

Platohedro's Principles of Buen Vivir

During the months of March to June 2020, along the initial period of quarantine due to the COVID-19 pandemic in Colombia, we proposed to reflect among the members of the Platohedro team on what Buen Vivir/Good Living means for us nowadays.

Good Living is a concept that comes from the Andean indigenous thought [Sumak Kawsay](#) (in Quechua) and [Suma Qamaña](#) (in Aymara language) which consists of the search for more balanced relationships in ecosystems and between all beings, human and non-human, as a path to a common well-being.

We started from this thought as a vision that guides our practices and we adapted it to our work as an organization. As such, we consider it a dynamic concept that we approach, resignify and situate in time and in relation to our context.

To guide the conversation we took the [13 principles of Good Living](#) and each week we reflected on each one of them. Subsequently, each one wrote their ideas in a common document, where we began by addressing more individual aspects that progressively approached the collective.

In such a strange and difficult time, this exercise allowed us to open a space to situate ourselves in plural with the gift of thinking about ourselves and our practices.

At the end of this collaborative exercise, we made a synthesis of all the views in a new common text that follows:

**What does #BuenVivir mean for us?
How do we apply our concept of #Buenvivir in everyday life?**

The sensation of being out-of-synch with space and time enables the search for something different, as part of feeling and understanding what we experience, including the construction of a path that lets us get where we are heading. This route is not undertaken alone but with others. You must encourage a sum of tasks to be carried out to understand and learn to walk. These steps of ours end up solidifying and defining a topography of ideas and actions that little by little make it clear that the environment is not malleable matter but energy that complements us by being in relationship. The human and non-human and the tangible and intangible resonate alongside each other. This harmonious resonance is what we search for and when we find it we will have experienced Buen Vivir, without attempting for this to be a prize or a final state, but the beginning of a whole attempt at restoring and maintaining harmony.

P2. #BuenVivir is a fundamental pillar for Platohedro. Being part of the team, how does #BuenVivir become visible in our work and in our relationships with others?

In Platohedro, the path, the gathering, and the steps, cement the topography of ideas, the dance accompanied by the rhythms of each and every one of us. This is a sum of individual dreams and feelings that have learned to vibrate together. Beyond what is binary is our own selves. It is for everyone, both in and out of this house. This means knowing how to understand different forms of existence.

The proper and appropriate tools become a form of support for knowing, knowing each other and activating other forms of collaboration as common and free. This meant to be a solid base of knowledge and practices that "hack" what is out of synch. It is not meant to force it to vibrate like we do but to stop vibrating at these frequencies. Thus the everyone's well-being appears not as a goal but as a reality and harmony to be maintained. Sustainability as a precedent of operational existence but with the soul of diversity and joy of each and everyone of us. This is Buen Vivir in the style of Platóhedro.

1. Suma Manq aña | #SaberComer | Conscious Eating

Knowing how to eat is integrating a series of beings and processes in an act of preserving life. Food is essential for life and understanding where it comes from is of vital importance. It makes everyday actions become a political exercise, including self-care (maintaining physical and mental health), understanding your body and how it works, choosing conscious consumption, supporting local production chains, spending less and even promoting territorial transformations that defend and execute food sovereignty.

Knowing how to eat is also a construction of the encounter. Being well accompanied and sharing with others to avoid waste means getting involved in producing and preparing food without these tasks being marked by gender or age.

Finally, knowing how to eat is opening up reflection on health as an individual and collective responsibility. It is a commitment for achieving sovereignty and freedom that begins with the body itself, without being out of synch with the environment.

2. Suma Umaña | #SaberBeber

Knowing how to drink complements knowing how to eat.

Drinking a lot of water allows us to have a clean mind, with balanced clarity and emotions. It hydrates us, prevents pain, and gives us energy to be active. Drinking water without additives and sugar is a way of receiving what life gives us in its purest form. We are liquid and through liquid we socialize and celebrate rituals to share with others. We also get drunk, which allows us to flow and let flow through the liquid that we are. It fills and calms us at the same time.

Water is a fundamental element for life on earth in almost all ways. We are fluid beings full of water. The parts of these systems means taking care of water as a vital issue and need.

