



ECOVILLAGE PLAYING CARDS

LAYER TYPE: INDIVIDUAL, INTENTION, COMMUNITY, PRACTICE

A method using the GEN Ecovillage Playing Cards in CLIPS

- mapping motivations, intentions, skills and learning needs of a group.

The cards are interactive and offers room for reflection, both for the individual and for the group.



Aims and Objectives

This method has the aims to:

- To map motivations for group members
- To map skills and learning needs of group members
- To search for a common intention for a group



Time

Around 1,5 hours (with a break in between).
Can be split or one of the exercises can be taken out.

Alternative game takes around 50 minutes.



Materials & Preparation

- A set of GEN Ecovillage Playing Cards.
- Can be bought [on the GEN website](#).
- An Ecovillage Playing Cards Mandala Mat if possible, but not needed ([purchased here](#)).
- Bring small stones, leaves or similar items, at least three of each item for each participant.

Place the cards on the floor in the form of the GAIA Education mandala, each dimension in each own corner (see picture below).



Target audience

Community groups with a shared task.
Acknowledging that the playing cards are derived from the ecovillage experience and what characterize ecovillage life.



Number of Participants

Minimum 4 – maximum 40.



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**CLIPS
METHODS**





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Duration Activity

5'	INTRODUCTION - FRAMING GEN ECOVILLAGE PLAYING CARDS AND CLIPS
25'	MOTIVATION MAPPING
20'	SKILLS MAPPING
5'	BREAK
25'	INTENTION MAPPING
10'	DEBRIEFING

INTRODUCTION

FRAMING- 5 MINUTES

The cards have been developed by the Global Ecovillage Network (GEN). The 34 cards illustrate and distill years of experimentation and learning within this global network. The cards are divided into five groups - four dimensions of sustainability arranged around one central path.

The four dimensions are society, culture, ecology and economy. The path is whole systems design. Together, they make up a tool for playing, reflecting, dialoguing, learning and designing - for both individuals, groups, projects, organisations and communities.

In CLIPS we use the cards to get closer to our intentions - the motivations that bring a group together (the inner calling). Also, to map individual skills and learning needs, leading to a map of the skills/needs in the group. In the end, we get closer to what the intention and the vision/mission for this group might be. Let's play!

MOTIVATION MAPPING

INSTRUCTION 1 - INTRODUCTION (10 MINUTES)

Tell participants to take 3 stones each and place them on the cards that are most important for them, as a strong motivation for joining the group.

Ask participants to take a walk around the cards and study all of them before deciding.

TIP: It can be easier to relate to motivation than to intention - and very often addressing motivation will lead to intention. That is why we start with motivation.

INSTRUCTION 3 - DEBRIEFING (5 MINUTES)

How was it to play?

Individual: Did you learn something new about what moves you to this group - and how it relates to motivations from others?

Group: Any new realizations? How will you accommodate different motivations?

End the session on MOTIVATION by taking a photo before removing the items from the mat again.

INSTRUCTION 2 - MOTIVATION SHARING (10 MINUTES)

When all participants have placed their stones, ask for comments first on the general level and then on the individual. What do we see? Which dimension have a lot of stones - which have only few? Are the stones spread out a lot - or are they placed more gathered?

After the general analysis ask some of the participants to share their personal motivations. Assess whether all voices need to be heard or only those who are most eager to share.

Ask especially for the background of stones that are 'alone' on a card with no other stones - what was the motivation to put the stone there?



SKILLS MAPPING

INSTRUCTION 1 - INTRODUCTION (10 MINUTES)

After having worked on motivations, we attend to skills and learning needs.

Place 3 stones on cards where you have SKILLS, where you have something to contribute with, something you can teach others, a gift you can share.

Place 3 leaves on cards where you want to learn something. Which can be what an image of what you want to achieve, in terms of new skills and inspiration.

