3 September, 2017 – 6 January, 2018

Awakening Leadership Training
Course Overview

This EDE was part of the second Awakening Leadership Training, a collaborative effort which took place from 3rd September 2017 – 6 January, 2018 (plus TOT from 9-25th January 2018) 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:

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

Over the 18 weeks, 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 grounding to find their way forward. They got to spend time in nature, to explore their own inner healing, and practice diverse forms of inner inquiry. This all helped to bring awareness to a sense of interconnectedness, and the potential of many paths. 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 over time together, and had the time and space to practice possibilities of what community can be and how it can transform society.

“How do we create spaces where we leave with our hearts a little bit more open? I feel like ALT does that, and is really a model for how I want to think about creating spaces for others”
– Doreen, US/Taiwan
Participants:

Overall, 116 participants joined at least one module of the training. Fourteen participants completed the core components of the EDE, from Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, India, Brazil, UK and USA. Two monks completed the course, while over 50% of participants were female (8 out of 14). The wider participants included China, with further participants coming from Thailand and Myanmar. Many of the participants were active in social realm in differing capacities, (lawyers, trainers/facilitators, NGO workers, environmental educators etc.), as well as a number of participants seeking direction in how to walk their path with
sustainability and authenticity at its core (business sector, school teachers). Conventional educational levels ranged from participants with few years of schooling to PhD candidates, and ages ranged from 20 to over 60. There was also a wealth of diversity in the knowledge and experience from the many resource people and communities that the participants learnt from and interacted with.

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. A new activity of journal writing was introduced for half an hour at the end of each day for this activity, 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.
The long-term group of students (14 pax) 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 teaching daily meditation practices. Having space for decision making and taking responsibility strengthened their own skills in social dynamics.

Half of the course was spent at Wongsanit Ashram, where participants stayed in separate accommodation and ate together in the communal dining hall. 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 communal 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.

Participants could experience unique connection to traditional ways of living and being, through homestay in an indigenous Karen community for four weeks
Social Dimension

Core of the social dimension was building a community of good friends. Here participants co-created the space for learning, experiencing, inquiry and experimentation, which formed the foundation for the ongoing four-month learning journey. 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.

Within this space, self awareness practices were introduced, and expanded to inter-personal relations, understanding power issues of rank and marginalisation in order to challenge underlying dynamics, and foster equality and justice. Leadership was explored in terms of the diverse expressions and ways that a leader is able to share power, build unity, and facilitate people to express their potential.

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.

Beyond Building a Community of Good Friends, other modules in the Social Dimension included Non-Violent Communication, and Conflict Transformation (Process Work).

**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:** No real challenges during this dimension.

**Topics covered:**
Self Cultivation – Self Awareness, Edgework, Personality Archetypes; Social Awareness – Roles, Rank, and Marginalisation, Group Dynamics and Decision Making, Art and Ritual, Leadership and Participation, Trust building; Community Building - Ancient Wisdom and Contemporary Approaches to Community Building; Art and Celebration

**Youtube:**
Building a Community of Good Friends: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dDvzzU04TI&t=316s
Compassionate Communication: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FJipsZ3nfQo
Conflict Transformation: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kpa8MCoFopo&t=12s

*Socially, I grew up with the concept of fear, social injustice and breakdown of community. During the course we looked into this, and got to experience a community of good friends which is really empowering. Trusting each other and being vulnerable brought the quality of good friends. It was a very touching experience for me, knowing what is possible in how we can live together – Phil, UK*
Crossing my edge was about speaking my truth, and being grounded in it. This came from process work (during social dimension). I saw myself in someone, mirrored back to me. As an artist, I think I have an opportunity to speak the truth. Art can leave evidence of the truth. I want to use art as a tool for social change – Nora, Myanmar

When I decided to join ALT, it was from this overwhelming sense of separation - I couldn’t connect to people although I am an extrovert. So my sense of love has grown in surprising ways. All of us are here with a common hunger to transform ourselves, and we can only do this in community, walking hand in hand together – Kasey, US

Day 1, summarising the learning on Building a Community of Good Friends

Incorporating ritual into the rhythms of the learning

Daily alms round was an opportunity to both receive humbly, and to serve selflessly

Reflection on Concepts of Leadership for Building Community
Worldview Dimension

This dimension was placed second in the flow of learning after community building, to help participants ground their own perspectives, and utilise that as a basis to explore the world around them (Ecology and Eco-Political Dimensions, and Skills for Sustainability).