3. Suma Thokoña | #SaberDanzar

Knowing how to dance means knowing how to be present, relate, and connect. It also has to do with communicating with other beings, with the ritual of liberating the body in connection with the cosmos, with spirituality.

Dancing is the mystical language of the complete being in a decentralized expression of the body in its entirety, of the spirit and the heart in consideration with others and with the earth that provides us with support.

Navigating space and learning to share, understanding rhythms and pauses of movements, and also understanding stillness. Choreographing solutions and releasing burdens, discomforts, and emotions. Celebrating life through catharsis. Dancing is feeling and transmitting a source of one's own energy, collective energy and environmental energy without having to go through the rational. Dancing opens a door to a sensory and fluid dimension that allows us to celebrate life by letting ourselves be free and a part of a whole.

If we learned to dance from a young age, we would walk in harmony and know how to walk together, without stepping on each other, with consent, embracing the diversity of expressions, because even the revolution is danced.

4. Suma Ikiña | #SaberDormir

Knowing how to sleep is one of the most important, complicated, and even perhaps rigorous, principles. It is a need that requires attention.

We demand from our body and our mind throughout the day, sometimes so much that during the night they are still active. Exhaustion overloads the mind and body. We enter into crisis. We lose sleep and end up in a cycle of insomnia that wears us out and makes us sick.

Sleeping has its own rituals to predispose itself to rest, silence, and pause, such as taking into account the position of the bed or learning to sleep two days (the night of one and the dawn of the other). It is essential to recover and recharge the lost energy for the regeneration of the organism and our ideas. It is essential that we know how to sleep enough to have fluidity and cleanse our mind.

Sleeping can also be a state of protection when something distresses us. It can make us withdraw and deactivate as a matter of rhythms and times, of intensities and repose.

When we know to sleep we facilitate the revitalization of the body and mind to think and project ourselves in an organized manner.

5. Suma Irnakaña | #SaberTrabajar

Working means change, challenge, creativity, love, and dedication. Working has to do with the fulfillment of each and every person.

Forgetting about salaried work, understood a capitalist and western rhythm, we must seek to work with pleasure, facing our everyday lives, doing what we like without feeling under the weight of senseless obligation.

It is important to work with respect: rhythm and time, our energy, environment, tools, valuing work done by others, using all our senses to reach non-exhausting ways that help us achieve what we propose, facing difficulties with intelligence and patience.

The work we do with care and love helps us learn and develop many skills and be willing to do so, favoring the rhythms of life and personal fulfillment.

Know how to work at Platohedro

The professional work at Platohedro teaches us more often than not to live with others, to listen, to understand the collective, to think from the collective, to leave individual egos and to understand that trust in others also resides in trusting oneself.

The search to know how to work that led to the founding of Platohedro also brought us the fortune of forming a diverse team that does what it likes to do and has different capacities that, bringing them together, can achieve wonderful things that teach us to walk together.

The work at Platohedro is not "a crazy job and for that it is paid", as some people say. It is knowing that beyond our doing, there is a background that impacts us in multiple ways, that seeks changes without selfishness, that leaves oneself to be a part of ideas that come together and act collectively.

Love for what we do is the engine of our work. It connects us with enthusiasm and on difficult days it helps us to remember why and what we are here for, understanding the undulations of energy, personal and collective.

6. Suma Lupiña | #SaberMeditar

Knowing how to meditate, the importance of silence, and looking inside oneself, means knowing how to speak and dialogue with oneself. It allows us to renew and work our energy from other perspectives, from emptiness, echoes. It allows us to pay attention to our breathing and listen to our body. It is a principle related to moments of stillness, introspection, self-criticism, and reflection.

Knowing how to meditate is a process that is cultivated; one learns the need to do it, seeks that calm, takes time for that moment, takes the time to be grateful, prepares for life and death. There are many ways to meditate. What is important is to allow oneself time for self-observation, internal listening without judgement, inner peace or satisfaction so as to find and travel to one's path towards one's self.

7. Suma Amuyaña | #SaberPensar

Knowing how to think is the ability to stop and reflect before speaking and acting. It also means to think collectively, build a collective intelligence, and learn to nurture thought. Knowing how to think is then a creative act. It means new ideas and clarities. It implies listening to others who are close and share in feelings and think about helping to have a broader perspective to navigate the map of possibilities.

