



SPIRIT OF HUMANITY  
FORUM

# NEWSLETTER

January 2018

Dear Spirit of Humanity Friends,

**2017 has been a wonderful year** for the Spirit of Humanity Forum. A very successful 3rd Forum took place in Reykjavik, Iceland, in April this year under the theme of Caring for a World in Transition; building a foundation for a loving and peaceful world.

Close to two hundred leaders and change-makers from all over the world participated. All their feedback was exceptionally positive and is encouraging us to keep on our path and continue the work that the founders of the SoH Forum started in 2010.



*Photography: © GNNSJ 2017 [Gurdev Singh Deogon]*

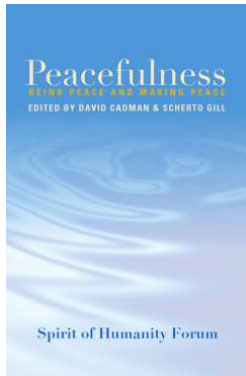
**A group of young participants was formed** before the Forum and youth presence was particularly strong in the Forum for the first time. Our aim is to strengthen and nurture our youth work even further.

**The 4th Spirit of Humanity Forum in Iceland is being planned for the spring of 2019.** The most important task between Forums is to nourish and uphold an interactive community of SoH friends and support the emerging community of practitioners of core human values like peacefulness, love and compassion, which we can also call a 'spirit of humanity'.

**To spread the seeds** of a spirit of humanity, we are encouraging our friends all over the world to hold Regional SoH Forums and also engaging the SoH Forum more actively on social media, and building a strategic approach that extends our reach and participation.

**The first Regional UK Forum** was held in London in November with great success and another is being planned for April 2018. A Regional South American SoH Forum in Spanish is being organised in Patagonia, Argentina, in October 2018.

**We launched a new beautiful SoH website** and hired a social media specialist, Tom Chick, who participated in the 3rd Forum this year. Tom is building up our social media presence with very powerful material from the panels and interviews with participants at the 3rd Forum.



**We published our first book under 'SoH Press': 'Peacefulness'**, a collection of chapters written by participants at the SoH Forum, edited by David Cadman and Scherto Gill. It was made available in November on Amazon and for Christmas holidays the electronic version was shared as a free gift through all our channels. More books are planned in connection with future Forums.

**We thank you for your support** and for being a part of a community of practitioners who wish to set an example by practising core human values in life and work, to help humanity make a deep shift in consciousness, in our mission to create a more peaceful world.

**Wishing you a rich, peaceful and loving year 2018!**

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## **The first regional SoH Forum event! LONDON 3rd November**



3rd Forum in April, took the initiative to propose and help organise the first ever regional SoH Forum event.

“The purpose was to reflect on what we have taken away personally, discuss what we have done in response to the questions posed at the Forums and discern further how we can best make a contribution locally to cultivate SoH’s values and ethos in our own spheres of influence.”

One of the outcomes of the 3rd Forum in April was the agreement that we are now ready to invite former SoH Forum participants to set up regional SoH Forums. Catherine Allinson of Future Earth Ltd and Kate Monkhouse of Creators of Peace-Initiatives of Change, both participants at the





Photos: © GNNSJ 2017 [Gurdev Singh Deogon]

### Some of the reflections that emerged in the conversations:

- We often remember 'humanity' but forget the 'spirit'.
- As a community of practitioners, we empower and encourage one another when we meet.
- We need a shift in human consciousness to move from fear and separation towards love and connectedness.
- We value that the SoH Forum offers a safe space, where people care for one another and can secure their own trustworthiness.
- We need to co-create actions and systems that share care, that don't leave care to the 'caregivers'.
- By valuing silence and stillness in a busy world, and knowing that, through spiritual strength, we can accept not knowing the outcome of our endeavours beforehand.

[Full summary](#)

[About the event](#)

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## New introduction brochure

A new SoH Forum introduction brochure was developed in the autumn. We are happy and proud of the result. Neville Hodgkinson, one of the original founders of the SoH Forum, came across it and spontaneously wrote to us: "The SoH brochure is really magnificent - simple, striking, and informative!" See the brochure [HERE](#)



## New introduction video

A new SoH Forum introduction video has also been completed this autumn. We are very happy and proud of the result of this too. Steingrimur Thordarson, one of the best cameramen and film editors in Iceland, has been working with all the filmed material from the 3rd Forum and and came up with this beautiful little introduction video for our website.

