



WORKING WITH PEOPLE

In the modern workplace, you hear a good bit of hype around jargon words like inclusion and productivity. Organic farms are inclusive and productive, but in a very different way than a big warehouse selling inexpensive imported goods online.

What and how you include and produce are important! The organic movement was begun, in the 1940s, by farmers who could see the negative effects that the new "more productive" agro-chemicals had on the soil, wildlife, and people. The ideal of organic growing is to produce positive effects rather than extinction and suffering. Growing with natural principles must include harmony with all aspects of nature, including people.



On WWOOF farms, people aim to build an alternative lifestyle to combat the ecocidal ways of modern society. These ways of thinking and living should also extend to the working relationship.

Teamwork

Tractors and fossil fuels have replaced humans on most farms. Organic farming is more reliant on human input. It is harder--remember that when you are getting blisters! This hard work is why people go down to the supermarket instead of their own food. Organic methods are hard work, but rewarding. And because organic farming needs more human input, more teamwork is involved. Two people hoe-ing will get the job done faster. It is not just about numbers though, as the two people hoe-ing can talk or sing work songs and they will do more work together than two people working separately would have.

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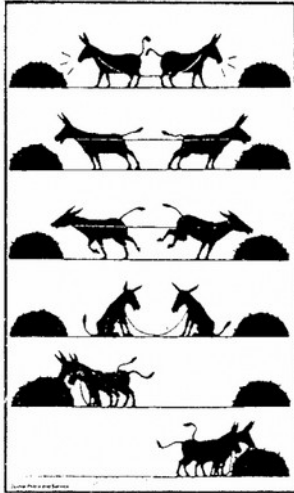
Using Individual Strengths in a Group Dynamic

Nature is diverse; that is how it survives. There is always a slightly faster deer or one with bigger horns that can chase off the predator. Diversity gives nature strength. We should learn from nature. We need diverse people--not standardised industrial robots.



Dealing with Conflict

People often argue. We see violence on TV and in the cinemas. We are encouraged to compete in the workplace and in sports. Cities and places with high populations can be angry and unwelcoming places due to the competitive and chaotic environment fostered by these places. Many organic farmers and those involved with WWOOF are trying to get away from this chaos and confusion, but it can be hard to adjust to a different pace of life.



"There was once a farmer taking bananas down river to sell in The Village. The canoe was small and the bananas were piled high. As the farmer paddled along, the canoe hit a log, and the accident knocked some bananas off. They sank to the bottom and were lost. The farmer remained calm and paddled on. Near the village there were many more canoes with other people from the country and villagers going about their business. One of the other canoes hit against the farmer's canoe and, again, some bananas fell into the river and were lost. The farmer was angry this time, as there was someone he could blame..."

This story demonstrates how people tend to direct their anger at others, which is more likely to happen in larger cities or densely populated areas. If you have a problem with people, it is often a good idea to do so in a calm way. Try not to make accusations or start sentences with "you". Instead, try saying, "It seems to me like..." This is not an accusation, and it invites correction. It also can help avoid the other person in becoming defensive. It is better to not blame people, but try to include others and to be productive.

Remember, if you have a problem it is usually better to try to raise this with the Host. Most WWOOF Hosts are people who want to avoid conflict. If you can't solve it with your Host, you can contact WWOOF. There is the option to leave a review, as well.

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