



UN
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CAMP

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BOOKLET

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2017

The **UNSCHOOLERS WINTER CAMP 2017** was invented and UN-organized **FOR** and **BY** a group of 23 children.

The children came from different states in India; they had different ages (10– 17) and various interests. Some of them never went to school, some walked out of school, others were still enrolled in an alternative school and one of them took a gap year.

Diversity

Real World

Experimenting

Group learning

peer learning

interaction

adventure

Fun

Free learning

Unschooling

WHAT?

This booklet shares our experiences during the unschoolers winter camp 2017. The stories that are told can give an idea on what happened during the camp. The stories intend to inspire people to get to know more about what 'unschooling' means. It can give inspirational thoughts and ideas for people who want to organize such a camp.

FOR WHO?

For you! And for all enthusiasts who want to create their own unschooler camp.

HOW TO USE?

However you want! USAGE AT ONE'S OWN RISK! The booklet tells a lot of stories and a great number of specific examples.

It leaves a lot of space for imagination and interpretation. It is anything else than a complete manual that teaches you how to set up an unschoolers camp. Instead it is an inspiration/invitation for you to create your own UNIQUE unschooler camp with your community. For more information, questions or suggestions you can contact me

(chiarabockstahler@gmail.com) or Shikshantar.org

WHO WROTE IT?

The booklet retells the stories from my perspective. I am Chiara, a student from the Netherlands who came to India to explore and live self-designed learning. By a coincidence, or not, I ended up as a learning supporter/guide of this camp. Shikshantar: the people's institute for rethinking education and development, provided the platform to make this camp happen. The camp took place in the Unlearning Centre in Udaipur, which is home to the spirit of self-designed learning and unschooling since more than 15 years.

This booklet presents...

- ◇ From organization to Un- organization
- ◇ Our basic Un- structure
 - ◇ Open Learning Exchanges
 - ◇ Mini Internships
 - ◇ Social Entrepreneurship
 - ◇ Workshops
- ◇ Travelling Together
- ◇ Boredom and the value of doing nothing
- ◇ Un- Facilitation
- ◇ What's Community?
- ◇ Check in and Check outs
- ◇ Out of comfort zones
- ◇ My Journey