See the video [HERE](#)

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## Deborah Greene and the LiveaMoment App

*LiveaMoment is a movement dedicated to the worldwide creation, support and funding of peace initiatives through social impact and technology.*

*Deborah Greene, Founder & CEO at LiveaMoment, participated in the 3rd Forum and has here a very valuable thought provoking message to share and a very interesting app to offer humanity.*



### Empathy... this seed will grow

Over and over again, since we last met in Iceland, we are left to contemplate another deadly attack, another potential threat, or another assault at the fabric of what we wish to see for our world community. What is clear is that the 'new normal' is not normal.

I have been blessed on my travels with the opportunity to sit in front of hate and dig deeper. That may feel like a strange sentence, but it is in fact a blessing. My humanity has been stretched to the point where I am now self-trained to breathe and seek to soften when up against the very thing that may disarm me. It's not just the attacker to be considered. It's the hate that has been allowed to grow beneath each act of violence. This is not easy. It is not condoning, weakening my personal resolve or finding joy in any of the horrific pain we are putting each other through. It is instead, a visceral desire to understand and find our way back from the edge of fully devaluing the beautifully diverse group of people who make up the human race.

When people feel safe, they are kind and even generous. Period. We are built to be kind. Even our molecular structure is designed to heal, replenish and make new...the greatest example of empathy is the pattern of our very life. And that's just our base constitution. Imagine what capabilities we could have with some consciousness behind that power.

Last month, I spoke with an ex-Nazi recruiter. We discussed how he became susceptible to that level of hatred. He spoke about a moment when he walked in on his father cheating on his mother; how that moment shattered his sense of security and order in his world. The wound that left him open to being inculcated in a community of vengeance didn't come from being raised racist. It came from a lack of feeling held and protected in his home life.

What moment brought him back? It was the grace and kindness of a Jewish man who showed him care and empathy, even while knowing all he had done against Jews and other minorities.

There is a lack of safety that is fostering the violence the world is facing at large. The best way to combat viewing each other as a threat is to step outside our bubbles and meet each other.

The Spirit of Humanity Forum is a perfect illustration of what a collective of hearts can achieve. The conversations, both on stage and off, created a tapestry of life experiences that fed my personal journey and informed my perspective as I continue to travel around the world and speak to people about their state of peace.

We've since launched a beta version of our app on the App Store. The LiveaMoment app connects people globally in daily moments of peace, teaches emotional intelligence, and promotes unity. (This New Year, we will launch an updated version with ways for non-profits to raise funds and keep connected to their supporters. Do let us know if you want to be involved as we travel!)

I ask that we continue to pause, collectively, separately, and in every moment that challenges us, to reach beyond, and see the humanity beyond the pain. When in those moments, consider the similarities that bind us. Even if all you see in the moment is, "I breathe. You breathe," we can build from there.

We are being called on to save ourselves. We are being challenged to self-identify with the pain that creates dysfunction. We are not falling apart, we are deepening.

There is a connective dot... and that dot is empathy.

*[The LiveaMoment App](#) is a platform to connect people globally in daily moments of pause, teaching emotional intelligence, and promoting unity among communities.*

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## **India one - an example of spirituality in action**



Spirit of Humanity Forum focuses on spirituality in leadership, and explores new forms of governance underpinned by care, respect, trust, dialogue and relationships. The thermal solar power project India One has been a huge success and in the last **UN Climate Conference COP23 in Bonn** it was taken as a lead example for an exceptional environmental project. The German government selected the project for their ["Ready for the Future" Campaign](#) and the poster of India One was everywhere in the conference, at German bus stops, railway stations, airports and in newspapers.

