



GRACE

GRUPO PARA A RECONCILIAÇÃO EM
ÁREAS DE CRÍSE E EDUCAÇÃO

**ACTIVITIES AND
ACCOUNTS REPORT**

2023

Tamera Peace Research Center
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Presentation

The Portuguese Association G.R.A.C.E. - Group for Reconciliation in Crisis Areas and Education (G.R.A.C.E.) is a non-profit association, based in Relíquias, municipality of Odemira, Portugal, founded in 2010.

"The objective of the Association consists in promoting the international understanding of peoples, the pacifist management of conflicts in crisis areas, the promotion and implementation of a global peace education, as well as a general school education; research and development of concrete models for a sustainable pacifist

attitude; promotion of regional and local education centers for peace as well as support and cooperation with humanitarian, peacekeeping, educational, and scientific projects."

G.R.A.C.E. is an entity part of the Tamera community, pursuing the objectives of research and development of models for Peace and Education. For a further understanding of the scope of activities developed by G.R.A.C.E., a brief description of the Tamera project is presented below, followed by a deeper exploration of G.R.A.C.E.'s activities.

Brief Description of the Tamera Project - International Research Center for Peace

The Healing Biotope I, Tamera, is a peace research project aimed at creating a model for a future society without violence among human beings, animals, and nature.

The project began in 1978 in Germany and moved to the Alentejo - Portugal, in 1995 with the foundation of Tamera. Currently, it has 150 people dedicated to the project, connected with the growing international network and partner projects in Israel-Palestine, Colombia, Brazil, Kenya, among other countries

Since its inception, the focus of the project has been on how human beings, from all cultures and religions, could live together in a way that peace could emerge among them.

Various research topics have been extensively worked on over the last 25 years, and their results are made available globally, so that the foundational ideas of a society without violence can be replicated around the world.

The research themes of community life and peace education, as well as the establishment of a cooperation network with projects with similar ends around the world, are the responsibility of the G.R.A.C.E. Association. Among the various ongoing projects, the Defend the Sacred Alliance, the Escola da Esperança project, as well as community education actions and actions for global peace stand out.

Since Natural Resources are finite and often at the origin of social conflicts, research in this area is fundamental. Thus, the ecological and technological research questions of Tamera are the responsibility of the organization Associação para um Mundo Humanitário (AMH) and include the implementation of a Water Retention Landscape (for the restoration of the hydrological cycle and ecosystems), as well as a model for regional self-sufficiency - at the level of energy supply (research in renewable energies, especially solar energy) and nutrition (organic agriculture, permaculture and reforestation).



Areas of Operation

The main areas of operation of G.R.A.C.E. are research and the development of models for Peace and Education, which are subdivided into 3 categories:

- Developing and maintaining a global network for peace
- Peace Education aimed at adults
- Peace Education aimed at children and youth

Insights Into a Community in Transition

Like many intentional communities, Tamera has faced considerable challenges in recent years. We are working with intergenerational tensions, transformation of our governance structures, reduced capacity in the face of growing complexity, and much more. In this essay, someone born into the community, now a next-generation leader, sheds light on the struggles and transformation that the community has gone through, while celebrating the processes that have allowed the community to stay together.

By Vera Kleinhammes

Claro, existem diversas interpretações e Of course, different people hold different interpretations and viewpoints about what we are going through as a community. What I offer here is a part of my perspective. I don't claim to represent the community as a whole, nor to be complete, nor to be able to capture all the fine nuances of how this process impacts the lives of the individuals who dedicate so much of their life-energy to this community. As one of the people who grew up in and has lived her entire life in this community, I'm personally deeply moved by this process and by questions of how the vision of the founding generation, that has given me so much, can be carried into the future.





A Brief History of Tamera

Tamera's roots can be traced back to 1978, following the 1960s, and marked by significant historical events such as Cold War tensions, the Apollo moon landing, and widespread student protests. Dieter Duhm's work, "Fear in Capitalism," gained prominence within the German leftist movement during this period. Duhm's critical insight was that "Revolution without emancipation is counter-revolution," arguing that true change requires internal transformation alongside external action. Despite its early momentum, the student movement succumbed to internal divisions and dissipated.

Duhm remained committed to seeking a sustainable alternative to the prevailing culture of violence. In May 1978, Duhm, along with Sabine Lichtenfels, Charly Rainer Ehrenpreis, Sarah Vollmer, and eight others, initiated their first community experiment in southern Germany. Their collective vision aimed to explore and demonstrate a model for societal transformation that aligns human existence with the wisdom of the natural world, inspired by Buckminster Fuller's notion: "You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the old one obsolete."

In 1983, about 50 individuals committed to a three-year deep dive into the human condition in the Black Forest. They embraced art and theater to explore and express truths beyond cultural alienation, delving into often private or taboo topics such as sex, love, money, and power. One of their (and our) core convictions was that "There cannot be peace on earth as long as there is war in love."

Arising from the need to create a social framework in which truth is possible in all areas of life as a basis for a nonviolent society, the group developed the Forum practice for collective expression. In Forum, community members engaged daily in theatrical exploration of their conflicts, joys, and desires.

This social experiment tapped into life-energies and gave rise to a larger vision. Dieter Duhm developed his "Political Theory" based on his research into how information shapes the fields governing our collective behavior. He used the theory to formulate a strategy for global peace that could be achieved by developing a network of Healing Biotopes and peace villages that create a global field for living nonviolently with earth.

In 1995, after years of nurturing the dream, the community acquired "Monte do Cerro," a 140-hectare site in the rural Alentejo region of southern Portugal, as a location for the first model of a Healing Biotope.

Tamera attracted many people and became an experimental site for the implementation of big visions, such as the water retention landscape and the Solar Village inspired by visionary figures like Sepp Holzer and Jürgen Kleinwächter. It was the base station of the "Global Campus", the first gathering place of the "Defend the Sacred Alliance", contributed to the successful campaign to stop offshore oil drilling in Portugal, and was the birthplace of the "Peace Research Village" vision and many other initiatives.



The Adventure of Creating a Multigenerational, Multicultural Project

I understand and respect ever more deeply how the dedication of Tamera's founding generation and their relentless work upholding the clarity of vision and values and an interpersonal field of truth was so crucial for coherence of the community in the first decades, giving the community its strength and its unique qualities.

While holding immense gratitude to the founding generation, I acknowledge that times are changing. Founding a community that's reimagining the very pillars of culture is an enormous undertaking; and transitioning from a "pioneering" phase to creating a living model holding the full spectrum of life, from birth to death, for a multi-generational, multicultural project is yet another whole adventure. It feels as if Tamera is "coming of age", passing through a significant initiation into a new phase, in which responsibility can decentralize and leadership from intrinsic motivation can develop.

