



SPIRIT OF
HUMANITY
FORUM

NEWSLETTER May 2022

Don't be afraid of love

'Say care, compassion or empathy, but don't say love.' We receive this signal from time to time that love is something private, personal and intimate and not appropriate for serious official conversations or the political arena. However, we feel that the meaning of the word love has become distorted. Love is often confused with personal needs and desires. Saying 'I love', we often really mean 'I want'. In the name of love, we can become possessive and disrespectful, which is not love at all, but still believe it is and say 'it is only because I love you'. However, deep down, we all know that love is about giving, contributing and cooperating without needing a return. To notice where there is a need and fill the gaps creates a deep fulfilment - a stabilising sense of meaning. It is not beyond human capacity but what we really are, deep within. Love is the quiet, silent force of life, which often expresses itself in the small gestures of everyday life. It is the guiding light that helps us recognise what to do, how to respond, and how not to interfere. Love helps us respect limits to maintain harmony with others and the environment. The healing capacity which restores relationships, builds bridges, and gives us patience and tolerance to wait and listen well enough to understand the other better. We need to heal the wounds which block love from blossoming. Love belongs to all spheres of life and not the least in leadership and governance.

Even the great wizards of the world [depend on Love](#) ;o)

“Why I am doing this?”, “What is my real aim?”

A thought provoking passage of Pope Francis

...Viewed in this way, politics is something more noble than posturing, marketing and media spin. These sow nothing but division, conflict and a

bleak cynicism incapable of mobilizing people to pursue a common goal.

At times, in thinking of the future, we do well to ask ourselves, “Why I am doing this?”, “What is my real aim?” For as time goes on, reflecting on the past, the questions will not be: “How many people endorsed me?”, “How many voted for me?”, “How many had a positive image of me?”



The real, and potentially painful, questions will be, “How much love did I put into my work?” “What did I do for the progress of our people?” “What mark did I leave on the life of society?” “What real bonds did I create?” “What positive forces did I unleash?” “How much social peace did I sow?” “What good did I achieve in the position that was entrusted to me?”

From "Fratelli tutti", the third encyclical of Pope Francis, subtitled "on fraternity and social friendship".



A sustainable mindset

THOMAS BRUHN is a physicist at the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies, Potsdam, Germany. He is a researcher and bridge builder, helping experts and change-makers from all sectors of society to come together to explore the topic of sustainability, listen to each other, and develop solutions. In part 1 of his conversation with **JUDITH NELSON** at the Spirit of Humanity Forum in Reykjavik, Iceland, he talks about the walking holiday he had after finishing his studies, and how it informed his perspectives on nature and sustainability.

Q: I was intrigued by some of the content of your session this morning, particularly when you talked about your walk, where you went from a mindset of “think, think, think” and “work, work, work” to something very different. Can you explain more?

TB: That transformation came after I completed my diploma thesis. It was an intense phase of working, where I had little space for myself. Originally, I had huge plans after my studies like, “I’ll go to the Himalayas, or the Rocky Mountains, or the Andes,” but I didn’t have time to organize anything. I ended up packing a very small bag and started to walk in Germany. I only had a plan for the first three days, because there was a place I had been in my youth with

my parents, and I thought, “That’s a nice place to start.” There is a place in the very south of Germany and I had intense memories of that place. I thought I would like to end up there.

When I started walking, I realized how long it took for me to calm down, certainly a whole week. All sorts of things came to mind – music, songs, inner voices. I thought of my diploma thesis. Was there something I had done wrong? Because I was walking and I was on my own, I could observe and allow everything to be as silly as it seemed.

**Everything that happened
when I let go of planning
was such a blissful experience**

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The first Inner Development Goals Summit was held on 29th April where the Inner Development Goals (IDGs) were introduced.

This is a wonderful initiative that was created to support the progress of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that were set forward in 2015. The initiators of the IDGs found the progress disappointing. Even though we had all the knowledge we needed to solve our greatest problems we were still stuck in the old thinking that created them. We needed to put greater emphasis on inner development to move forward. So they have now introduced new goals; *The Inner Development Goals* - 23 skills and qualities to develop our inner capacity.

Inner Development Goals: [Background, method and the IDG framework](#)

The 5 Categories with the 23 skills and qualities - [Read HERE](#)

A healthy planet for the prosperity of all – our responsibility, our opportunity



On 2nd and 3rd June 2022, 50 years after the first international environment conference was held in Stockholm, a crucial international environmental meeting will be held in Stockholm, Sweden, again. Anchored in the [Decade of Action](#), under the theme “[Stockholm+50](#): a healthy planet for the prosperity of all – our responsibility, our opportunity,” this high-level meeting will follow months of consultations and discussions with individuals, communities, organisations and governments around the world.

Associated Event **STOCKHOLM+**

How can a shift in mindset contribute to a sustainable planet?



Michael Wernstedt
Social entrepreneur
Chief Operating Officer
Inner Development Goals



Golo Pilz
Energy Adviser, Meditation teacher
Brahma Kumaris Germany/India



Sonja Ohlsson
Moderator
Brahma Kumaris
Environment Initiative

In 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals gave us a comprehensive plan for a sustainable world by 2030. The 17 goals cover a wide range of issues that involve people with different needs, values, and convictions. However, we need the inner capacity to fulfil these goals. Fortunately, research shows that we can develop our capabilities through inner work. This seminar will reveal how inner development can enable the change we need to see.

