

# **Be the Change Now**

## **Gathering Report**



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## **How It Started ...**

World Spirit Youth Council (WSYC) started in 2005 in Switzerland at Arosa where a group of young people with the support of Children of the Earth USA formed into a platform for youth to put spirituality into action.

Quite separately, two young ladies, Sarah and Ellieschewa Dreyfus, have been attempting to create youth gatherings at Schweibenalp - Center for Unity in Switzerland in order to give youth the chance to connect on deeper levels and form a community.

2008 Guatemala brought World Spirit Youth Council representatives and Sarah together and discussions formed into a concept of a youth gathering in June 2009 with the exact purpose to empower a group of young people to stand together and build the youth components at Schweibenalp with a focus on putting spirituality into action. The financial support did not hesitate to show as such happens when there is unity of mind and purpose.

This was a successful meeting of like-minded youth from several countries of the world.

The core group who committed then had several meetings or communicated online throughout 2009 and 2010 and planned the Be The Change Now gathering. The below report is our account of what happened and we are happy to share the news with the world. Our dream is that more youth would join us or collaborate with us on the Path of Raising Consciousness and Unifying Thought and Action.

***Be the Change Now is how we intend to live our lives and inspire others too.***



## ***What We Did ...***

### **Morning Connection**



Every morning each of us gave our best to have an early start of the day together dancing, doing exercises and joining in a short meditation. The ones that shared their exercises and meditations were already engaged in their practice and thus allowed others to get inspiration about how to do simple and easy connection work.

### **Singing in Harmony**

Reaching harmony of the group was considered a very important aspect which was followed through different means. One of them was through singing and learning songs together. Ellieschewa who is also a professional singer led us in an elegant and graceful way to reach deep down in ourselves and show our voices, get in sync with one another and follow the rhythmic discipline of some songs. Sarah, also taught us some songs. During certain evenings we made our own music with whatever instruments there were through lively and electrifying jam sessions.



### **In Nature ...**



The beautiful mountains and their trails led us to a lake up high towards Axalp called Hinterbock See. In the fresh water some took a quick, freezing dive while others attempted the conquest of the steep rocks close by. The road up tested our bodies' fitness. The concentration to choose the easiest and most effective steps as well as enjoy the scenery cleared our minds of all other thoughts. In the easier sections of the journey we engaged each other in relaxing conversations catching up with stories of our lives or of interesting activities that we could do together.

## Community Sharing Circles

As part of being the change we felt that having a good mechanism of community sharing was necessary. Two professional facilitators, Mara and Martin, from Tamera Project joined us and led us through a series of sessions where the main aim was to hear from each other what concerns we have about our lives, the world situation and our aims. This sort of dialogue enabled a safe exchange of different points of view and increased the richness of our interaction. Seated in a circle, each speaker was requested to take the middle, speak their mind and heart, and receive recognition as well as opinions from the community about what they heard him/her say. At the end of the evenings or at other points where we felt the need to debrief we organized circles that used the method of the Talking Stick.



## Healing



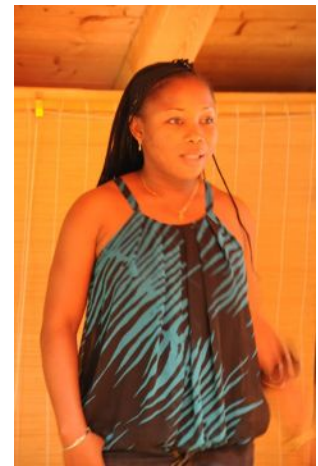
With the guidance of Miriam and Christoph, professional healers, we learned different techniques that we can apply to heal our bodies and minds through movement with our inner and outer energies. Nina also briefly shared with us the gist of the Ho'oponopono Hawaiian technique of reconciliation. These practices started deep processes in some of us. They received further support from the leaders of the workshop, the group as a whole, but also time on their own to get through their feelings and emotions such that in the end to be able to say sincerely and proudly their discoveries about themselves and their path towards self-acceptance and healing.





## Supporting Community Peacebuilding in Nigeria

Princess Ndikom is from Nigeria. During one of the evenings we listened about her work in the community she is living in and what is her motivation for it. One of her reasons to be part of the Be The Change Now was to get inspiration and ideas for continuing social work at home and find possible solutions for engaging young people who more and more turn to violence. We are her global family and like all families we were happy to support her. Ideas were shared and there also came a quite unexpected financial support. We took this very seriously and we also worked on developing a meeting next year in September to get to know each other better and the conditions of life in her community.



## Sacred Ceremonies

Devotion is a practice that Schweibenalp really respects and as its guests we had the chance to receive the insight into a few spiritual ceremonies. One morning, Sundar offered a Havan - Hindu fire ceremony - for youth and woman spirit. On Friday, he officially started the Sabbath celebration together with Miriam. Also, Miriam led us through a powerful Shamanic visioning practice with the use of flutes. Their results helped us to reflect and connect to our Higher Selves and share in our collective spirit. A few other points along the way, like meditations in the morning, the sharing with the Talking Stick and the smudging ceremony at the end had deeper connections to a spiritual realm which we underlined to increase understanding and awareness of how we have been putting spirituality into action throughout our time together.



