



SPIRIT OF HUMANITY
FORUM

Newsletter New Year 2019!

As a New Year dawns, we keep on with great excitement to plan for our 4th International Spirit of Humanity Forum which will take place in Reykjavík, Iceland this year. We also look back with much gratitude, appreciating what the previous year brought us. 2018 was the year for the **Regional SoH Forums** to emerge and blossom. It was great to witness the work of our teams in the UK, Argentina and Iceland, who planned beautiful regional events volunteering all their work with just one desire: to bring core human values to the forefront in the world. Our **plans for the 4th Forum** in Reykjavik are developing very well and, in this newsletter, we present more of the panellists and also the overall programme outline. We are also very proud to introduce another **supporting partner for our 4th Forum, Reykjavík 2019; the Sikh organisation Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha**. Their Chairman Bhai Sahib (Dr) Molinder Singh OBE KS is a great friend of the SoH Forum and we are very grateful for his support. We also celebrate **Icelandair and Icelandair Hotels as a new long-term partners** which is a great support for the Forum. In a new article in our series on living from the inside out Amjad Mohamed Saleem gives us a great **tool to help us practice core human values** like tolerance, love and compassion. He reminds us that between every stimulus and response there is a space where our freedom and power lie to choose our response. The SoH Forum encourages leaders to practice core human values and that being aware of this space every day is an important tool in implementing these values. We wish you all a joyful, prosperous and peaceful New Year full of hope, new opportunities and new adventures!



ESPIRITU DE
HUMANIDAD
FORO PATAGONIA

CONGRATULATIONS PATAGONIA!

**Transformative experiences for
a world in transition**

Villa La Angostura, 24-27 October

2018



The first 3-day regional Spirit of Humanity Forum was a big success, beyond expectations and dreams. Our Argentinian friends achieved an amazing accomplishment, bringing together 150 beautiful participants and over 20 panellists who offered deep inspiration while staying faithful to the Spirit of Humanity Forum ethos.

The structure was very similar to our home-based Icelandic Forum. It started with an opening on Wednesday evening, with music, children dancing (photo) and a heartfelt talk from the Mayor, and it finished on Saturday at 5pm. During the 3 days there were 5 plenaries with 3 to 5 panellists in each one, they gave a brief introduction and shared deep insight on their personal transformation (photos). If you are interested to read more: [Patagonia Forum Programme](#)

Every day we all had a vegan lunch together which was offered at the local school and which was a 5-minute walk from the convention centre. The food was prepared and served by the youth of the school, as they have cooking lessons as part of their curricula and Sara, our host, is the legal representative of the school. Workshops were offered in the afternoon and reflection groups met at the end of the day to share their daily experiences. Music and meditations were also offered daily. Friday at 6pm all the participants walked 3 kilometres down to Lake Nahuel Huapi, through Nicolas's beautiful property, where meditation and circle dancing in an outstanding setting were shared by all.

An important contribution to the Forum was the personal participation of Gabriela



Michetti, the Vice-President of Argentina. She expressed her wish to come to the Forum as a simple participant. It was wonderful to have her presence and everybody was interacting with her comfortably. She's accepted our invitation to next year's Forum in

Reykjavik and is willing to be on a panel and share about politics, governance, democracy and spirituality.

We also went through some challenging moments, as Gabriela Michetti's presence stimulated strong emotions for some artists at the Forum. The current crisis in Argentina (40% devaluation of the Pesos) is leading to strong political polarisations. It was a great opportunity to 'walk the talk', reiterate our non-political approach, and respond with love and compassion without falling into the trap of fear. The quality of the relationships and connections among the organisation team played an important role, serene energy was held and transmitted throughout the Forum.

The decoration was beautiful - it was very cosy, with lots of wood and art on display for the participants. A deep feeling of love and hope for humanity was shared by all; the Spirit of Humanity ethos was conveyed and is now alive in South America. A big thank you to our dear beloved Argentinian friends, and Myrian from Brazil. Words are not enough to share our gratitude for their engagement, commitment and passion for this first SoH Forum in South America. MUCHAS GRACIAS!