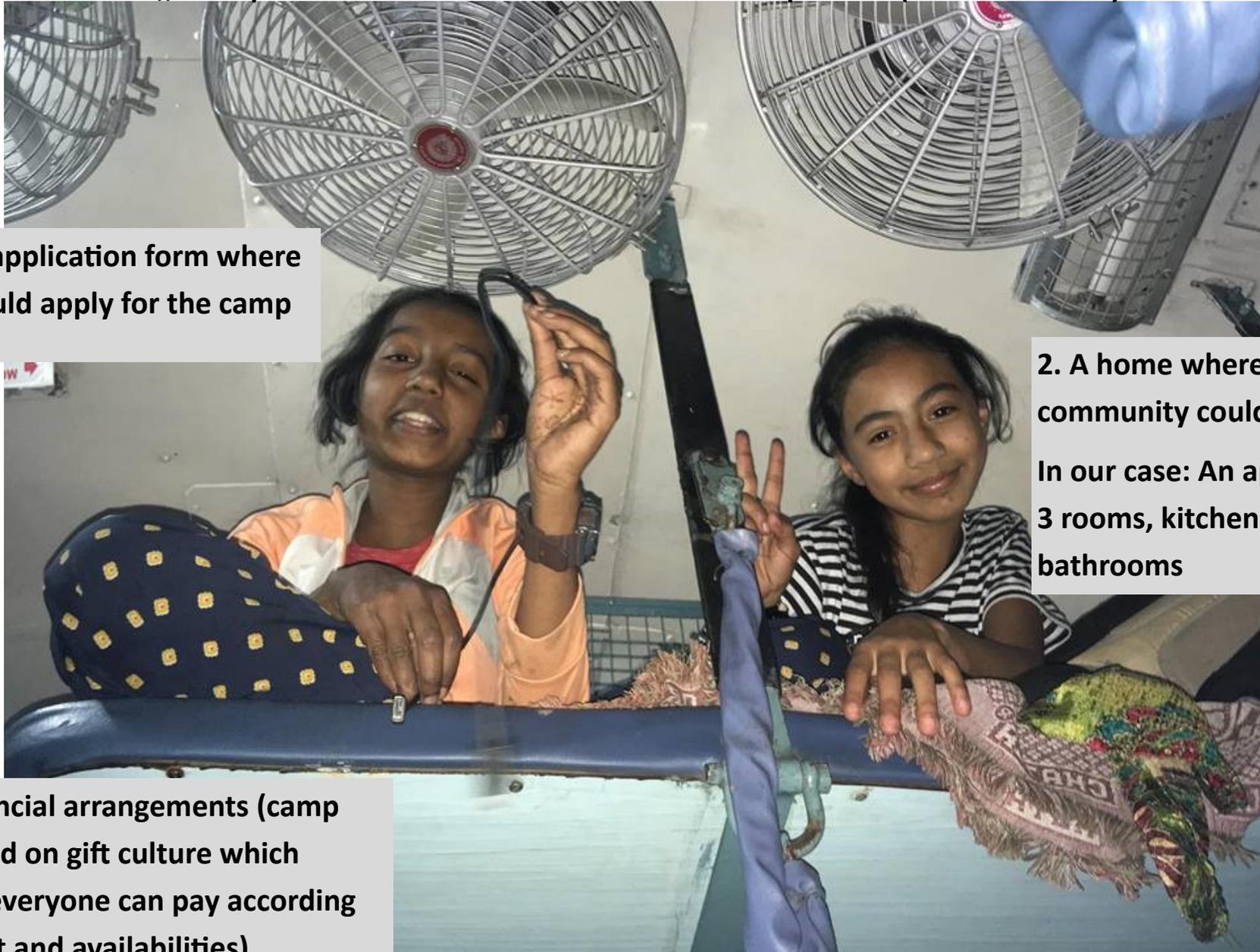
From organization to unorganization

„Simple can be harder than complex“ (Steve Jobs)

1. A Google application form where everyone could apply for the camp

2. A home where the community could live and sleep
In our case: An apartment with 3 rooms, kitchen and 2 bathrooms

3. Some financial arrangements (camp was organized on gift culture which means that everyone can pay according to their heart and availabilities)



"Plan as less as possible, to create freedom as much as possible"

Three reasons why you should not plan:

1. Everything turns out different
2. Let children themselves fill up the structure in the way they would like to have it.
3. Magic only comes out of chaos!

—> Children and adults together are the creators of this camp.

Everyone is guiding and following according to the needs of the community and based on own personal strength. —> creating co-ownership of space and time!

What we did in 6 weeks:

Getting to know each other and your superpowers for the group,
Open Learning Exchanges (OLE), Mini- Internships,
trips to nature , setting up our own social Businesses , trips to
come out of our comfort zones (e.g. Dump site),
Workshops of any kind

our basic
Un-structure

Open Learning Exchanges

Nethra from Tamil Nadu is an amazing baker. She learned to bake together with her mother. During the open learning space she is sharing her baking skills with Aditya, a boy who loves to eat sweets. From now on he will bake his own cakes, he said.

Each child is seen as a learning resource! We are all learners and teachers at the same time. In open learning exchanges everyone can share their skills, talents and knowledge with each other by organizing sessions. This triggers peer to peer learning and changes the perception that we can only learn from older people.

During the camp many learning exchanges happened: Besides Nethra, Ayaan was sharing his origami skills, Ashwati teaching the violin, Qudrat showing filmmaking etc.



Mini-Internships

Hands-on!

Exploring the real working world

Kanku, Varsha and Abdul decided to explore the world of a healthy restaurant in Udaipur. For five days they were actively involved in the daily life of Millets of Mewar. They learned new dishes, helped chopping and washing utensils and even became introduced in the art of serving. The sneak view into the working of a real restaurant was so exciting for the children that they decided to organize a second week of mini- internships.