It feels deeply humbling to be part of this endeavor that requires the collective effort of all generations. Really learning to think and act for the future generations is a huge undertaking.

Being part of a global network and hearing from others, we understand that the challenges we face are not unique to us but are experienced by many, if not most, of the larger and more long-standing intentional communities. Many established communities are reaching a point of maturation, grappling with whether and how the founding spirit can be passed onto the next generation.

One big challenge I feel is that for some years we grew quite fast and were not set up with systems of education and initiation to connect people deeply to a vision that holds beyond dependency on charismatic leadership. Nor did we have systems of governance or a social framework that

could hold the complexity in terms of growing diversity in which we found ourselves.

Especially since the Covid-19 crisis, many of the unresolved questions and conflicts that have been brewing within the community have started surfacing.

A strong critique that began to emerge was directed at certain gaps in Tamera's culture. Moved by the brutal murder of George Floyd in 2020 and the global awakening to the reality of white supremacy, some community members created a study group to understand more deeply how they'd been conditioned into patterns of white supremacy. Over the years, this perspective deepened, leading to broader research on issues of power and privilege and how these have influenced our community, our work, and our collective imagination.

These reflections led to a deeper understanding of the unconscious biases that manifest among different groups and identities – for example, between Germans and Portuguese – and how this impacts our relationship with the surrounding region. It also became more evident how the strong cultural and linguistic homogeneity in Tamera affected people from other identities and backgrounds, limiting their ability to integrate and thrive within the community, access information, and take on leadership roles, etc.

Since the coherence of Tamera was, for many years, sustained by shared ideas about how we envisioned contributing to change, these polarizing issues have fundamentally impacted the cohesion and identity of Tamera.

The community was also shaken when queer people and others from the LGBTQ+ community started to express how much they have been impacted by the strong heteronormativity in Tamera's teachings and culture, creating a sense that their love and being is often – intentionally or not – valued less than cisgender heterosexual relationships.

For many people who had held a lot of

the responsibilities for the community for decades, the calls for critical analysis from the newer generation, and the wish to establish systems of equity and governance were often perceived at first as a critique and an attack on their holding of the community. In some people this triggered a fear of "extinction" of the origin of the project.

On the other hand, the newer generation, wanting to step into responsibility felt it hard (if not impossible) to bring systemic feedback or criticism to the founding generation without them feeling hurt or attacked – and that they didn't have the agency to own the project without a mandate from the founding generation to carry the project into the future.

It felt as if with each community gathering the conflicts revealed even more layers of complexity. For some time, a repeated dynamic of attack and defense led to a breakdown of communication. Under the pressure of these circumstances our "carrier circle" disbanded itself and we navigated a year without a clear decision-making structure.

I see that this disintegration also had to do with a loss of the organic community life of former years. There are many reasons for this: we became busy running many (maybe too many) subprojects, had about 30 children in the last 15 years, and we didn't manage to create social structures that would provide the same depth and intimacy of community for 150-200 people that we used to have when we were only 50. In the early years we had many natural spaces of cross over, where an organic exchange about topics that matter to one's heart would take place in informal conversations. Now one would often only see each other in more formal community meetings where "hot" topics were discussed. With less intimacy it became easier to fall into mutual projections, perceive criticism as condemnation and lose perception and curiosity for each other as human beings, missing the common care that is behind the debates. The formality added to characteristics playing out that are not very helpful in creating

the trust that is essential for having the conversations one is calling for, such as fragility and defense instead of real listening from people in the seats of power, along with accusation and righteousness instead of curiosity from the other side. Of course this has many layers and I think it is important not to underestimate the impacts the loss of organic community spaces, natural storytelling etc. can have to the community fabric and the trust building between the generations as such.

Robin Wall Kimmerer (author of Braiding Sweetgrass) writes that "Owning a land comes with entitlements, while stewarding a land comes with responsibilities." What

does it mean to take on the responsibility of becoming a place-based community?

As people coming mostly from white Western backgrounds who can't lean into ancient traditions and lineages, where caring for a land, a vision, a community, and common practices to mark transitions is passed on from generation to generation – learning to stay, even when it gets difficult, is a capacity we need to redevelop.

I am deeply grateful to be part of a community that is training this muscle together and that we haven't given in to the global trend of separation around those issues.



What Did We Do About It?

We initiated a "community consolidation" process to find out if we actually can gather the strength, willingness, wisdom and capacity to co-create the next phase of the project among the different generations integrating what matters to us and also what is relevant within the global context we find ourselves in today.

During the past years, I have felt, maybe more than ever before, how vital it is to be held, facilitated, supported and also to receive very honest and critical feedback from allies that are committed to a similar vision but not part of our specific predicament. Thank you to Miki Kashtan, and the NGL group, Erin Selover, Gigi Coyle, Win Phelps, Roman Huber, Janna Rehbein and her team, Favela da Paz and Carlin Quinn who have all hugely contributed in their ways to us being able to embark on this next phase of our adventure. And for sure the gratitude extends to many more!

The community consolidation resulted in the decision, in April 2023, to build a distributive governance and leadership model and to trial it experimentally for two years.

Our purpose in this phase now is to "foster co-holding" of Tamera, acknowledging that we are still in a transition as aspects of our project are ending or disintegrating while new ones are emerging, and much is yet uncertain. In this situation, in which it is hard to develop definitive clarity of our long-term purpose, we're invested in creating conditions that enable us to go through this process, developing the cornerstones of a common path forward.

For a community to learn to co-hold responsibilities which so far have been carried by a few leaders requires that a lot

of what could so far been handled implicitly and informally needs to be spelled out, made explicit and brought into agreement. A key aspect of this transition towards a distributive governance model was adopting a decision-making system, which we designed to encourage transparency, inclusion and shared responsibility. And we established clearer and easier ways to offer feedback, both for community members and guests.

For our vision to thrive it is clear that we need fruitful cooperation between all the generations.

Navigating this crucial phase of learning to co-hold the project into the future we chose the following approach:

We believe that the way we engage with questions, conflicts and voids will influence the "answers" and possibilities that show up for us. In other words, how we deal with endings, gaps, voids, uncertainty and divergences, is peace work in itself. In our approach we have chosen integration as a path of healing and peace.

I feel part of Tamera's current contribution is to the global endeavor of re-learning those community principles which are essential for human survival on this planet as we develop the strength to stay together in the face of collapse.