Love, with you

I am in love with you

And I do not need you to belong to me

I am in love with you

And I wish non-attachment for us

I am in love with you

And this love is not in you

This love is about a space, a space I share with you I am in love - with you

Experience and poem by Mark Milton

Board member & Founding Partner of the Spirit of Humanity Forum who participated in Patagonia



A tribute to the organising team!

We have been very touched by the spirit with which this regional Forum



was initiated and carried through by just a small team of friends. Here are the words of Moira Lowe from Brahma Kumaris in Argentina, who has given the team a big hand of co-operation and who also participated in the Forum herself:

"They performed a gigantic task out of pure love and enthusiasm, simply convinced that this was very important to do. They were not representing a big organisation with a lot of experience and routines for taking on a task of this magnitude, but in daily life all of them have very different roles, and yet they were able to draw in co-operation and resources from many different sides and complete the whole Forum on a voluntary basis. There were many situations they had to face along the way, like for instance having no finances for quite a while, but it never shook their faith. They kept on saying "It will come, it will come." There was a lot of internal care and attention to give each other good company when things got difficult and a lot of care for acknowledging each one's contribution and this nourished everyone's joy to be involved.



People were honoured to be involved, like a group of women living in the Villa Angostura who offered themselves to take care of many practical tasks.

The Patagonia Forum attracted 30 panellists of a very high quality and who all took responsibility for their own expenses.

The local hotels offered rooms at incredibly low rates. In spite of the financial crash which occurred in Argentina later in 2018, the hotels would still kept to the original agreement and did not ask to upgrade the rates.

Participants were spending expensive tickets to come and on top of it many contributed extra to help fund the Forum. People were really inspired to run that extra mile to make ends meet and it all worked out.

At the Forum a spirit of friendship quickly emerged among participants, just to walk together back and forth to the venue became very enjoyable moments. Many coupled up to work together on initiatives of common interest. A lot of networking was happening. It is amazing to see what people are able to do when they are touched, sensing a real foundation for benefitting the common good. People quickly become eager to give back, not expecting to get anything more in return. It creates a lot of hope in humanity.

It was a great joy and inspiration to be involved."

We will soon be posting more news from the Patagonia Forum on our website and Facebook.

Reykjavík 2019
The 4th International SoH Forum
Discovering Harmony in a World of
Difference
Spiritual Resilience in Practice
30 May - 1 June

Panellists

We continue to introduce our panellists at the 4th International Forum. This time we are very proud and happy to present:

Sister Jayanti Kirpalani European Director of **Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University** and their NGO Representative to the United Nations, Geneva

As European Director of Brahma Kumaris (BK) and a spiritual leader and teacher for 50 years, Sister Jayanti has dedicated her life to self-transformation and service to humanity. She is a pioneer advocate for the spiritual basis of caring for the earth and a key presenter at COP since 2009. As BK representative to the UN in Geneva since 1982, Sister Jayanti has championed the co-operative role of spiritual organisations in creating a just and peaceful world. She has brought spiritual principles to the discussion tables of politicians, economists, business leaders, scientists and nearly every stakeholder of our times. In 2018, Sister Jayanti led early morning meditation sessions at the World Economic Forum in Davos in January and



at the European Commission's EUSEW Policy Conference in Brussels in June. In November, she participated in the Women Leaders Global Forum in Reykjavik, Iceland, organised by the Government of Iceland, Parliament of Iceland and Women Political Leaders. [READ MORE](#)



Jean-Christophe Bas CEO of the [Dialogue of Civilizations Research Institute](#).