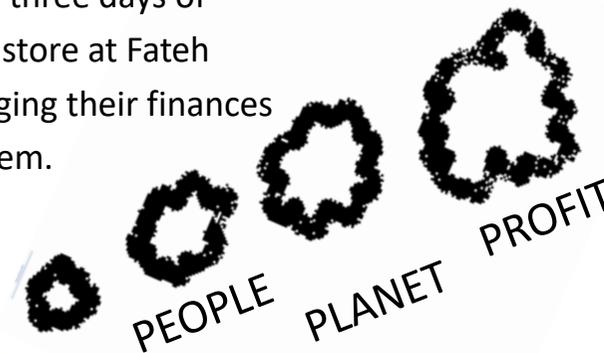
The internships unschoolers were exploring during the camp:

Miniature artists, Local cafés and healthy restaurants, animal aid center, Sankalp center for special children

Entrepreneurship

The real world challenges are our textbook!

In six days the children explored how it is to set up a social business. Abdul, Varsha, Heer, Ajanmya and Skanda came up with the idea to sell self-made, healthy and vegan sandwiches. After three days of planning, they were able to put up their AHA FOOD store at Fateh Sagar Lake in Udaipur. Working in a team and managing their finances turned out to be a real and exciting challenge for them.



The Entrepreneurship week of the camp gave birth to 4 creative social businesses:

'AHA FOOD' that sold healthy sandwiches, **'Crumb a Licious'** that offered vegan self-made cakes and lemonades, **'Baksa film company'** that could be hired for advertisement movies and **'PLANTcils'** that were selling pencils that have a seed in the back and therefore can be used to plant a tomato plant after usage.

Workshops

Workshops created the opportunity for children to explore many different, new things. Whoever felt interested joined the workshop.



Workshops during the camp:

Diary making, clowning, pottery, jewelry making with seeds and recycled material, filmmaking, theatre movement, baking, dance workshops, Frisbee, wall painting, Geodom workshop, natural dying, first aid, music workshops, game workshops

Travelling Together



Five days of travel; three nights in the train; one day in Delhi; one night in Delhi. There would have been no better end to our unschooling camp than travelling together across whole India. What an experience!

Everything was organized together: Food, Transport, and Shelter. We had a lot of fun on our travel. We even opened up a sandwich stall on gift culture for our whole train compartment.

Open learning
exchanges

Entrepreneurship

Travelling Together



Mini-
Internships

Workshops

- Diversity
- Real World
- Experimenting
- Group learning
- peer learning
- interaction
- adventure
- Fun
- Free learning
- Unschooling



Encourage

Boredom

And explore the value of doing "NOTHING"

It is there, where real learning happens!

We don't have to be busy or productive all day

We need free spaces in which we can make mistakes and
come up with the most creative or dumbest ideas.

UN- Facilitation

*“From the moment on you feel unnecessary as a **facilitator**, you did a good job”*

SELF GOVERNANCE during our camp means that the children are invited to become their own facilitators!



Tariq from South Africa is an amazing storyteller, talented actor and an outstanding comedian. Not only that: during the camp he discovered the art of facilitating and he involved himself in the coordination of group processes. He was great in guiding the group in making decisions together with a lot of humor.

Everyone can be a facilitator! Facilitators are not teachers, not mothers, not entertainers. They are people who like to support the group in coordination. In our camp, the core team of facilitators had different ages- Vidhi and Manish with the age above 40, Vibhuti and Chiara in their mid-twenties and Qudrat who is 17 years old. During the camp more children joined the facilitation team.

Different Ages

Children and facilitators of different ages were part of the camp. Annora shares "the best thing about the camp was to live with 20 strangers that turned into family, was the greatest experience of this camp".



Common agreements

At the beginning of the camp, we sat together and we decided upon some agreements for our community. For example the children suggested a gadget time which would help us to use them as less as possible. The gadget use stayed a hot topic till the end of the camp and it triggered interesting and helpful conversations between the children. Ajay, one of the children that do not has a gadget, was able to explain his feelings of exclusion to the others. Based on that, the children talked about how we can respect each other.

CARE

- For each other

Whenever someone fell sick or needed help, the children supported each other.



- For our space

"We cannot solve our problems, with the same thinking with which we created them". Our biggest challenge: How to make everyone serving for the community in the same way?