## ARIA



An aria is a very intricate piece of music written for an orchestra. The beauty of it is the wonder it creates when all the instruments are harmoniously and precisely tuned and playing each note in sync. Spirituality in action is very similar to an aria. We had our own version of it though. ARIA comes from Aspirations - Resonance - Inventions - Action Planning. We took time to consider what we aspire to during and after the gathering. Based on our personal stories of why spirituality in action is important to us (resonance) we went further into thinking of ways how to realise it during the gathering (inventions). A series of project ideas and teams emerged from the last phases of the process (action planning). A brief description of them you may find in the next chapter. These sessions were facilitated by Corina.

## Closing Ceremony

With a feeling of sorrow that the moments of departure are closing and also still feeling the loss of friends that already left, we had a wonderful closing ceremony that brought together all the strands of the week we shared. Christoph following a First Nations tradition helped cleanse the space and each person. Miriam brought a special crystal that was loaded with youth spirit and which will take its place in the middle of Schweibenalp. We also placed our personal stones and stories of the week around the earth with an image of each of us. Finally, the last sharing circles went around. The night ended at the fire, talking and dancing.



## So ... What's Next? ...

We are committed to bringing forth these projects and initiatives ...

**Swiss Hub** are planning to gather every three months at Schweibenalp. During these meetings they will invite various spiritual leaders and gifted youth to speak and share their knowledge and skills. They will also enact local campaigns of spirituality in action like Free Hugs.

**Nigeria September 2011** is going to be a global meeting of youth on the issues of spirituality into action and creating a joint feeling of interdependence and unity. This will be meant to inspire local youth for positive change and empower each participant to make its own unique mark in the work for peace and justice. We will support Children of the Earth Nigeria to carry its work at a higher level.

**Tamera Grace Pilgrimage in Bogota, Columbia** will be promoted among youth networks. Its aims is to create international pressure about human rights violations and violence in Colombia.

**Universal Peace Celebration** at Schweibenalp will be observed by a team of youth who will share of their experience together and will bring in their perspectives on peace.

**Guatemala 2012** will be a gathering of leaders from all over the world that will join in connecting about the future of the Earth at the end of the Mayan calendar and the entering into a new generation which will be marked by raised consciousness.

**Phoenix Eco-Conference** at Schweibenalp will also benefit of a team of youth supporting the sustainable ecological development and sustainable living carrying our messages to the elders present there. We are hoping for a true partnership and targeted strategic action towards respectful coexistence on and with Mother Earth.



## Participants



### Youth

Alicia Marine, Anis Nasri, Celine Moos, Claudio Werfer, Corina Simon, David Jaramillo, David Schächli, Elischewa Dreyfus, Johannes Knoblauch, Johannes Kletzmayer, Karoline Buys, Kiran Hug, Lukas Dreyfus, Mara Vollmer, Martin Winiecki, Mira Woschek, Nicola Schächli, Niklas Woschek, Peter Adema, Philipp Knechtle, Princess Ndikom, Rahel Aebli, Rebecca Inauen, Reto Biedermann, Rosie Waygood, Sarah Dreyfus, Sarah Steinemann, Sidonia Claus, Thore Haugstad, Vita

### Elders

Christoph Staempfli, Elisabeth Steinemann, Marco Steiger, Miriam Wolf, Nina Meyerhof, Sundar Dreyfus.



## **Our ideas about Spirituality**

“For me, spirituality means consciousness. Being conscious that we and the things surrounding us are not coming out of ourselves, are not made from our hands, but that in the center is a holy matrix of giving. Spirituality means to align our lives in a way we can fully live from this source again.”

“Spirituality is everything and nothing. We are all spiritual, we just have to develop the consciousness for it.”

“Spirituality is another form of existence. It connects me to everything existing and with the greater powers of the universe. In this Connection lies a higher force of surviving and peace that we need to cope with in this times.”

“I don’t know. For me, spirituality describes a feeling. A feeling of spiritual affinity (with others, with nature, etc.) that has various facets. The feeling arises while dancing, singing, making music. During prayers or meditation or exercise outdoors in fresh air.”

“Not to distinguish between good or bad (not to judge), but to realise that everything emanates from a loving source.”

“To treat others like I want to be treated. To follow my heart.”

“To feel the source of energy- from which everything emanates and returns- and live in her wholly diversity.”

“Trying to be authentic and not to persuade oneself to be anything else. To be loving and caring with me and my fellow human beings.”

“To recognise the divine in everything and to live.”

“Feel and live the love for God (nature, humans, ...). To connect myself with the divine power in rituals, relationships, nature, through singing and arts.”

“A continuous, fulfilling journey to discover and put to good use the knowledge and power of Inner Self and also help others connect to that. “

“It is to put the needs of humanity before our own and live for the Glory of the Divine. It is to let the Divine Guide us in everything we do through the silent voice in our hearts.”



## **Love and Gratitude To ...**

Schweibenalp - Center for Unity

### **Sponsors**

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### **Links**

World Spirit Youth Council [www.spirityouth.org](http://www.spirityouth.org)  
Children of the Earth USA [www.coeworld.org](http://www.coeworld.org)  
Schweibenalp - Center for Unity [www.schweibenalp.ch](http://www.schweibenalp.ch)  
Tamera Healing Biotope [www.tamera.org](http://www.tamera.org)

### **Acknowledgements**

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21 September 2010 - International Day of Peace  
May Peace Prevail on Earth!