In our process it felt essential to learn to be as precise as possible, especially addressing tender and conflicting points, within a field of such long relationships and accumulated history, and to develop discipline to refrain from general accusations towards each other.

And with the guiding thought that the way we navigate this phase is peace work in itself, we also return full circle to Duhm's political theory. I'm humbled and grateful to be alive in these times.

Activities

Political Cafés 2023

Political cafés are open, informative gatherings organized by G.R.A.C.E. where global and local political issues are presented and discussed. These events aim to foster a deeper understanding of socio-political dynamics, our own part in it and encourage collaborative efforts towards peace and sustainability.

14 Feb 23 Political café about "One Billion Rising".

16 Feb 23 Political café about the earthquake in Turkey and Syria, raising awareness for the situation of the population in that area.

28 Feb 23 Political café about the situation of Palestinians with Aida Shibli.

14 April 23 The association G.R.A.C.E. invited for a presentation and public conversation with journalists about fair journalism, peace journalism, alternative media, theater and the work with youth.

25 April 23 Celebration of the Carnation Revolution. Fatima Teixeira, Rui Braga, Mafalda Gonçalves and Martin Winieki held a history hour about Portugal's non-violent revolution including video clips. Presenting the broader context, they pointed out the importance of this historical event that saw its 49th anniversary this year.

15 May 23 Political café for the 75-year memorial of Nakba Day. A day full of controversy in the Middle East, which marks the catastrophe for one and the building of the state of Israel for the other.

1 June 23 Presentation by Chiara Baldini about "queer Dionysus". Who is Dionysus? Why is he the Queer God? Who were his followers and what were his rituals about? Chiara Baldini is a researcher and curator

from Florence (Italy), who investigates the evolution of the ecstatic cult in the West, particularly in ancient Greece and Rome. Her presentation looked at the ancient Greek god of wine, love and ecstasy, to learn about his wild gender-bending rituals, and their social and political context at the dawn of patriarchy.

23 June 23 Talk by Oskar Eckmann, founder of the Escola da Esperança project, about the individual and global effect of the classical school system on children and young people.

4 July 23 Political café - conversation with André Vizinho about ecosystem regeneration and Montado Novo.

28 July 23 Activist retreat
The activist retreat with 30 participants from around the world invited to a political café to present their work. Among them was Indra Singh, Indian dissent journalist, agro-ecology expert/activist, who spoke about the recent farmer's movement in India which stopped the government's plans for an agricultural reform that would push GMOs, pesticides and near-total corporate control. It's the largest social movement in human history and Indra was the journalist who most intensively covered it. He also worked closely with Vandana Shiva on seed saving and the Monsanto tribunal.

25 Oct 23 Following the outbreak of violence in Israel-Palestine, Aida Shibli and Uri Ayalon held the first public peace debate, which was followed by several meetings of that kind.

10 Nov 23 Philip Munyasia from Kenya
On November 10th, 2023, Tamera hosted a talk by our long-term ally and friend, Philip Munyasia from Kenya. He shared the progress and vision of his project,

Otepic, with an engaged audience. Philip's presentation highlighted Otepic's transformative approach to sustainable agriculture, permaculture, and community empowerment in Kenya. He detailed their efforts in ecological farming, water conservation, and renewable energy, showcasing how these initiatives are fostering food security, environmental

sustainability, and social resilience. His talk not only educated, but also inspired action and support for sustainable development and community-led change.

5 Dec 23 Presentation by Osama Silwani from East Jerusalem, one of the leading figures of Combats for Peace.

Ring of Power

Throughout history, people of many cultures have honored the sacred moment of sunrise in special rituals. Reconnecting with this primordial tradition, Sabine Lichtenfels - Tamera's co-founder and Association member - initiated the "Ring of Power" in 2002 as a weekly sunrise meditation held at Tamera's Stone Circle, that connects peace workers and activists

from around the world in shared intention and prayer. Supporting us to ground our peace work in a spiritual source, the Ring of Power is a common ritual we celebrate in Tamera and our global network every Monday morning. This is an invitation to all those who know that political action and spiritual research belong together.

Guided tour of Tamera for students from the Sines Vocational School

On May 5th, 2023, a guided tour unfolded in Tamera, led by Fátima Teixeira, Joel Barros, and Jorge Pax. Dina Nunes, an Integration teacher from ETLA in Sines, accompanied 21 students on this educational journey. The day started in the Aula, where discussions on community practices set the tone. Participants engaged in a sharing circle, voicing their curiosities about the visit, and demonstrated active participation through insightful queries. The atmosphere was lightened with a theater exercise named "impulse circle," where students explored emotions through actions like "scaring" and "declaring love energetically to a partner" which brought a lot of laughter among the group.

Fátima Teixeira then provided an overview of Tamera and the purpose behind the Aula's construction. Outside, by the lake,

Joel Barros delved into the critical issue of water, highlighting its significance in the climate change dialogue. The tour then shifted to the cultural center, focusing on activism, with Joel sharing insights from the impactful "No to drilling" campaign in Odeceixe. Fátima brought attention to the challenges of agro-industry in the Costa Vicentina, further enriching the students' understanding of environmental and social activism.

The afternoon was dedicated to exploring sustainable technologies, as Jorge Pax introduced the Sheffler mirror and biogas systems in the solar village kitchen. The tour concluded with Fátima guiding the group through the solar village, wrapping up a day filled with learning, getting to know each other and a deeper appreciation for community and environmental activism.



One Billion Rising

On February 14th, 2023, the Tamera community came together to celebrate and reflect on their 10 years of participation in the global "One Billion Rising" campaign, honoring this event with a political cafe and dance performance. This worldwide movement, founded by activist Eve Ensler, aims to denounce and end the violence against women and girls. Drawing on UN statistics, which estimate that one in three women across the globe will experience rape or sexual assault in her lifetime, Ensler initiated this campaign in 2012 with a powerful combination of song and dance. "One Billion Rising" has grown from a day of action into a global uprising, with groups dancing in the streets of over 200 countries to demand revolutionary change.

Over the years, the focus of "One Billion Rising" has evolved to address not only violence against women but all forms of violence, advocating for a broader examination of systemic violence within economic, political, social, cultural, environmental, and patriarchal structures. Ensler emphasizes the transition from campaign to lifestyle, urging a commitment to a deeper understanding of women's

oppression and exploitation in the context of global issues such as capitalism, colonization, racism, imperialism, and war. Tamera's engagement with "One Billion Rising" began in 2013 with Janka Striffler, a co-worker and former dancer, leading the charge. Her dedication not only brought Tamera into the movement but also positioned her as the coordinator for "One Billion Rising" in Portugal, establishing Tamera as an official ally.