Thinking beautiful mean living beautiful. There is a lot of beauty in thinking, but sometimes it can become something that paralyzes you. Thinking too much about things is not good. The saturation of information can play against you; it distresses you.

Knowing how to think is related to connecting the mind and heart. In this sense, it is related to the principle of knowing how to meditate.

It means weaving the learning and experiences, knowing how to incorporate the voices of others into our construction, taking our learning from the past and projecting it into the future while being in the present. It means being reflective, questioning oneself, wanting to know what lies beyond, and having the ability to think critically and imagine radically.

8. Suma Munaña, Munayasaña | #SaberAmarYSerAmadx

Knowing how to love means knowing how to love oneself and thus being able to dare and understand loving others. It means knowing how to give what you want to receive.

Knowing how to love and be loved is one of the most essential needs for humanity. Loving gives meaning to our lives. Love is unconditional. It means not having contracts, or definitions, or norms that limit ourselves and our freedom. Love is built from trust, freedom and listening. It means always seeking well-being.

Love as a vital force. Losing fear and facing risks makes love a good companion to building well-being. We are not taught to love and much less to be loved. There are many ways to love and we must learn all of the ways. It means de-idealizing and understanding how an everyday construction in relation to others, with what surrounds us and with what we do, includes moments of differences and difficulties.

This principle is a vertex between the previous ones that place us in knowing how to be with oneself and those that follow that are knowing how to be with the others in harmony.

9. Suma Ist aña | #SaberEscuchar

Listening is a test of respect. It is key to communication. It implies an attitude to understanding others. It is fundamental for the construction of our relationships. It involves an act of abandonment of the ego and opening the body and the senses.

It means leaving oneself and opening up to the environment.

Knowing how to listen is necessary for collective construction and knowledge. Listening helps to harmonize others. It is very necessary to learn to listen to ourselves and our surroundings.

We must find more and more ways to listen to each other. That is why knowing how to meditate and knowing how to think are well connected with this principle. They are also a part of learning, listening to the rhythm of the heart, the dialogue between humans and nonhumans, knowing how to be and knowing how to feel that there is within us, knowing what is in the environment, refining the ear to interpret people, spaces, measuring distances, internal listening, and manifestations of the body.

10. Suma Aruskipaña | #SaberHablarBien

Words cultivate actions, build reality and create life. Speaking well then implies invoking the great power that words have to cultivate dialogue and communication. This is why it is important to work internally the ability to listen, observe and reflect on ourselves and those around us. This lets us connect our intention with our expression by selecting love and caring about what we are going to say. Speaking well does not mean that one must always speak. Silence is an ally in times with a lot of noise. Words are a means of personal and collective recognition.

11. Suma Samkasiña | #SaberSoñar

Knowing how to dream is the result of connecting personal and collective goals and desires. When this synchronization happens, an energy is empowered that gives projection and momentum to a path that we trace together.

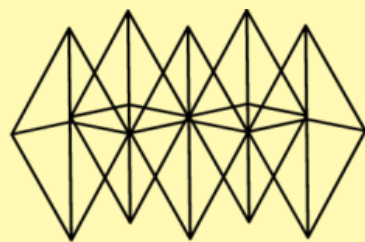
This journey leads us to the construction of other possible worlds, materializing new realities based on dignity and harmony.

12. Suma Sarnaqaña | #SaberCaminar

Knowing how to walk is something that is learned in the experience of walking alone and with others. Along the way we discover different forms and rhythms and we can surprise ourselves with new ways that lead us to know ourselves better and strengthen each other. We can adapt the rhythms to what the moment asks us --pauses, detours, retracing steps, slow progress, constancy, acceleration-- into a dance that brings us closer to our dreams. At certain times through introspection and at other times through coordination with others, we venture into unknown paths and hold ourselves in trust.

13. Suma Churaña, suma Katukaña | #SaberDarYRecibir

It means a relational and generative exchange in which the complexity of the principles of Buen Vivir is collected and integrated. It refers to the ability to cultivate gratitude and generosity, giving the best of us with love. It is a spiral that embraces the organic flow of all things and inhabits the way we exist in the world, seeking balance and balance in the bonds we cultivate with others. Giving and receiving has the capacity to transform and transform ourselves, by expanding our gaze and opening ourselves to new opportunities.



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