Jean-Christophe Bas has held senior policy positions with intergovernmental organisations over the past twenty years. 1999 - 2008 he was Head of Policy Dialogue at the World Bank and set up innovative mechanisms of strategic engagement with key decision and opinion makers around the world. 2008 - 2014 He was Head of Strategic Development and Partnerships at the United Nations of the Alliance of Civilisations, an initiative of the UN Secretary General aimed at improving understanding and co-operation among nations and people across cultures, promoting cultural diversity, and building inclusive societies. Bas has been designing and heading the world campaign 'Do One Thing for Diversity and Inclusion', aimed at building a world movement in support of diversity with partners such as UNESCO, the Red Cross, American Airlines, Civicus, Intel, Deloitte. He co-ordinates the UNAOC Global Forum, and is the founder of a fellowship programme for emerging leaders to foster dialogue and understanding between the Western world and the Muslim countries, in partnership with the League of Arab States, British Council, Organisation of Islamic Conference, Institute of International Education and Euronews. Jean-Christophe Bas was a Professor of Political Sciences at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques in Lyon and a Vice President of the European Fund for the Freedom of Expression, a very rare organisation that advocated and supported freedom of speech and pluralism activists in Eastern Europe before the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989. Bas is the author of EUROPE A LA CARTE, a book of reflection on European identity, with contributions from prominent leaders around the world.



Michael Wernstedt Social entrepreneur with a devotion to build a world where both humanity and life on earth thrive.

Working towards this goal, he co-founded and served as the party leader for the political party the Initiative in Sweden. The Initiative is a party which shares his vision and aims to create a new political culture in order to get there. Previously he built and now serves on the board of the [Raoul Wallenberg Academy for Young Leaders](#), an NGO which empowers 10,000 young people to make a difference every year. Michael is a frequent speaker on topics of human rights, social entrepreneurship, self-organising

organisations, empowerment and resilience. Read more about his work in this [New Yorker](#) article.

Programme outline

Here is an [overall programme outline](#). Further details will be presented later on.

Tours

Participating in the 4th Forum is of course a wonderful opportunity to see the unique nature of Iceland. Here are some nice tours offered by [Iceland Travel](#)



Supporting partner for Reykjavík 2019

Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha

GNNSJ



A Sikh organisation based in England, UK, which was formed by Baba Puran Singh, Kericho wala in about 1974. Their work spans the whole of the globe with special projects taking place in Africa and India. **Bhai Sahib (Dr) Mohinder Singh OBE KSG** has served GNNSJ as its Chairman for the last 16 years. It is a registered religious charitable organisation with Headquarters in Birmingham. It has sister organisations in Leeds and London. GNNSJ is a local organisation with a global heart. The Organisation's motto is selfless service. It has five centres for excellence in Handsworth, an inner-city depressed area of Birmingham. Its subsidiary, the Nishkam Civic Association, was last year presented with the Queen's Golden Jubilee Award for outstanding voluntary services to the community. [READ MORE](#)

Bhai Sahib Mohinder Singh participated and spoke at the 3rd Forum in Reykjavik 2017.

New partners

We are proud to introduce new partners of the Spirit of Humanity Forum:
Icelandair and Icelandair Hotels have joined our team of long-term partners.



 **Icelandair Hotels**

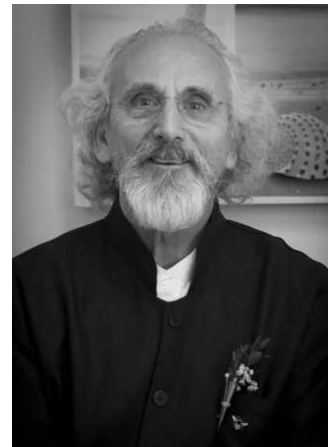
Icelandair Hotels offers 20% discount for SoH Forum participants

Icelandair Hotels offers special rates for participants, which includes Hotel Marina and Hotel Natura. The reservation can be changed or cancelled until two days prior to arrival, without any extra costs. [BOOK HERE](#)



The Harmony Project

Professor David Cadman, one of the founders of SoH Forum, has for the last two years been taking part in the wonderful Harmony Project hosted by the Sustainable Food Trust. He is currently serving as a Harmony Professor of Practice at the University of Wales Trinity St. David. As our next theme focusses on Harmony, we asked David to tell us about this project and his reflections on harmony:



"In undertaking this work, watching it emerge and seeing how people respond to the notion of Harmony, I have been struck by the fact that when it is explained most people 'get it' and many want to become involved with it. There is something about these ancient, or rather, timeless, principles that is both familiar and welcomed – wholeness, flowing interconnectedness and relatedness. Of course, why wouldn't this be so? Look outside and it is happening in the turn of the day and the seasons – birth, life, death and rebirth. We didn't invent it, did we?

