



The iJGD working principles / Arbeitsgrundsätze von iJGD

These are the principals of our work. Established by the volunteers of the very first workcamps and developed by volunteers and iJGD-members through the years until today. This process of “updating” our own rules will continue in the future for sure with new projects, ideas and people coming to iJGD. Anyway we want to do our work according to these principals in our groups, in workcamps, seminars, meetings, workshops, in our offices, in volunteering, in projects with our partners and volunteers.

Our work here at iJGD is based on the following principles:

Ecological Learning

In order to promote education about sustainable development in all sectors of the iJGD, we encourage cross-generational discussions concerning the relationship between nature and humans, as well as debates on general questions concerning ecology. Furthermore, we also promote a heightened awareness for our environment. Possibilities for an ecological and sustainable day-to-day life are associated with positive experiences. Re-thinking one's own personal behaviour patterns is encouraged through practical experiences. In doing so, it is demonstrated how we can live sustainably ourselves and which far-reaching consequences our own actions have on our selves, on humans, on the environment all over the world and on future generations to come.

Self-organisation

Open spaces offer you the possibility to become creative and invite you to use this space to create. These spaces are characterized by self-efficacy, responsibility and a distance from pre-established structures. The interests and wishes of all those participating should be respected here.

Voluntariness

This is the main principle of the iJGD and the prerequisite for self-organised and motivated work. This motivation is the main difference to so-called obligatory duties in society. Volunteers should view their engagement not only as a service to society but also view as an opportunity to re-orientate themselves and to learn. Volunteer work offers open spaces to try out new things and to discover oneself without any societal pressures pertaining to achievement.

Social Learning

In all spheres of the iJGD, life in a group is characterised by a social togetherness and a culture of understanding. It is important to us that various needs and opinions are considered and an inclusive togetherness is made possible. To enable this, prejudices should be questioned and overcome.

Interactions within a group as well as a change of perspective can help form one's own personality as well as (re-) shape an entire society. It can also help in learning social and emotional skills such as the ability to deal with conflict or to cooperate. Social learning describes a lifelong, cross-generational process that is characterised by a self and joint responsibility, communality and civic participation.

Intercultural Learning – Diversity as the Norm

Encounters between cultures take place in all of our programmes in various ways. We are convinced that every person combines numerous cultures within themselves. It is our aspiration that these diverse affiliations and the herewith associated or lacking personal possibilities for action are critically questioned. For this purpose we deal with our own prejudices and societal forms of discrimination and continually look to the similarities in our country as well as across borders. As a result, openness, a mutual understanding and appreciation for diversity is fostered.

Gender equality

Are there merely two genders, or many? In our projects people are sensitised to the existence of variation in gender and sexual orientation. They are encouraged to treat each other equally and to question conventional societal roles. In doing so, self-determination and individuality are emphasised. Prejudice toward for instance lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, intersex or trans- lifestyles should be dismantled to make way for acceptance.

Antiracism, Antidiscrimination

“Me? Prejudiced? No, I am definitely not prejudiced!” However, all people have been socially conditioned by their surroundings which can – often unintentionally – lead them to make racist or otherwise discriminatory statements or actions. Here at the ijgd the space is opened to deal with one's own prejudices and stereotypes. Simultaneously, societal power structures are discussed and one's own role within society is reflected on.

Political Education

The ijgd regards itself as a space for political education. Here, political education describes the experiencing and shaping of an active democracy. The ijgd encourages critical thinking, stimulates discussion and critical questioning of societal structures and actively promotes the autonomous political decision-making and awareness-raising processes. According to the convictions of the ijgd, voluntary work as a special form of civic engagement cannot take place separately from an applied democracy or political education.