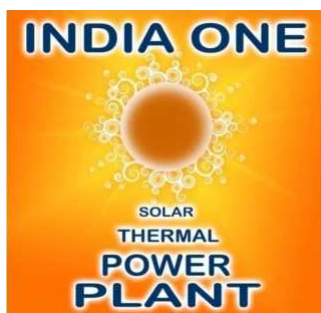
In her chapter in **'Peacefulness - Towards Inner-Outer Peace: Cultivating spirituality and relationship'** **Maureen Goodman** takes this project as an example of spirituality in action:

"During my most recent visit to India, I witnessed a project showing spirituality in action. I visited the site of India One, a thermal solar power plant that had just become operational. It had been completed, against all odds, by people who learned their expertise as they went along. They had purpose, vision, will and, above all else, they had community. They gained the support of the Indian and German governments, and are now supplying electricity to thousands of people. The site has also been designated a Training Centre on Concentrating Solar Thermal Technologies under the United Nations Development Programme. I had made several visits over the six years that it took to build, and I reflected on how I saw a community of people coming together both for an immediate task, and also to do something for the world. Now that the plant is operational, I cannot describe the light in their faces. Their 'power of community' made what could have been an arduous task into a joy.

There is a principle at work here – the sense of purpose among the initiators of this project brought them an inner tranquillity and certainty that created an atmosphere which engendered co-operation. Inner peace is felt as a vibration that gently overpowers the resistance of negativity. Inner peace is not just related to having peaceful thoughts and feelings, but also to an inner knowing that I am fulfilling my purpose and allowing the inner voice of my conscience to guide me.

In the quest for peacefulness, we are looking here at a paradigm for transformation that is rooted in a spiritual awareness and works from the inside out. It has several aspects: an awareness of the original state of peace of our being; an awareness of a greater source than ourselves upon which we can draw; an awareness of being part of the greater whole, and a vision of a future without suffering. These aspects are completely interconnected

and necessary for us to move forward. They are based on what my colleague, Sister Jayanti, has called, “The spiritual truth, which is a basic principle, that whatever is within is reflected without. The inner state of human beings creates the outer state of the world.”



*'India One' is a 1MW solar thermal power plant situated near the Brahma Kumaris Shantivan Campus in Abu Road, Rajasthan, India, completed in spring 2017. This innovative project uses 770 newly developed 60m2 parabolic dishes and features thermal storage for continuous operation. The plant will generate enough heat and power for a campus of 25,000 people and is a milestone for decentralised and clean power generation in India.*

## “Visionary Leadership for a Sustainable Future”

While we are on the topic, we wish to share some valuable points by Sister Jayanti and Golo Pilz from **a press conference at the 2017 UN Climate Conference COP23 in Bonn on the theme ‘Visionary Leadership for a Sustainable Future’**

*Sister Jayanti has supported the SoH Forum from its cradle and has spoken at all three SoH Forums, Golo Pilz has led the work of creating the solar Thermal plant IndiaOne and spoke at the 3rd SoH Forum.*

- In a Planetary consciousness, we need a vision of the planet as our home.
- We must change from thinking ‘I/me’ to thinking ‘us’ – this is a spiritual consciousness.
- Visionary Leadership keeps a positive vision of the future.
- We have to change from ‘desires and wants’ to ‘needs’.
- The combination of a spiritual approach and a practical approach is needed.

The full press conference can be seen [HERE](#)

A powerful address by Sister Jayanti starts after 9 minutes.

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## The unfolding plans for the Regional SoH Forum in Patagonia 2018



Alan Gegenschatz, Dr Juan Hitzig, Sara Caputo and Javier Casas Rua, the initiators of this Forum.

[For Spanish translation - Español – read here!](#)

In our previous Newsletter (September) we shared the news of a Regional SoH Forum to be set up in Villa La Angostura, Patagonia, Argentina, 24-27 October 2018. The programme will be the same size and length as the international biennial Forum in Iceland. As the official language will be Spanish, a main part of the SoH Forum website is now to be translated into Spanish too.

The idea is to make the Spirit of Humanity purposes accessible to people in Latin America who are already leading from spiritual values. The local organising team wishes to contribute from their singular reality and walk with the global community, sharing their vision and their experience.