Reflecting on the past decade, the movement celebrates numerous victories and transformations in legislation, culture, art, education, and mindsets. A new generation of activists continues the legacy of those who fought for women's rights, signaling crucial changes and an explosion of artistic expression. Yet, the challenges of patriarchy, which manifests in various societal and global issues, highlight the ongoing struggle for equality and justice.

In 2023, "One Billion Rising" aimed to inspire and aspire, focusing on storytelling, community building, solidarity, dreaming, tree planting, art creation, and honoring women and the Earth—all through the transformative power of dance.

Activist Retreat

"The times are urgent; let us slow down."
– Bayo Akomolafe

From July 22nd to 31st 2023, an unusual gathering unfolded under the banner of an "Activist Retreat" with 30 participants from around the world. This immersive course was designed as a sanctuary for leaders, activists, and organizers grappling with the myriad crises facing our planet—from climate emergency and mass species extinction to surveillance capitalism. Amidst these challenges, the retreat posed critical questions about our role and response to an accelerating systems failure. It invited participants to explore their edges on personal, movement, and collective levels, and to examine how they could live in ways more aligned with the world they aspire to create.

This retreat was more than a series of discussions; it was a deep dive into the soul of activism, questioning how we perpetuate the dynamics we aim to disrupt and how we can foster empathy and connection in times of crisis. Participants engaged in a journey of self-inquiry, asking, "How to act fully without attachment to outcome?" This exploration was grounded in the belief that societal transformation requires not just strategic mobilization but also profound shifts in consciousness.

Tools and practices were offered to nourish the spirit and build resilience. By linking intimate questions of love, sexuality,

spirituality, and power with broader political narratives, the course aimed to reimagine activism as a sacred act of healing. Participants were also treated to a rich tapestry of activities: bodywork and massage, trauma awareness, somatic co-regulation techniques, and experiences of transparency and intimacy through council and Forum. Seminars on love school, re-indigenizing, and systemic change provided intellectual nourishment. Ceremonial spaces allowed for the expression of grief and gratitude, and time spent in nature facilitated a deep listening to the Earth, encouraging a letting go of human centrality.

"Gathering with activists from so many different places around Mother Earth, with such diverse backgrounds and unique qualities of activism, to regenerate in the loving field that Tamera offered us, brought me a feeling of heartfelt togetherness, of belonging to a global tribe that reinforced me in 'my piece' of action and service to Life. Muchas Gracias querid@s!!" —Anahí, Chile

"The activist retreat was for me an experience of deep learning and of spiritual and political research. Held by Tamera's unique field, we wove together our stories, our grief, our love, our fears, and our hopes into a tapestry that allowed for questioning, healing, growing, and also challenging our edges of growth and comfort zones as activists." — Carlota, Portugal



Defend the Sacred Journey India

Defend the Sacred Alliance Pilgrimage to India November 2023

In November 2023 three members of the GRACE association had the honor to join the travel of the Defend the Sacred Alliance to India. This is a global alliance united in prayer, mutual support, culture-to-culture healing, and shared actions. They come together to contribute to the growing

practice of sacred activism, to catalyze regenerative systems change, and to protect the sanctity of all Life. The journey to India was joined by DSA members from Portugal, Palestine, Cameroon, Benin, Peru, Colombia, Israel, USA and from India itself.



Words from Dr. Rajendra Singh the "Waterman of India"

"I invited the DSA of global water warriors to India to experience the vibrancy and diversity of decentralized community-driven water systems and to dream of a common future together. A future where Mother Nature grows with humanity and humankind respects all beings as part of our world family - (...) DSA are dedicated people aligned with the Earth and promote

the revival of indigenous knowledge traditions. I am grateful that DSA came and spent time sharing our waters, spending time with our communities, and seeding hope for a better future. The river Ganga teaches us love, and when the water reaches even the most parched and violent communities- it can have the transformative power to bring back peace and dignity."

Bringing Water to the Lands of Dust

We traveled to rural regions in Rajasthan, where Rajendra Singh awaited us. He welcomed us near a water reservoir built by him and the local village and honored us with gifts and gratitude. These regions were once called "the lands of dust" because it was an arid, rocky, sandy region denuded of trees and life. This is when we got to know "Tarun Bharat Sangh" (TBS), the renowned Indian NGO working for water conservation, sustainable agriculture and rural development. To our amazement, we learned that with the dedication and effort of TBS and the local community and village, they transformed this dry, lifeless land into a green and fertile one in only a decade.

It was powerful to stand and feel the reality of this new oasis and watering hole TBS had inspired to spring up in this rocky red desert region.

The TBS team shared their simple model. They believe that it must come from within the community, within the people themselves, from their own hearts and hands toiling on the land. Their work is simple and powerful: to revive Mother Earth's belly through Indigenous water harvesting techniques, giving opportunities to remember and rebirth long-lost rivers and self-reliance within local communities.

World Water Conclave

Hosted by The People's World Commission on Drought and Flood (PWCF) and TBS, we began the World Water Conclave with a ceremony honoring the water and the land. The focus of the evening was on the importance of Indigenous wisdom. We listened to ideas on how to clean rivers with plant-based sewage treatment plants, how to bring back freshwater dolphins and work on a law to declare the Ganges a living being. Thirty speakers from all over India presented their work, some sharing how they have had transformative results after only one year of devotion, and many of them emphasized the importance of Indigenous knowledge. Manish Jain, co-founder of Swaraj University, shared a beautiful still-living tradition in Udaipur: There are places all over the city where

drinking water is distributed. A service that people do in the spirit of a divine service. We learned that selling water is considered by many one of the biggest sins in India.

Uma Shankar Pandey, a panelist, was recently awarded the India Civilian Honour award for his water conservation work. He suggested that water universities be set up worldwide and that the movement campaigns work to bring more money into those kinds of projects. This way, we can create work opportunities that bring people back to nature so they may heal their natures. It was a rich conversation.

"It is not enough to clean the water physically; we need to give it back its divinity."





Peace Education aimed at Adults

Online Education

The online education team, consisting of Joel Barros, Uri Ayalon, and Yuval Kovo, had the pleasure of guiding over 345 students through our seven online courses.