The module on Paradigm Shift was both experiential and intellectual, and began by 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. Numbness, distraction, exploitation, commodification - these were some of the thoughts that surfaced during group reflection the following morning. At Sulak Sivaraksa’s Bangkok home later the same day participants were again asked to walk mindfully around the space, before sitting down for an afternoon of dialogue with him. The space was peaceful and full of memories, there were books and art everywhere and a towering mango tree, which he planted as a young child. 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, food, and health.

Worldview dimension was the broadest of all 5 dimensions, with other modules including: Mindfulness and Meditation (7 days), Vision Quest (7 days), Trauma Healing (8 days), Art and Self Transformation (3 days). As these modules were experiential rather than intellectual, with each modules’ experience building onto the next one, allowing for deeply transformative processes within the learning space to open up. These four 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.
Calligraphy as one of the diverse contemplative practices within the Worldview dimension

Daily recap to strengthen capacities in analysis, catching key points, and framing the learning

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: Large group numbers for trauma healing reduced capacity for individual needs; Not enough safety guidelines during solo Vision Quest (one participant was lost for 12 hours);

Topics Covered:
Framing Knowledge on Worldviews; Old and New Paradigms; New Science; Food and Health; Meditation - 4 Foundations of Mindfulness, Loving Kindness, Body Awareness practices; Vision Quest – Archetypes, Stages of Life, Threshold, Transition and Re-incorporation; Art Therapy - Soundscapes, Self Discovery and Expression;

Youtube:
Paradigm Shift: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9RkBwf9kE8&t=1s
Vision Quest: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BlV0tkoypj4
Art and Self Discovery: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NORSKHIfA3Q&t=160s

‘In Art and Self Discovery, they showed us gentle tools to experience our dark side. I am still afraid to express my painful stories with words, but the facilitators showed us so many ways to discover myself without any fear or shame’. Phwe – Myanmar

‘The peak for me was Vision Quest, it was powerful for me. I grew up in the forest so I felt good. I found after that experience, I felt that I could do something for social change. Before I had some fear, but I faced it and found out it was inside of me, so I could overcome some of it, and that gave me power’. Khun Wailar – Myanmar
‘One of the most important aspects for me has been how everything we learnt here is all interrelated. Learning worldview is where my own journey began, growing up in a consumer world but not knowing what was really underneath it. During our learning journey we got to spend time in nature by ourselves, explore our own inner healing, and mindfulness and meditation. These all helped connect to this sense of interconnectedness and there is not just one path, there are many paths’. Phill – UK

‘I joined Vision Quest I wanted to know what to do with my life. The answers I got weren’t loud answers, they were answers from nature. If you can tap into the silence and connection, you get messages. That module shifted my perspective in terms of motivation and what I want to do in my life’. - Kathy, Australia

Ecological Dimension

There were four modules on ecology: Foundations, Technologies, Deep Ecology and Ecological Design (see below, design week). 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, to follow the rhythms and interact 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 learning dimension of ecology 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, appropriate technologies, and deep ecology practices.

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.

Learning Natural History through observation and curiosity
Part of the learning was for participants to do their own research, using their curiosity and selection of tools for measurement that they had learnt and made during the module, to go out into the environment and explore, observe, measure and analyse. This gave the opportunity to bring science into the learning as another path to connect with and understand the wider environment, alongside deep ecology practices and the Nong Tao community way of living (see design week).

**GOOD PRACTICES:** Long-term stay in the community whose worldview and livelihoods are imbued with a strong connection to their natural environment; Facilitator team for Ecology Foundations included young environmental students who were able to co-teach and encourage curiosity: Exposure to see other eco-village models founded on sustainable principles;

**CHALLENGES:** Connecting big picture of energy usage with alternative technologies; Not enough time in Deep Ecology; Big transition from Worldview dimension focus on self cultivation to Ecology from Natural Science perspective;

**Topics Covered:**

**Youtube:**
**Foundations of Ecology:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_7cjjz5F_O8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_7cjjz5F_O8)

‘I learnt that science and local wisdom align with each other. Most young people in my town only believe in science, and unconsciously we ignore the wisdom of our elders. Now I trust more deeply on how natural history and local wisdom complement each other’ – Chen Xi, China

‘I enjoyed learning deep ecology principles, and the bringing in of local wisdom and our own personal experiences. Sitting around the fire at night, creating our own ritual and telling stories, and spending time in the Sacred forest, these were all ways to help me truly connect with myself and with nature’ – Cai Yu, China
Design

The Design Week was integrated into the one month stay at Nong Tao community, as part of the Ecology dimension. Instead of having participants design their own projects, the site and the context of the community and its people was drawn on, through exploring the landscape and history of the community, and listening to the challenges and needs of three families, whose visions were the target for the design week. The process began with the community’s existing wisdom of sustainability and their sense of place as a foundation for thinking around how to co-design a future vision that encompasses their traditional ways of living at the edge of a modernising society.