The local team who are bold and generous enough to propose and take up this challenge:

- Alan Gegenchatz, Business Advisor in Strategy and Sustainable Development. Alan is one of the founding members, who helped to create and shape the Spirit of Humanity Forum.
- Javier Casas Rua, former CEO at PWC Argentina, participant at 2nd and 3rd SoH Forums.
- Sara Caputo, Master in Communication Strategies, Adaptive Leadership Professor and Consultant, participant at the 3rd SoH Forum. Sara lives in Villa La Angostura.
- Juan Hitzig, Medical Doctor, Programa Longevus, participant at the 3rd SoH Forum.
- Myrian Castello, Founder of Dream Factory, participant at the 3rd SoH Forum. Lives in Sao Paulo, Brazil.
- Moira Lowe, Director of Brahma Kumaris Argentina.

#### **Here are their thoughts and unfolding plans:**

We believe in the power and richness of conversational moments which help us to enhance our awareness and commitment. We want to strengthen our transformational power in this process of becoming a new mankind, living the values of love, inner peace, forgiveness and compassion. We know that much is already being done in our countries for this and we wish to contribute to this work by creating a conversational arena in our language, within our cultures and our particular way of dealing with our problems. This does not mean that we do not appreciate the contributions of other regions; we value them enormously. Inspired by them and our own experience, we feel the imperative need to organise this Patagonia Forum.

- We want to bring the Spirit of Humanity initiative into our region; make visible the different paths people are exploring in trying to live spiritual values. It is a call to open up to diversity all around the world and learn how to walk together in this transformation process we are living.
- We trust that there is an emerging energy coming from inside which encourages us to believe in our dreams of dignity for all human beings, of communities who care about each other, with people living in harmony with their environment, loving the Earth and enhancing all living conditions.
- We are looking for practical ways / methods based on essential human values, such as inner peace, love, compassion and forgiveness, in order to make them prevail in our relations and our public policies.
- We have a sense of urgency in supporting new ways of dealing with social and economic issues, fostering brotherhood in relations, caring for life over profits, producing according to human and environmental needs.

Villa La Angostura is embracing the Spirit of Humanity Patagonian Forum and supporting the event by offering the Convention Center for free. It is a small village in the Andean Mountains, surrounded by lakes and ancient forests. As it is a tourist destination, there are many small hotels and rooms for rent in the town. As October is out of the tourist season, the prices will be affordable for most people.

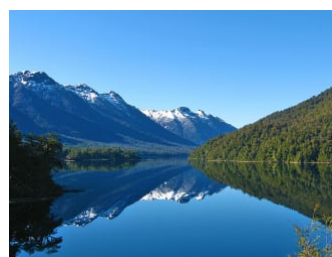
The general plan is to replicate the programme format and style of the 3rd Forum in Iceland, adapting it to relate to issues that are more specific for Latin America. Villa La Angostura has a special attraction for many artists and writers, due the beauty of nature and the quiet atmosphere away from the busy cities. They will help to build the reflection and introspection atmosphere that will play a central role in inviting a really spiritual connection and supporting a shift in consciousness.

We are aiming for 150 participants and we would like all parts of the world to be represented even if the main focus is on, of course, participants from South America. We wish to create an atmosphere of simplicity and humility in which real connections between people can be established. We wish to invite contributions, conversations and reflections with a practical and applied approach to the themes explored, creating a 'ground cable' for communicating and exchanging matters of the human spirit, bringing it onto the table to help when the serious questions are being dealt with.

## Villa La Angostura

The Forum will take place in Villa La Angostura, a small, picturesque village in the Andean Mountains, surrounded by lakes and ancient trees. Its silent atmosphere invites everyone who visits to slow down and stay connected to nature. October is spring time and flowers are just blooming.

[See more of Villa La Angostura](#)



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## Rama Mani - The Gift of Peace

A Peace Booklet by award-winning humanist and peace artist, William Kelly, and peacebuilder, poet and performance artist, Rama Mani, was offered by Rama and Bill on International Non-Violence Day (2 October 2017) as a heartfelt gift to humanity at this time of global turmoil. [HERE](#)



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## Videos of the 3rd Forum panels

**The panels were all filmed** and are now uploaded for viewing on the website, under Background/3rd Forum [VIEW HERE](#)

(We had some trouble with the sound during one panel and unfortunately it broke down when Alexandra Asseily was speaking, so we had to cut filming from there, but otherwise

there is a lot value in these videos.)



### **Spirit of Humanity Forum**

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