What is System Change? February 2-12, 2023

Activist and writer Martin Winiecki and community facilitator Juliette Baigler – together with world-leading radical visionaries and practitioners – invited 177 participants from 22 countries for an adventure of systemic global thinking, which included interactive learning, embodied cognition and self-reflection. The eight-part online course "What is System Change?" dove into the questions of our times: As we're facing an unprecedented global polycrisis, activism too finds itself in a profound crisis of meaning, orientation and strategy. Even though mass movements for climate and social justice have mobilized countless millions of people, they've mostly been unable to bring about structural transformation. Global capitalism is producing ever greater inequities and totalitarian realities, while pushing us ever closer to catastrophic ecological and social collapse. Each one of us is presented with a stark choice: helping to change the system or being part of the problem. But how to achieve this in a world so completely controlled by capitalism? How to even imagine it, when the logic of capital not only controls economics and politics, but even much of our own behaviors and dreams?

The hosts Juliette Baigler and Martin Winiecki were honored to be joined by 4 teachers with diverse backgrounds -

Miki Kashtan is a pioneer exploring the utilization of the principles and tools of Nonviolent Communication to social transformation. She holds a Ph.D. in Sociology and is widely recognized as a visionary voice rooted in practical applications.

Aida Shibli born to indigenous tribes of Palestine is a feminist, a political activist, a member of Defend the Sacred alliance, and a coworker of Tamera. She has worked to raise awareness of injustice and political violence in her home country and around the world.

Vanessa Machado de Oliveira is the author of the book "Hospicing Modernity". She is holding a Canada Research Chair in Race, Inequalities, and Global Change. As an educator, she works focusing on global justice, Indigenous and community engagement, sustainability, and social and ecological responsibility.

Sabine Lichtenfels is a co-founder of Tamera, author of many books and peace activist. Her spectrum of work comprises: international peace work, community knowledge, spiritual research, a new female consciousness and truth in love and eros.

Introduction to Love School

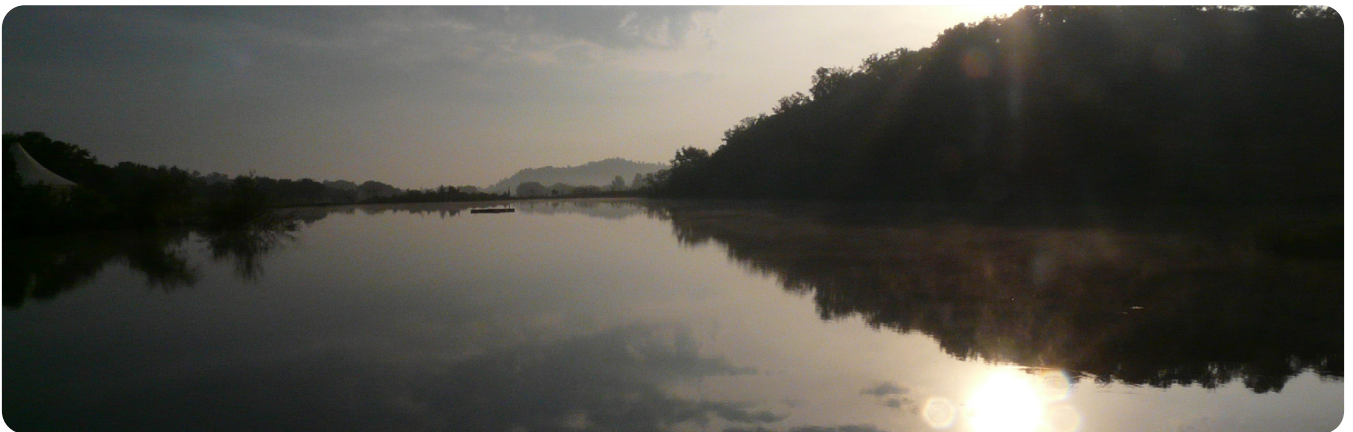
October 27 - November 5, 2023

In this series of six webinars, Sabine Lichtenfels and Benjamin von Mendelssohn, co-founders of Tamera's Global Love School, explored the foundations for a cultural shift in love and sexuality. Today, more and more people are awakening to the need for transformative work, on the personal, social and political levels. Together with 78 participants from 14 countries they explored the relevance of dissolving jealousy, enlarging the vessels for love and releasing shame around authentic sexual expression.

At the core of the Tamera project stands the insight that there cannot be peace in

the world as long as there is war in love. In this course the participants inquired the questions: What responsibility do I have for ending war? What do I love when I love? How do I find balance when experiencing the high voltage of love and sexuality? What tools can I use to free myself when I'm caught by jealousy, possessiveness, and fear? What social structures do we need to rebuild to allow for personal evolution?

Joined by participants from diverse corners of the globe, Sabine Lichtenfels and Benjamin von Mendelssohn facilitated a transformative journey towards the possibility of a more harmonious and loving world.



Consultation with Tamera

In January 2022, we started to offer a personalized accompaniment with Tamera's experts, coming from the wish to strengthen the alliance of peace workers around the world by sharing the collective knowledge we've gained through 40 years of community experience. The team offers 12 video calls of 1.5 hours each which can be distributed over 3 months–1 year in a way that suits each client.

This is a possibility to come into direct and continuous contact with wisdom carriers from different fields of Tamera's research. We believe that the integration of outer

perspectives for the delicate process of group/team/project building can be crucial for success and to overcome the challenges that inevitably appear when paving paths for a culture of cooperation and regeneration.

The spectrum of online consultation for peace work projects around the world with experts from Tamera comprises community building, political activism and networking, envisioning, love and sexuality in the context of a community, communitarian economy, rainwater management and water retention landscapes.



Reconnecting to Ancient Peace Knowledge with our Stone Circle

In the serene landscapes of the Alentejo, a profound gathering took place from August 16th to 25th, 2023, focusing on "Listening to Ancient Peace Knowledge." This event, led by the visionary Sabine Lichtenfels, co-founder of Tamera, sought to reconnect participants with the ancient wisdom of pre-patriarchal peace cultures. The retreat was deeply inspired by the Stone Circle of Almendres, a megalithic monument near Évora, Portugal, that stands as one of Europe's oldest and most significant prehistoric sites, estimated to be around 7,000 years old. This ancient circle, comprising 96 granite stones arranged in an elliptical shape, has long been recognized as a ceremonial site that aligns with celestial events, symbolizing a deep understanding of the cosmos and a harmonious way of life that predates patriarchal structures.