Mapping began with the unique landscape and its embeddedness in the stories the community tells of itself – the sacred forest, the representation of cultural histories in different parts of the mountains and lakes. With the worldview of the community and their place firmly at the centre of the design, more diverse ways of mapping began in terms of social, economic, ecological and aesthetic. The participants spent time with the 3 families on site to understand their needs and concerns, and wider issues facing the community. Theoretical input was also given on design ethics, principles and skills.

The result was 3 models that attempted to respect the centrality of the surrounding environment and the community’s relationship with it as a major part of their identity. Respect for nature and other cultural values around community living were all common threads in the designs, as well as exploration of ways to integrate into the modernising society at their doorstep that could allow them continuing autonomy over their land and resources. The models were presented to each of the families and other community members who were curious about the visitors spending time in the rice fields and forests around the village.
The next year ALT program will explore and follow up on the designs with the facilitator, as a way to work together with the community of Nong Tao so they are able to meet the challenges of being an indigenous community in the context of modernisation.

GOOD PRACTICES: Utilising the already existing community as the basis for design; spending 3 weeks there prior to the design week, so that participants had time to experience Karen ways of living and being; Integration of existing indigenous worldview into design; co-creation between traditional wisdom and new sustainability practices

CHALLENGES: Ensuring the designs are fully applicable to the needs of the community

Topics Covered: Understanding place and landscape; Design Principles and Concept; Co-creation with Nature; Visioning;

Youtube: Design Week: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XJAAqnx7vl

Spending time at the design sites, observing and learning from the local experience. An evening of wisdom sharing from community elders.
Step by step design process to integrate four dimensions of sustainability

Designs for 3 community families to strengthen livelihoods and foster their existing connections with nature

'We can see climate change, limited resources, we are pushing things too fast, too extreme. On the other side we have regeneration. Its been empowering to see viable alternatives. Design was powerful, when we look at design its not just about structures and buildings, but its all embedded into ecology and social systems’ - Phill, UK

'As we have already learnt about paradigm shift in the worldview dimension, and how we can go forward with a new paradigm, this module gave me a sense of completion, because we could see how that process can take place in a very practical way. I learnt many things, especially the background and history of the village and their traditional wisdom and worldview, which is very sustainable, and we could see the beauty and happiness of life. I could learn the importance of observation of the forest and land from Puttee Joni (community leader) throughout his life. Moreover, I learned how we can identify the zones, ethics and principles of ecological design with creativity and happiness.’ – Phwe, Myanmar

Eco-Political Economy Dimension

Eco-political Economy week was dynamic with diverse learning methods in order to help digest the heavy content. It was especially powerful with the inclusion of 2 seminars that brought together diverse Asian thinkers and activists, to dialogue and interact with the participants on the themes of: Civil Society and Authoritarianism in Asia, and Capitalism and Liberalism in Asian Context. It was a rich learning experience, to witness the exchange of ideas among thinkers and activists from Taiwan, Myanmar, Laos, China, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Thailand. We plan for this exchange to take place every year as a public seminar. A special
evening public talk was also arranged on the topic of Islam in the modern world, providing people with an opportunity to understand the historical political backdrop to the rise of political Islam and links with terrorism.

This module balanced lectures and small group work to deepen understanding on underlying worldviews of political ideologies.

With Asian intellectuals and activists who represented Bhutan, Malaysia, Hong Kong, China, Taiwan, Thailand, S Korea, Myanmar, and India.

Balancing intellectual rigour with hands-on work – natural housebuilding during Eco-political module.

From here, the learning journey shifted to an small family eco-centre, where the rest of the module included deep exploration into the key political ‘isms’, alternatives to neo-liberalism, as well as introduction to money and currencies, food systems, and community organising and social movements. The heavy content was balanced by daily dance and movement practices, and helping on-site with natural house building. Participants spent the last 1.5 days wrapping up and consolidating their learning, and envisioning alternatives to the neo-liberal world of today.