Of all the texts I have read on Harmony, I have been especially struck by those that come from the ancient teachings of The Tao in which there is only the movement from and towards, and in which what appear to be opposites are revealed as complementarities. Hot *and* cold, light *and* darkness, distance *and* closeness. And I have come to see that if you look for opposites (as we mostly do) you will find opposition and discord, whereas if you see complementarities you will find co-operation and a strange peacefulness or ease that is beyond understanding. And, most especially, you will find Love at Work."

[READ MORE](#)

A new article in our series "Living from the Inside Out"

by **Amjad Mohamed Saleem**

"A wise man once said, 'Between every stimulus and response there is a space. In that space lies our freedom and power to choose our response. In those choices lie our growth and happiness.'

Such is the meaning of profound spirituality and the need to live inside out requiring man to acquire a force of being and doing. Hence within this space everyone is asked to take up a dialogue with The Most-High, a dialogue of intimacy, of sincerity, of love. Within this space is the horizon of all spirituality requiring man to acquire a force of being and doing, rather than to undergo despotic relentlessness of a life reduced to mere instinct. Within this space, we marry the purpose of our existence with the purpose of our subsistence. Living inside out, we must comprehend the message: You are indeed what you do with yourself. You are responsible for the actions you take.

Hence the steps towards living inside out and its destination is to serve humanity, those in need; those without! That purpose is to awaken our conscience in the proximity of the wounds and the injustices people face! That purpose is to move away from selfishness / greed and waste; to distance ourselves from the darkest dimensions of our being, our violence, our jealousies, our superficialities. That purpose is to face our responsibilities with confidence and assurance."

[READ MORE](#)

Amjad Mohamed Saleem

Amjad Mohamed Saleem is the Manager of the Inclusion, Engagement and Protection (IPE) unit, tasked to implement the third strategic aim of IFRC's Strategy 2020 - Promotion of Social Inclusion and a Culture of Non-Violence and Peace, and to support the youth and volunteering aspects of the third 'Enabling Action' - Building Strong National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The IPE Unit works to support IFRC and National Societies to meet this overall objective with a focus on educating, empowering and enabling young people to be agents of change contributing towards making their local communities more peaceful, inclusive and resilient, 'where no-one is left behind, no-one is left out and no-one feels unsafe'.



Call for applications for an Essay competition on the European Project

Our friends from the Dialogue of Civilizations Research Institute invites students and young people from across Europe to participate in an exciting project which they are developing together with Humboldt University. The year 2019 will be very important indeed with upcoming European elections, Brexit and a vibrant debate about the nature and goal of the European project. In this context it would be very interesting to hear what students and young people from across Europe have to say about the European project and their expectations. Here is a flyer presenting the Essay competition.

The founder of the institute Dr Vladimir Yakunin participated and spoke at the 3rd Forum in Reykjavik 2017 and now Jean-Christophe Bas, the new CEO for the institute will contribute to the 4th Forum in Reykjavík 2019.

[READ MORE](#) about the Essay competition



The fruit of patience is very sweet

Wednesday Wisdom - core human values in practice

When we say core human values, we think of the fundamental, positive, human qualities that all humanity has in common, at our core, and are therefore universal. Qualities that we are all drawn to, that give meaning to our life and our

relationships. Love, care, loyalty, honesty, courage, fairness, kindness, wisdom etc. become qualities we want to protect, encourage and live by. Their power lies in being universal and limitless, unconfined by cultural traditions or belief systems. Universal and all-embracing means spiritual, like a thread that runs through all living beings; a connectedness that requires no introduction.

What do core human values or spirituality look like in practice? How can spiritual principles guide and help us in our daily life?

Follow our food for thought series **[Wednesday Wisdom](#)**

Teaming up!