Drawing inspiration from the Almendres Circle, Sabine Lichtenfels established a modern stone circle within Tamera as a

communitarian artwork and ceremonial center. This new circle, mirroring the ancient monument's purpose, serves as a bridge to the primordial memory of a time when human societies lived in balance with the Earth and each other. The circle's 96 stones represent archetypes of a universal peace community, emphasizing the ideals of inclusion, cooperation, and harmony.

The "Listening to Ancient Peace Knowledge" retreat invited attendees to engage with Tamera's stone circle as a spiritual library, accessing and learning from the ancient stories and wisdom it holds. The event was not just an educational experience but a spiritual journey, encouraging participants to explore how humanity once coexisted with the planet before the rise of hierarchical and patriarchal systems. It sought to uncover the lessons these ancient cultures can teach us about creating regenerative and nonviolent ways of living together.



Throughout the ten days, participants delved into the essence of what it means to be part of a peace community. They examined the various aspects of such a community, seeking answers to personal, spiritual, and political questions. The retreat emphasized the importance of leaving behind old habits and patterns, urging attendees to connect with the living consciousness of the Earth and to listen to its voice. This connection was facilitated through a variety of practices, including meditation, group discussions, and ceremonial activities, all designed to foster a deeper understanding of and alignment with the Earth's wisdom.

The retreat was a call to action, challenging participants to integrate the wisdom of ancient peace cultures into their daily lives and activism. It encouraged a reimagining of activism itself, not just as a fight against what is wrong in the world but as a sacred duty to restore harmony and balance.

"The entire team truly embodies what you teach. You created a welcoming space for us and guided us on a sacred and healing journey. I was able to wrap myself in this supportive atmosphere and deeply engage. Immense thanks to you all!" – Sabine Agnes Mehringer

"I'm impressed by the breadth and depth of the topics covered and the comprehensive approach of the seminar. You made an effort to include a wide range of aspects. The time we spent together in nature, at the oracle source and the stone circle, really resonated with me, strengthening our bond with nature and each other as a community." – Tanja Kaller, School of the Heart

1st Pride Parade in Vila Nova de Milfontes

On June 18th 2023, the picturesque town of Milfontes, Portugal, celebrated an iconic moment in its history—the first Pride Parade, coinciding with Pride Month. This march had a large participation from Tamera as well as members of the LGBTQI+ Community course and other locals from the queer community of the Alentejo. There were also many children and their families who joined. The air buzzed with music, creating a festive atmosphere that invited everyone to join in the celebration. Adding to the

joy were slices of cake distributed in the streets, symbolizing the sweetness of love and acceptance. This vibrant event marked a significant step forward in the region's journey toward inclusivity and diversity. This is an issue that needs to be strengthened, even more after there were incidents that occurred in LGBTQI+ actions in Évora with vandalism and assaults.

The Correio de Lagos published the news of Milfontes first pride parade.





LGBTQ+ Community Course

From June 1st to 21st 2023, Tamera offered an intensive community building course, specifically inviting members of the LGBTQ+ community to partake in a transformative journey towards creating a peaceful future. This program was not merely an educational course but a lived experience in fostering a community rooted in cooperation, trust, and a deep connection with the more-than-human world.

The course aimed to demonstrate how global peace could be achieved through decentralized, autonomous bioregions. Participants were immersed in the principles of truth, transparency, and trust, exploring how these values could form the foundation of a community that transcends the traditional boundaries of private life, embracing a communitarian way of being. The course addressed the often-hidden patterns of fear, mistrust, and jealousy that undermine communal living, offering creative and artistic avenues to engage with and transform these patterns.

A significant aspect of the program was its focus on the political relevance of inner

transformation work, positioning personal growth and communal harmony as essential to global peace efforts. Participants learned the importance of transforming fear and mistrust into truth and trust, discovering how such shifts can serve as acupuncture points for peace within the larger community.

This course was a call to action for those ready to challenge themselves, let go of old habits, and actively participate in the creation of a new, peaceful culture. It offered a rare opportunity to experience a level of trust and communal living that many may have thought impossible, leaving participants with valuable insights into how they could contribute to building a global field for peace.

Voice of a participant:

"Definitely not a walk in the park... just a meaningful way to come face to face with myself by meeting others engaged in an effort to make it all work out. Having to find my way through the whole process was worth every minute!" – LN



Peace Education Aimed at Children and Youth

Youth Camp Summer

This year we had about 30 young people aged 14 to 20. We reduced the numbers slightly compared to previous years so as to create more intimacy within the group.

We started with an introductory talk about Tamera and our work. The next day we went on a pilgrimage, sometimes in silence, sometimes in conversation, walking 17 km to a nearby place called Pego das Pias, commonly known as "Paradise Place" in Tamera because of its natural beauty. We spent the day together, with drawing exercises, games to get to know each other and a talk about what it means to live in community. The next day we returned to the Art mountain in Tamera and started our art days.

During these days we had talks about art, the human being in the cosmos and meditations to get in touch with another entity. We introduced painting and explored with colours. The creations were very impressive, as the door to many souls on the canvas.

After three days of painting, we introduced "love school day", which is always a highlight and a meaningful experience for everyone in the camp. We had girls and boys rounds where we shared moving experiences. For us in the team we are reminded again and again how important this work is, creating spaces where young people can share and talk about their experiences in a held space without fear of judgment. We find that many of the youth bring similar issues

and questions, and through the sharing, strong bonds of support are created within the group that last long after the camp has ended.

In the second week we continued our time at the art mountain, moving from painting to theater. The focus was to create our own masks. Simultaneously, we played little improvisation exercises to discover the magic of masks and the characters that can be created. It was a joy to see the masks slowly come into being. And we were very impressed by the quality of the masks that were created.

Along the way we continued to have our boys and girls rounds and forum work.

There were also many different evening events – for example, we had one where we invited activists who had just done an activist retreat in Tamera to talk about their life and work. Hearing their life stories was inspiring for all of us.

We also had an evening in the Bar, where Fabio Miranda, from the Institute Favela da Paz in Brazil, spoke. Among many things, he spoke about how to integrate new technologies in a community inside the favelas (slums) of São Paulo. His nephew, who was part of our youth camp, also spoke this evening about his life in the Favela, and what is possible in the face of such adversity when you have a vision and a belief.

We had the gift of listening to a session on

trauma, describing how trauma works and some of the main responses to it – fight, flight, freeze or fawn. We discussed how to recognise when we are in these responses and practiced ways to regulate our nervous system, both individually and collectively. Many young people (and also the adults) were grateful for this time.