INSTRUCTION 2 - DEBRIEFING (10 MINUTES)

What do we see now? Which dimensions and cards have a lot of or few stones - which have a lot of leaves?

How can we use this mapping to check what skills we have as a group, what learning needs might match other members' skill sets? What skills need nurturing, in the group, to improve in certain fields? Maybe a basis for recruitment of new members?

End the session on SKILLS by taking a photo before removing the items again.

INTENTION MAPPING

FRAMING (5 MINUTES)

We have now mapped both motivations and skills/learning needs. Next is to explore in which field this group really want to engage. What is the common intention with the project and how could that feed into the vision/mission?

INSTRUCTION 1 - INTRODUCTION (10 MINUTES)

Walk around the cards and think of the project. Think not from the individual perspective, but what you as a group of people can do together, in the common project.

Place your 3 stones on cards that are central to where you think the intention is, as a group.

What is shared among you, what has been part of your discussions till now and where you see that the group can come together and make a difference.

INSTRUCTION 2 - DEBRIEFING (10 MINUTES)

Look at where the stones are placed. In one dimension only, spread around in all dimensions, strong in two dimensions? Are some cards central? How does it fit with intention statements the group has already formulated? Any new realizations?

Underline that the 'result' does not indicate that the group does not take the other cards as serious aspects to consider - but must make a choice of what is its core.

Encourage the group to use the mappings when defining its intention, vision/ mission. End the session on INTENTIONS by taking a photo before removing the items.

Inform the group that they can use the cards in the group to check how the project change over time. The cards can be played periodically, i.e. annually, to check and form an image of how the dynamics look like in the group, at any given time and in any given constellation of people.



ALTERNATIVE: WORKING WITH THE DESIGN CARDS

A DESIGN GAME (50 MINUTES)

Introduce the Ecovillage Playing Cards, by having a set of cards on the floor. Run maybe one of the above exercises. Then hand out a copy of the playing cards to each group of 4 - they can be bought in many different sizes from GEN.

Ask the groups to design their project by choosing 10 cards they see to be very most essential for this specific project.

Then ask the groups to choose the 3 cards that are the highest priority.

Ask each group to share their design - their 10/3 chosen cards. Put them up, so everyone can see the 10/3 cards for each group. Check for similarities and discuss cards, that only some groups have chosen.

The discussions when choosing 10 cards out of the 34 cards and then 3 cards out of the 10 cards encourage valuable reflections, for the individuals and the group

It might bring something new to the group to play with the cards this way - or it can be used to reaffirm that the group is on the right track or still needs a lot of work in the field of intention/vision/mission.

As a facilitator you must think about how to handle very diversified results and how to support a group with an unclear focus, for the result not to become disappointing.

Celebrate both the diversity of good intentions - and celebrate what unites.

TIP: It can give a sense of relief to members of a group to realize, that all groups have chosen many of the same cards when choosing the 10 cards - and even the 3 cards. Even if misunderstandings and conflicts are present, the core (the 10/3 cards) is still valid and what can unite.

RELATION TO THE CLIPS MODEL

When purchasing the GEN Ecovillage Playing cards, a comprehensive booklet with suggested exercises come with it. The cards can be played in various ways.

In CLIPS we use them when working with INTENTION, but also to explore the relation between the INDIVIDUAL and the COMMUNITY. They can also show what PRACTISE is being experienced in a community.

Opening a space for people's dreams may uplift the energy of the group and create personal links that may otherwise remain hidden.

The "intention" level needs to come in at the end, to check if the available skills, resources and dreams are aligned with the mission and strategy, or if something needs to be adapted in order to create better synergy.



FACILITATION TIP:

As a facilitator you must find a balance between playing in a fast speed and keep time for reflection, sharing and learning. Note that it can be tiring to stand up for long, for some people. The movement to place items will help.

Note that the mapping on the cards speak for itself and sometimes do not need many words to be spoken. That is the power of working with objects and visuals.