Next year, this module will expand to give time and space to explore more deeply the theoretical constructs and philosophical roots of political ideologies, including more on Asian schools of Political Thought.
GOOD PRACTICES: Seminars with Asian Thinkers and Activists as unique space for exchange of ideas; Body movement practices and hands-on work to balance with lectures and knowledge-building on political economy; Introduction of ‘big picture’ systemic change with practical examples from Thailand.

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:
Islam in the Modern World, Capitalism and Socialism, Green Political Theory, Civil Society and Authoritarianism in Asia, Food Systems, Gross National Happiness, Structural Violence and Money, Community Organising and Social Movements

This was alot about systemic change, and we had a laboratory to think about how to talk about these issues. It was one of the safest spaces I have been in because of the spiritual aspect – Doreen, US/Taiwan

‘Content was critical. These issues cannot be talked about only among elite men, because these are structures that shape our past, present and future. I thought the resource people were great, so powerful, especially some of the women’ – reflection during Eco-political Economy module

Skills for Social Transformation Dimension

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 organising 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.

Another module was named ‘Slow Is Beautiful’, which integrated Asian wisdom practices and philosophies as an antidote to the negative impacts from the Western development paradigm. It included the introduction of thinkers such as Satish Kumar, Vandana Shiva, Masanobu Fukuoka and others who are drawing on and practicing elements of traditional wisdom in an effort to reclaim the global economy and create new patterns of localisation through ‘small, simple and slow’ solutions. Participants were able to explore and contemplate not only the theories, but could practice different traditional practices to bring the theories to life – Haiku, art work, flower arranging.

**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; Seed Saving and NRM; Post-disaster organising; Community economics; Unlearning the economic mindset; Concepts on slow and small; Materialism and Religion; Asian philosophies on ecology and spirituality; Global to Local

**Youtube:**
Mae Tha – living eco-village: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yMzfqlwHY_w

Japanese Tea Ceremony during Slow Is Beautiful – exploring traditional practices of slow, small and simple

Homestay and exploration in Mae Tha community
Wrapping up lessons learned from Community Organising

New skills in healing and reconnecting with the Earth during Deep Ecology

“Now I know why there is inequality – because we separate everything – people, society, nature. I can see that networking is the most important link, and that top-down approaches create more gaps. Now I know about power within and how to share among a network, and how to use that to improve quality of life for ourselves” – reflection during Community Organising module

“Community Organising is building a peoples’ empire from the ashes of structural violence” – reflection during Community Organising module

I am aware that I have to know myself, to stop the patterns that contribute to unsustainable modernisation. And I have to discover my own roots, to contribute back to society. For me, with slow consciousness, or mindfulness, I could see my true nature and a lot of my weaknesses which I have to accept, and to respect others – reflection during Slow is Beautiful module

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:

- Having Worldview dimension early in the program 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 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.
- 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. Continuous, consistent learning and being together over 18 weeks has resulted in larger shifts in the depth of changes and their ability to sustain, compared with previous shorter 4 week EDE programs.
- 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 of 18 weeks.
- Allowing more space for reflection and digestion after the deep inner work during the Worldview dimension. The process was very energy-consuming, and there needed to be at least 2 extra days for them to fully complete their own process before coming back into the learning community for
- Feedback also recommended that it would benefit to have the Deep Ecology module at the beginning of the Ecology dimension, so that all participants have already experienced felt connection to the environment, which could support their learning during the dimension.

Some Reflections on What Supported Personal Transformation:

*The more powerful learning modules were the ones where I became more aware of myself. I found no competition or judgement, so it allowed me to express my opinion, and that empowered me* - Khun Wair, Myanmar

*What contributed to my learning was the sense of trust and safety around vulnerability, which grew over time. You could be more authentic with people as the time went on. The learning sessions I remember the most were the ones where we really got to participate and practice. So when we could participate, we learnt the most, and it gave a sense of empowerment.*

- Phill, UK
What I appreciated was the structure and discipline, the morning and afternoon meditation sessions. It’s really hard for me to do that, but I really got the chance to challenge myself – Kasey, US

What contributed was that it was a safe space. And two things bring safety: diversity of opinion, and how the facilitator deals with conflict, so I could be heard and still be loved in spite of my opinion – Doreen, US/Taiwan

Having the facilitators be willing to adapt is helpful. And for me it’s not only diversity of opinions from participants, but also the diversity of RP’s. So politics week seminar helped to connect me to see that my work is beyond China and into SE Asia. The meditation is also very helpful – Heaven, China