As in many years of the youth camp, we also did a final presentation where we invited guests and the community into "our living room" on the art mountain. There was an exhibition with our pictures, a small play with masks, acrobatics and poems, reports

Youth Camp Easter

This year a youth group of 25 people in total started off with the plan to walk from Odeceixe down south to the Cabo de São Vicente, the most south-western point of Europe's mainland. This route is about 80 km long and we planned to walk it in five days. Besides the physical challenge of walking for a week, we decided to refrain from as many habitual distractions as possible, especially from the use of smartphones. This challenge was received quite easily by most of the teenagers, and was seen as a huge gift in our reflection round, as it allowed for much more actual time spent together.

For this first day we had the pleasure of Sabine Lichtenfels, the co-founder of Tamera, walking with us. This felt very meaningful for the group, as she herself has led and walked several pilgrimages in different countries before. We could get a taste of her knowledge through her storytelling about those experiences being on the road and the time of finding and founding Tamera in Portugal back in the 90's. We also took the first day to walk with the question of our intention. Why, and for what, are we here? How can we make use of this time in the best way?

What a gift it was to constantly be outside in nature, walking and leading a very simple life without much distraction. Many of the participants shared about their stress-level dropping a lot throughout the time.

about things we learnt and experienced in the camp, as well as rapping and singing. The aim was to share some of the worlds we had created in the youth camp with the wider community in Tamera. This was a very successful evening where many of the youth felt seen and appreciated.

We are delighted with how the camp went this year and we think it was a huge success.

Thank you to everyone who made this time possible. Thank you to the youth, the residents of Art Mountain and all the teachers and speakers who joined us.

Beautiful songs were being created and a lot of music and creativity was present while walking or around the fire at night.

We succeeded in creating a real community time and also had very moving spaces of sharing amongst each other within the boys and girls rounds, as well as the sharing rounds with everybody around the fire. One could really feel how the teenagers could open up, come into contact again with themselves and each other. It was a time where everybody was contributing and taken care of by the group simultaneously.

Thanks to everyone who helped to make this possible!





Travel to Damanhur

The "Fire Phoenix" learning group of the Escola da Esperança project, 6 youngsters aged 11-13 and 3 adults, made a road trip to Damanhur, a community in Italy, in February 2023.

The entire journey lasted 3 weeks. For many of the students it had been the first time to be on such a big journey and to be away from family for so long. It was a new experience for all of them. The following is a statement from the staff of the Escola da Esperança Project regarding such educational projects.

"We find that such journeys offer a unique richness into the learning process of the students that is difficult to create in

conventional school settings. A journey like this – including the fundraising, pre-journey preparations and after work – becomes a big communitarian process that trains teamwork and motivates the students to meet new challenges. The joy of being together on the road and the excitement of meeting other youth and cultures become part of the invisible classroom which goes on 24 hours a day. One way to approach growth in self-awareness is meaningful contact with other ways of living – which leads to genuine curiosity of one's own life circumstances. In addition, such journeys support the youth in feeling part of the global community. We are very grateful to everyone who made this journey possible."

A Student's Perspective: Communication with Plants

On Thursday we had a class about plant communication with the 5th graders of the Damanhur school. In that class, the teacher started by showing us a presentation about what it is and how it works. Afterwards she took us outside to talk with a tree. In the presentation she talked about the fact that in order to fully talk with plants you need to connect with all of your senses. They have

a device they use for one way of listening to the plants. It uses electromagnetic resistances to work, similar to a lie detector. The changes in resistance are translated to musical notes. I would have preferred if we would have just done experiments with the device. That topic is really interesting to me but I think it was a little too much talk, amongst the humans.



A Student's Perspective: Project Time on Food Industry with Uri

When we started to discuss what kinds of community rules we want to agree to, many topics immediately popped up. The issues that had the most excitement in the beginning were not so much about how we want to treat each other and resolve conflicts (this came later), but about media and food consumption guidelines. To the topic of food, some questions came: "Can we eat sugary foods? And how much?! What about potato chips? What about these fast food restaurants?" Of course, we can't expect everyone to suddenly change their normal eating habits or to always eat like health angels. It was also clear that there are many personal opinions about what is okay to eat and what is not. To begin to answer these questions as a group we wanted to start with a common baseline of information.

For this we invited Uri from the Tamera community, a historian and activist who for some years worked in the area of local food production. Bringing his passion and political heart, he prepared a rich presentation on the topics of the modern food industry, sugar consumption, processed vs. whole foods, speciesism, the meat industry and its ecological impact and more. His wish was to wake us up to the importance of food choice- where we spend our money and the impact we have on other species and the planet through our daily consumer decisions. Though we each still carried our own personal preferences, from the sessions with him we left more informed collectively to this issue, which made it easier to establish clear guidelines as a group for our journey.

Kindergarten and Pottery

In November our kindergarten had three pottery sessions in Maya's workshop in Ateneu do Catorze.

Early in the mornings we filled up the van with kids and to the sound of the "Final Countdown" from "Europe" we headed towards São Luís.

Whatever Maya's proposals were, getting to know the different states of clay, transforming it into dust, adding water to it, shaping little islands, mushrooms or snowmen and painting them, you could

see magic happening there. I don't know if it was Maya's presence or the power of the material but the children's focus and concentration was surprising.

From the youngest, who's only 3 and who was simply enjoying experiencing the material, to the older ones who already had loads of ideas of what to shape and how to do it, all of them were in total union with the clay. Maya was merely the observer of the process and gave a few inputs here and there as if she knew the motto of Maria Montessori "Help me do it on my own".



Saint Martin Celebration

On November 14th, 2023, Saint Martin's Day brought a festive spirit to the Alentejo region, uniting two local education projects: the School of Relíquias and the Escola da Esperança project's kindergarten and primary learning group. This was the second year these school projects teamed up, and it was a win for both.

Saint Martin's Day, or Dia de São Martinho, is celebrated all over Portugal, but Alentejo has its own special way of honoring it. The day remembers Saint Martin of Tours, famous for his kindness and the miracle of the "Verão de São Martinho" (Saint

Martin's Summer), a brief warm spell in early November. In Alentejo, people celebrate by roasting chestnuts (castanhas) and drinking the season's new wine, capturing the community's warmth and generosity.

At Tamera, the celebration was full of these traditions. Kids and adults gathered around a campfire, singing, sharing stories, and enjoying roasted chestnuts, all reflecting Saint Martin's spirit. Events like this help kids understand their local traditions and the importance of unity and kindness, values that Saint Martin stood for.

Some More Childrens Activities in 2023

Jan - Dec Monthly visits of the kindergarten to the libraries of Odemira and Ourique.

March 27 - 31 The kindergarten group had a week of working with horses.

