



SPIRIT OF HUMANITY
FORUM

NEWSLETTER - December 2016

As we come to the end of 2016, we are very much looking forward to our gathering in Reykjavik from 26th to 29th April, 2017. Preparations are going well. A good number of people have already registered, and we have plans to ensure that this time more local people join us, including, of course, our new friends at the new Reykjavik's Peace Centre at the University of Iceland in Reykjavik.

Involving youth

Another recent initiative has been the work of our colleague Clémentine Raphel, from Education for Peace, who is developing our network of young people and she is sharing her thoughts with us here.

The emerging programme

The programme is taking shape and we shall have a mixture of inspirational presentations, workshops, small-group discussions and spaces of silence and contemplation. See here a [Draft Programme Outline](#). One of our speakers next year we are happy to introduce here is Gulalai Ismail a youth and peace activist. She was only 16 years old when, in 2002, she started the organization Aware Girls in Pakistan, to provide young women with leadership through which they could act as agents of change for women's empowerment, peace and democracy. Gulalai has developed Aware Girls into a well-supported, women's-led organization, working towards gender equality and peace in one of the most fragile regions in the world.

Welcoming ideas for the future

Since our last Newsletter was sent out, we have completed the setting up of the new Spirit of Humanity organisation, based in Reykjavik, and with the Fetzer Institute and the Pure Land Foundation confirming their partnership, their funding and their support, we are growing in vitality. We feel ready not only for April 2017, but to plan our work for the next five or so years. This will be very much in our mind in 2017 and we would welcome any thoughts on this that you, our special friends, might have on this."

***Warmest wishes for the festive season
and for the New Year 2017!***

Greetings from Gulalai Ismail, one of our speakers in Reykjavik 2017

Hello Everyone!

Greetings from my part of the world!

I will be participating in the Spirit of Humanity Forum and I am very excited for it is an opportunity to connect with world leaders and activists at a very different level; the level which actually matters the most i.e. at the level of values. We're living in a time when the world seems to be darker and filled with fear and uncertainty which makes us question if things will ever change for the better, if we will ever be able to see a world free of hunger, inequalities and wars. However, I keep on reminding myself that there is hope too, hope in the form of people who are driven by the values of love, empathy and compassion, which gives me motivation for life.

A decade ago when I was participating in a Leadership Program we were asked to talk about people whom we admire as leaders in our life. I choose two people as my leaders, both of them for their values of standing by justice and equality. That was the point in my life when I realized that the world is a reflection of our values; both of the leaders and people at the community level and to bring a shift in the world, we have to bring a shift in the values which perpetuate violence, discrimination and hatred and promote values which perpetuate equality. Today, when in running an organization 'Aware Girls', we aim to make the world a better place for young people, especially young women, by bringing shifts in the personal values of young women, decision makers at the community level and policy makers. We promote the values of non-violence, empathy, equality, and compassion.

I look forward to meeting leaders from the world, wanting to know what motivates them in their lives and how their values are driving them to make the world a better place.

Gulalai Ismail

Aware Girls

Pakistan



Greetings from Clémentine Raphel, from Education 4 Peace who is developing our network of young people

Caring for a World in Transition, Building a Foundation for a Loving and Peaceful world.



I have been reflecting deeply over the past couple of years. My self-inquiry and profound need to be part of something bigger led me to be the ambassador of the youth of the Foundation Education 4 Peace. This wonderful experience opened the doors to now also be the coordinator for the youth participation in the Spirit of Humanity Forum. As a coordinator, I am gathering and inviting young change-makers from around the world to meet and connect with each other and to go deeper into questions such as “How can we inspire our generation to

connect with their inner world?”

Observing the situation of our world, with a huge feeling of fear, asking myself what seems so wrong, I then connect to the essence, seeing the crisis as an opportunity to grow, to learn and to understand the importance of connecting to my values, utopias and dreams. And then after having made this strong connection, after meeting with this true essence and place of peacefulness, acting with head, heart and hands to be the expression of my values and contribute to building a world where every human being would feel worthy and loved. This doesn't happen in one second. We've got to practice self-love, to practice gratitude, to practice compassion in order to make it a reality.

But why don't we learn it at school? To build a foundation for a loving and peaceful world, to create a better tomorrow where people would live in harmony with themselves, others and Nature, we need to give tools to the next generation and enable them to connect with themselves and to love and trust themselves.

Through the Spirit of Humanity, Education 4 Peace, in collaboration with the new Höfði Reykjavík Peace Centre of Iceland is organising, this year, a pre-program on 'Tomorrow's Education'. This event aims to deepen reflections about a new dimension of education developing in schools, a dimension which intends to accompany happy, trustful and responsible children in their process of growing. For me, this pre-program and the Spirit of Humanity Forum represent a wonderful opportunity to strengthen our inner and outer connections. It gives a chance to my generation to get inspired and in turn to be heard and inspire others.

Clémentine Raphael

Education 4 Peace

Switzerland

Greetings from participants

“Thank you to all, at Spirit of Humanity, for the gracious invitation. I look forward to the unity of such individuals.

I am a Native American woman, living in the US. My heart is in need of such an event."

Alicia Fall

Vision Holder of Her Many Voices Foundation, USA



"I will be delighted to revisit Reykjavik to be warmed and uplifted once again by the spirit of a wonderful conclave, meeting to address humanity's collective needs and aspirations at a time of monumental changes and challenges for our planet and universal family."

Riad Nourallah

Deputy Director, Academy of Diplomacy and International Governance Loughborough University,

UK

"Excited about going back to my third forum."

Upkar Arora

Founder & CEO

Illumina Social Impact Partners Inc, Canada



"I keep feeling that my greatest transition is not only in the professional work that I do in bringing more compassion into the workplace and into leadership; but also in the transition from generation to generation.... how do we inform and share a more integral, unifying way of being to our beautiful youth?"

Gwen Pennington

Effectiveness Coach & Improvement Leader,

Australia



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FORWARD

The Spirit of Humanity Forum

Secretary
Lotta Arbman (Sweden)

mailerlite