Spaces and classrooms that encouraged contemplative learning
KEY LEARNING OUTCOMES

The knowledge has already integrated into my body, so I know this will all come out when I walk forward in my work - Khun Wailar, Myanmar

On my own journey, I have started as an inner activist, I have tried to dedicate myself to not only overcoming what scares me but what holds me back, by finding a place inside me that I can really connect to myself. Finding a sense of presence and starting to cultivate a sense of compassion, I can more wholly step into the area of outer activism. It may be in educational activism, how people are being empowered and empowering each other. I have experienced it first hand and am very grateful to have this experience. – Phil, UK

This experience was the most deeply I have felt that I was myself. It was a real gift to have the space to be myself. And I got a stronger conviction to work towards what I love and what I fear. In the West we talk a lot about doing what you love, but it’s also important to get closer and embrace what I am afraid of. – Doreen, US/Taiwan

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 energy and actions of 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 18 weeks 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 traditional 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.

Empowering 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.
Joining daily rhythms of life in Thailand: experiencing the spirit of giving as a cultural practice during a morning alms round

Plans for the Future

Together with the participants, we are co-designing a Masters programme to build on the ALT. This will hopefully be piloted in the coming year, with the ALT (including the EDE component) to be offered as the coursework component. To date, 5 participants are willing to explore this learning avenue.

Some participants will also return to support the staffing faculty as part of the next ALT. Four participants will come back (including one from previous year ALT/EDE) to contribute to the running and teaching of the course.

Other follow-on activities that participants have developed plans for in includes:

- Apply learning to the development of a new sustainability learning centre in Myanmar
- Teaching English through participatory methods for students in Japan
- Facilitating participatory learning trainings in Thailand.
- Translating ‘Systems View of Life’ into Thai
Start a reading club to revisit ALT topics, in Taiwan
Continue exploring and cultivating a path of mindfulness
Documentary-making on ALT learning journey
Continue learning to become a Trauma Healer

The largest module was Deep Democracy, held collaboratively with Thai Process Work facilitators and activists

FINANCIAL REPORT

According to the financial reporting for the period of 1 April 2017 to 31 January, 2018 – which includes the preparation period – there is a surplus income of THB 843,806.52 which will be carried forward for the coming year preparation period and ALT 3 which is due to start in September, 2018.

Majority of costs are made up of the food and accommodation costs, staff salary (yearly salary), and honorariums for resource people. Income came primarily from fees, followed by grants (Thai Health Promotion Fund), and philanthropic donations.
# SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modules</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module 1</td>
<td>Building a Community of Good Friends</td>
<td>4-8 Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 2</td>
<td>Conflict Transformation</td>
<td>11-15 Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 3</td>
<td>Compassionate Communication</td>
<td>18-22 Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 4</td>
<td>Paradigm Shift &amp; Emerging Cultural Values</td>
<td>25-29 Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 5</td>
<td>Mindfulness, Inner Growth and Leadership</td>
<td>1-7 Oct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 6</td>
<td>Vision quest</td>
<td>10-16 Oct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 7</td>
<td>Art and Self Discovery</td>
<td>19-21 Oct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 8</td>
<td>The Path of Inner Transformation</td>
<td>23-29 Oct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 9</td>
<td>Ecology Essence</td>
<td>1-3 Nov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 10</td>
<td>Ecological Technologies</td>
<td>5-9 Nov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 11</td>
<td>Ecological Design</td>
<td>11-13 Nov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 12</td>
<td>Deep Ecology</td>
<td>15-19 Nov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 13</td>
<td>Deep Democracy</td>
<td>22-24 Nov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 14</td>
<td>Eco-political Economy (Economics Dimension of EDE)</td>
<td>27 Nov – 2 Dec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 15</td>
<td>Community Organising</td>
<td>5 -11 Dec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 16</td>
<td>Eco-political Economy (Economics Dimension of EDE)</td>
<td>14 - 20 Dec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 17</td>
<td>Slow is Beautiful: Ecology Wisdom from Asia Traditions</td>
<td>23-28 Dec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 18</td>
<td>Exposure visit to Traditional &amp; Intentional Eco-Communities</td>
<td>30 Dec to 6 Jan2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 19</td>
<td>Practical Leadership – Mindful Facilitation for Empowerment (ToT)</td>
<td>9-25 Jan2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>