Apr 28 The kindergarten held a Compost Workshop - what is compost? How is soil created? How do we take care of our Earth?

May 23 Bee Workshop with Annelieke. What can we learn from the bees?

June 16 Final School Celebration with parents, friends and neighbors.

June 19 and 20 A workshop for the kindergarten of making Puppets with Isabel.

July We had 3 weeks of circus and acrobatics summer camp for the primary kids: learning bike tricks, jumping through loops, acrobatics with the silk, exercises at the trapeze.

25th October The students of the 1st and 2nd cycle went to the teatro "O Estado do Mundo (quando acordas)" in Odemira, together with other pupils of the region.

Nov - Dec 2023 The 2nd cycle were involved in a project time of creating a stop motion animation called Por Causa dos Lobos ("Because of the Wolves") which tells the story of how the ecosystem of Yellowstone National park regenerated due to reintroducing wolves.

Dec 15 Final School celebration with parents and friends, showing an exhibition of artworks and a magical Advents spiral.





Resource Analysis

Human Resources

As of December 31, 2023, G.R.A.C.E. had 19 employees, the same number as the previous year, despite two departures and two new hires.

The number of members in the Social Bodies in 2023 remained at six, with three in the Directorate (President, Secretary, and Treasurer) and three in the Fiscal Council (President, First Member, and Second Member). None of the Social Bodies received any remuneration for their roles.

8 employees
22 volunteers, on average
119 members





Economic and Financial Situation

Balance Sheet and Income Statement Analysis.

Analyzing the Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2023, it is evident that G.R.A.C.E. maintains a solid position with a financial autonomy of 74%. The following variations in the Balance Sheet are highlighted compared to 2022: a marginal 1% increase in Assets; a 53% increase in Liabilities due to obtaining financing and amounts owed to suppliers. Equity decreased by 10% (explained by a 10% worsening of Net Results compared to the 2022 financial year).

Regarding the Source of Funds, 2023 saw a 32% increase in Sales and Services Rendered, resulting from a continued focus

on the main activity, Education; conversely, Operating Subsidies (Donations) decreased by 31%.

Concerning the Application of Funds, considering the increase in activities, the Supplies and External Services item saw a 13% increase, continuing the effort to reduce the costs associated with organizing events and the expenses of participants' stays. There was also an 8% decrease in Personnel Expenses.

The net result for the period was negative, amounting to -€29,895.60, which will be integrated into the Retained Earnings account in accordance with legal requirements and the Statutes.

Financial Statements

Balance

DECEMBER 2023			
amounts in EUR			
Headings	Notes	Business Years	
		2023	2022
Assets			
Long-term Assets			
Tangible Fixed Assets		16.226,28	18.262,25
Historical and Cultural Heritage			
Investment Properties			
Intangible Assets			
Financial Assets		329.070,51	330.454,72
Founders / Patrons / Sponsors / Donors / Shareholders / Members		17.206,14	8.942,41
		362.502,93	357.659,38
Current Assets			
Inventory			
Customers			143,81
Advances to Suppliers			
Government and Other Public Institutions		5.123,13	8.004,84
Founders / Patrons / Sponsors / Donors / Shareholders / Members			
Other Receivables			
Prepayments			
Other Financial Assets		509,90	
Cash and Bank Balances		32.523,62	30.722,58
		38.156,65	38.871,23
Total Assets		400.659,58	396.530,61
Equity and Liabilities			
Equity			
Funds			
Technical Surpluses			
Reserves			
Profit Reserves		251.497,43	272.147,92
Revaluation Surpluses			
Other Equity Changes		75.000,00	76.805,40
Net Profit for the Reporting Period		(29.895,60)	(20.650,49)
Total Capital Funds		296.601,83	328.302,83
Liabilities			
Long-term Liabilities			
Provisions			
Special Provisions			
Received Financing		40.041,60	30.000,00
Other Liabilities			
		40.041,60	30.000,00
Current Liabilities			
Suppliers		30.422,29	393,73
Advances from Customers			
Government and Other Public Institutions		6.248,89	10.909,96
Founders / Patrons / Sponsors / Donors / Shareholders / Members			185,00
Received Financing			
Accruals			
Other Liabilities			
Other Financial Liabilities		27.344,97	26.739,09
		64.016,15	38.227,78
Total Liabilities		104.057,75	68.227,78
Total Equity and Liabilities		400.659,58	396.530,61

Profit and Loss Statement

PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT OF THE NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION			
January till December			
Amounts in EUR			
Categories	Notes	Business Years	
		2023	2022
Income and Expenses			
Sales and Services Rendered		328.239,17	249.585,80
Operating Grants		160.409,86	232.741,51
Changes in Inventories of Finished Goods and Work in Progress			
Own Work Capitalized			
Cost of Goods Sold and Consumables Used			
External Supplies and Services		(303.085,69)	(267.150,67)
Personnel Expenses		(203.759,20)	(222.458,51)
Impairment Losses (Expenses/Reversals)			
Provisions (Increases/Reductions)			
Other Income		1.451,04	1.321,02
Other Expenses		(11.114,81)	(11.346,27)
Profit Before Depreciation, Financing Costs, and Taxes		(27.859,63)	(17.307,12)
Depreciation and Amortization / Reversals		(2.035,97)	(3.343,37)
Operating Profit (before Financing Costs and Taxes)		(29.895,60)	(20.650,49)
Finance Costs (Net)			
Profit Before Tax		(29.895,60)	(20.650,49)
Income Tax for the Reporting Period			
Net Profit for the Reporting Period		(29.895,60)	(20.650,49)
		,00	,00



Final Considerations

The year 2023 brought many innovations and new developments to our association - from engaging in a new decision making structure, to deciding on a purpose and mission plan for the coming two years, to working on and publishing an inclusion statement on our website. Looking back we can say that last year marked a significant step in the handover of responsibility to a younger generation, from the pioneers and project carriers of many years finding new supportive positions holding their knowledge and decades of experience. We are deeply engaged in creating an authentic cooperation between generations.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to all the workers, partners, patrons, and volunteers who have supported us, as well as to extend our deepest gratitude to our Associates, as it is all of them who make it possible to continuously pursue the objectives of G.R.A.C.E..
Relíquias, April 01, 2023

Meike Müller

Meike Müller, President



Images: Yuval Kovo, Simon DuVinage, Eiko Goldeck, Fátima Teixeira, Benjamin Bogosian, Silvano Rizzi, Juliane Eckmann, Shiri von Reumont, Avihai Cohen

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