We opened up many conversations about what

What's Community

Collective decision making

Biodiversity Park or Fateh Sagar Lake Park?

With a group of 25 people the easiest decisions become a BIG task. During the camp the children experimented with different types of community decision making procedures. Marjotity decides or voices and feelings of resistance?



Check in & check out



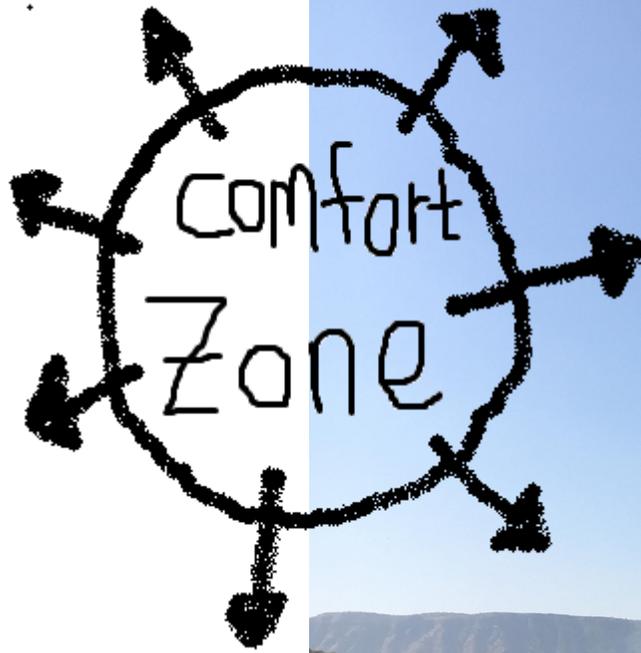
The magic of the talking piece: whoever has the talking piece can talk freely from his heart; the others are listening from their heart.

Creating a space where everyone can express thoughts and feelings and where everyone feels heard.



Again a listening circle? *sighing* At the beginning the children were complaining about holding too many listening circles. Because the organization was in their hands, they stopped organizing them. During an issue meeting they collectively decided that we should start again with doing regular check in & check outs. “We should start every morning with a check in, so that everyone can share how he/she is feeling.” “The listening circles help us to know how everyone is doing, no-one gets ignored“- two of the kids were saying.

Tanvi is 10 years old. For her it was the first time to be away from her home for such a long time. Even though she often struggled with the feeling of homesickness, she kept going till the end. The beauty of her story was that she was able to share her feelings with the people around her. We often kept talking about how homesickness feels and what we can do to make it less painful.



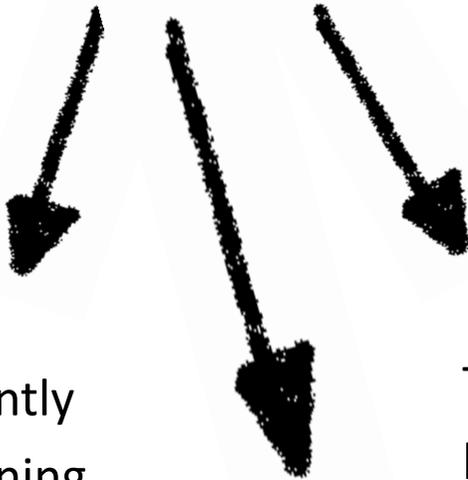
A visit to the dump and mining side in Udaipur triggered the children to discuss about their own consumption patterns. The sharing circle after this day seemed to have no end because all the children had so much to say and explain about their experiences and feelings.



My Journey

“My role as un-facilitator during the camp was anything else than fixed. Sometimes I felt like an older sister, sometimes I felt like a friend and sometimes I was just another unschooling child.”

Unschooling myself!



Constantly questioning and re-defining my role

Taking the up-side down perspective by questioning everything what I have learned about learning.



TRUST: Children do not always need adults that keep them busy and organize everything for them!





ALSO CHECK:

<http://shikshantar.org/videos/unschoolers-winter-camp-2017>

A film about the Unschoolers Winter Camp .This film was shot and made by the unschoolers themselves.