"I just graduated from my 3rd year (Level 3) at the **Center of Self Leadership**! I feel very grateful and lucky that Dr. Richard Schwarz led this training which finished today in USA and was an amazing opportunity to learn new tools for the management of the self and for helping other leaders with their challenges in life!!"

Alan Gegenschatz



Alan Gegenschatz is one of the founding partners of the Spirit of Humanity Forum, and one of the organisers of the Patagonia Forum. **Dr Richard Schwartz**, founder of The Center for Self Leadership, participated and spoke at the 2nd Forum in Reykjavik 2014 and also wrote about the experience in their **Newsletter**. As we shared in our previous newsletter The Center for Self Leadership is now a supporting partner of the 4th Forum, Reykjavík 2019.

Remember to be sweet in 2019!

Chocolate Banana Cake

A gluten-free and vegan recipe

- 7 tbsp aquafaba (aquafaba is the liquid leftover in a can of chickpeas)
- 2 cups rice flour
- 1/2 cup almond flour
- 1/3 cup cacao powder
- 2/3 cup brown sugar
- 3 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup melted coconut oil
- 1 3/4 cups of mashed bananas (approx 5 bananas)
- 2 tsp vanilla
- 100 gram crushed vegan chocolate

1. Mix in a bowl:

Flour, cocoa powder, brown sugar, baking powder, baking soda, salt.

2. Mix in another bowl:

Melted coconut oil, pureed bananas, vanilla, aquafaba.

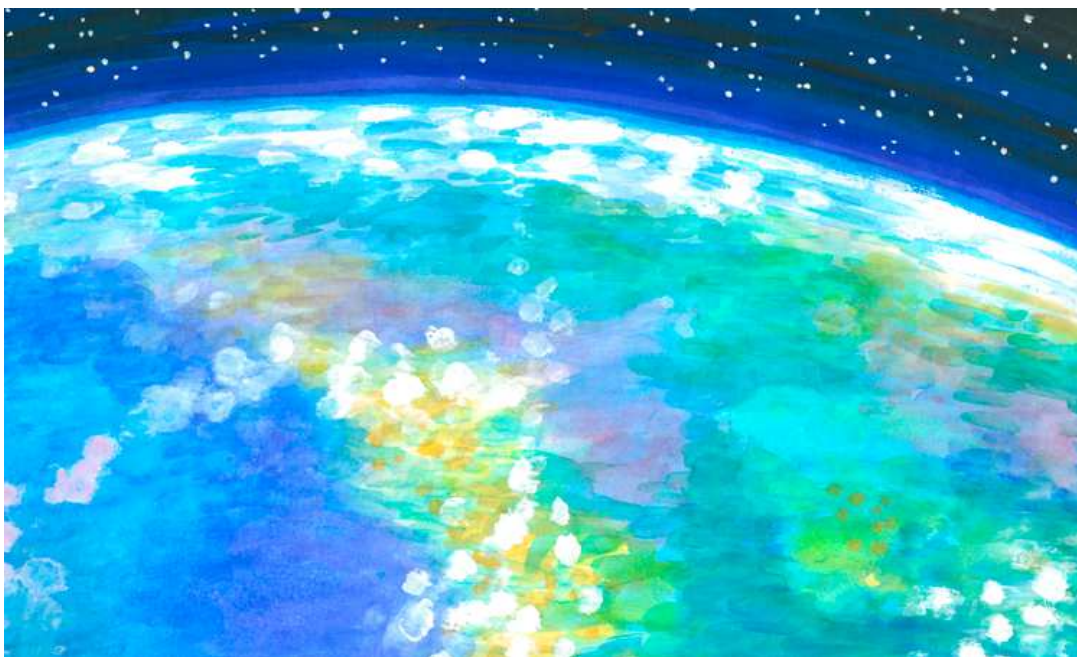
3. Mix it all together.

4. Fold in the chocolate chips.

5. Pour into a greased loaf pan.

6. Bake for 50 minutes to 1 hour at 165 C

Share with your friends and enjoy!



***Wishing you a Bright New Year 2019
and for the Whole World !***



Spirit of Humanity Forum

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