In the result, they could get to know that people become to be free and encouraged to open their full personality with love to others; all people need is to be loved and love to others essentially.

Community business model is the Farming company and its prosscening section, Lunch Box shop with daily dishes cooking and delivery Company of As-One Community, whose hand-made-and delivering-lunch-box is very popular in Suzuka city, such as more than 1000 customers a day. Participants could learn such way of thinking and management as interdependence between the community business, local economy and city people.





## Quotes

Kiyoshi Katsuta (Male, Principal of kindergarden): It is exciting that localization can solve global problems. I want to build a community with my coworkers.

Emi Uomi (Female, Web designer) I was much interested in the local currency at Fujino TT. I will try it with my fellow

## 02.3 Ecological

All subjects were covered:

### 02.3.1 Over views



Participants stayed a kind of green- building, that is a retrofitted old school building as a training facility of Fujino city, Kanagawa pref. And their main learning place is a renovated hall as the Eco & Community Station as a platform of exchange with city dwellers of As-One Suzuka Community. Those examples made them realize that they have already enough resources and materials on their own site.

As-One's farming company is a model to reuse of abandoned farming fields. And they also have the food



processing section like Lunch box shop in the community.

At first it helps participants to understand how important local water management and nutrients cycles. And they learned that it shows no food loss between farming and processing and delivering and community living.

In June, at As One Community, participants could experience that there are lots of abandoned fields and forests in cities, not in mountains, waiting to be maintained, while local people are getting older. They understood that if they can have a step into local community around, they get opportunity to make good use of natural resources with local government and people.

On whole system approaches, participants, they made maps on cycles of water, energy and food as group works after study-tour. Through examination of their present living by Eco-Footprint, they found their problems against sustainability, and discussed on the solution. Another example was the Urban-permaculture way of living in Yokohama city, which encouraged participants because of its closeness to their circumstances.

## 02.3.2 Quotes

S.O (Female, Architect) Learning the Eco-foot print, I think that it is just the first step to get to know the real balance of our way of living. I enjoyed learning alternative possibility.



## 02.4 World view

All subjects were covered comprehensively.

### 02.4.1 Over views

They found that they have their own amazing possibilities and flexibilities, through six months exploration with conversation and dialog based on the ScienZ method.

They could experienced they have mutual true heart basically as a human being. That is the key for human to harmonize each other in the nature; the essential point of oneness.

We, human beings have compass inside to live

together, like a flock of Gaia's symbol. We are communal being as nature.

Such awareness happened among participants at the almost same time.

## 02.4.2 Quotes

Tatsuya Nobori (Male, IT engineer), I was much moved to be encouraged by a faculty, Hidetake Enomoto that the ability of imagine is undeveloped and most powerful natural energy of human"

Ayumi Nakajima (Female, Student) EDE course encourages me to recognize as I am. And so I feel to move out of existing values and start moving in the direction of new Gaia world.

## 02.5 Design

### 02.5.1 Observing the present condition and designing the future plan.

In 2020, we needed to avoid covid-19 infection. Though participants have to learn and have conversation through online and video lectures, they made learning group using their favorite examples from all contents. Condition was limited but worked well for their own team building.

### 02.5.2 Quotes

Sanae H. (Female, social entrepreneur of forestry); Based on our awareness to Oneness, we willingly become to start creating the base of conversation around. From such mutual understanding about people and local resources around, we will have perspective with local community people around. That is the beginning

Takaaki Kumakura (Male, a staff) I have never seen such mindful conversation and atmosphere as all participants willingly transited to be interdependent.

## 03 Lessons Learnt - Notes for Future Benefit

### 03.1 Notes of our Learning

This year we could quickly changed the program to the online style in March, just before the program starting in April. We sincerely appreciate the support by participants based on their understanding. At the same time, it was hard to fit the flow of learning for every participant. Some of them were disappointed. We did our best to run the all program. But we think it is necessary to create the new program for people to learn enough under the pandemic.

From the last Survey, we started a body-expression class in the program. We had Social Experiential Activities in April and September. The first one is for them to get relaxing. The last one is to confirm their relationship building at the end of program. They enjoyed a lot. Especially the first one in April worked better than we expected.

## 04 Participant Report

We live and learn together with exploring ourselves and finding the new path to the sustainable world.

Sanae Hirayama

It was fun!

Six months of living under the same roof we could learn 3 days and 2 nights every month

I decided to join last December.

I was excited with curiosity.

Meeting and learning..

People become people in the midst of people.

I thought I knew.



I wonder how many assumptions I have in my head.  
I'm just me, without any labels attached.  
The friends of Gaia Education I've spent time with and listened to are a lifelong treasure.  
I can't express it in words.  
Words can't describe how full I feel.

More than half a month has passed since we graduated.  
How is everyone?  
I wonder how everyone is doing?  
I'm soaking in the afterglow.  
I enjoy the fine bubbles that are fermenting inside me.  
I want to nurture it carefully and carefully.  
While continuing to learn.  
Until the day when this body ends□.

(October, 2020)