The SoH Forum supports the seminar with the spiritual practise, a guided meditation by Lotta Arbman from Fridays for Silence.



Thursday 2nd June 17.00-19.30 G.M.T

Hybrid event

In-person, Brahma Kumaris, Fleminggatan 29, Stockholm: [Register via email](#)

Online: [Registration](#)



The Purpose of Education from attainment to Human Flourishing

Article by Wendy Ellyatt

"We know that education can bring about profound change. However, effective education is fundamentally relational and must engage the energies and creative potentials of all those involved. In this way, students and teachers cooperatively build relationships of trust, that can then optimise the conditions for flourishing."



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Wendy Ellyatt along with her Flourish Project team has developed wonderful

versions of the [Sustainable Development Goals for Kids](#). They also partnered with Montessori Europe to produce the [SDGs Handbook for the Early Years](#).

The Unitive Narrative

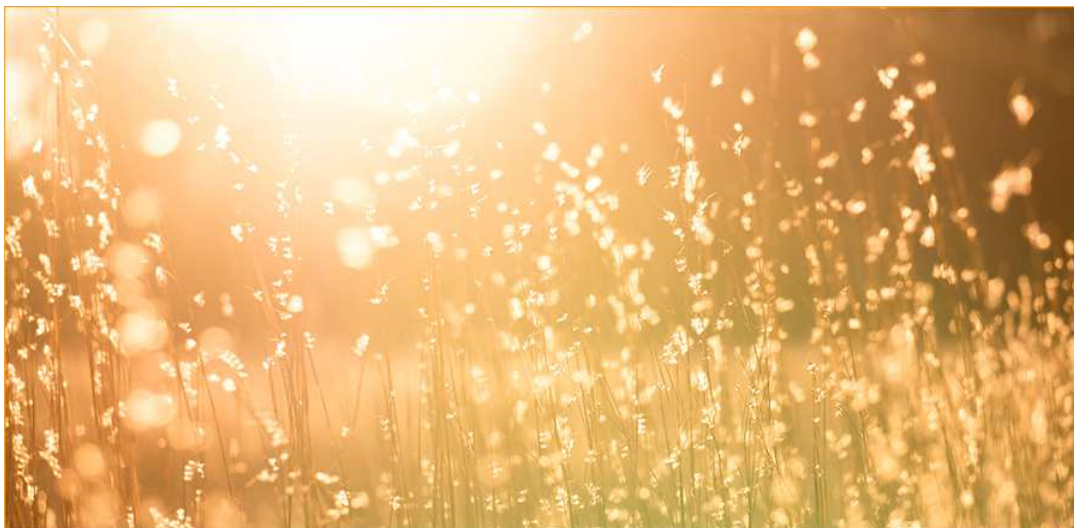


From the narrative of separation to a unified nature of reality

To help us envision and co-create a love-based rather than separation-based future, members of the [SDG Thought Leaders Synergy Circle](#) have drafted A Unitive Narrative. The narrative is founded on the convergence of scientific breakthroughs with universal wisdom and spiritually-based teachings. It provides a foundation to serve and support the conscious evolution of humanity and heal our collective worldview from separation to a perspective of unity in diversity. From the SDG Thought Leaders: "In only describing the outer appearance of the world, the pervading paradigm can preclude probing more fundamental truths of universal relationships and the nature of consciousness. In not acknowledging such deeper wisdom it has been unable to provide an authentic and wholistic worldview. This has progressively driven a schism in our collective psyche and motivated duality-based and unsustainable behaviors that have come to existentially threaten our collective future as a species as well as our planetary home. Now, however, the presumptions of the secular science of separation are being found to be fundamentally flawed and instead, scientific breakthroughs are enabling an understanding of the unified nature of reality and a unitive narrative to emerge...Instead of choices founded in fears and scarcity engendered by the illusion of separation, we can co-create a future affirming shared life, love and hope in action, where the SDGs and Agenda 2030 resolutions are natural outcomes of a world that works for all people and our planetary home."

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No sustainability without spirituality



Reflections from the Fetzer Institute

By Frank Peabody, III

War, environmental degradation, racism—it appears that polarization has a death grip on every aspect of our world, including our democracy.

I believe the sustainability of humanity depends on the interpretation of the word “spirituality.” There may be no other word in the English language about which there is as much confusion and misunderstanding. I have spent the past 35 years living with this word and reflecting on how it can transform both people and institutions. If, in fact, a general lack of spiritual grounding is the root cause of the polarization in this world, and at the same time there is confusion as to what spirituality means, we indeed have a challenge.

The major confusion over spirituality exists over its relationship with religion and the misunderstanding that it means *only* religion. People are born with an innate capacity for spiritual development quite apart from religion. Further, spirituality can be nurtured both within and apart from religion. Many of us, for example, have had powerful spiritual experiences inspiring awe, wonder, and intimations of a sacred presence in relation to nature beyond the framework of any religious institution.

People can be spiritual without being religious or religious without being spiritual. Spirituality is primarily about a way of being, not a way of believing or doing. It is a way of being compassionately interconnected with all life. Until we appreciate the fact that spirituality does not mean only religion, progressing from polarization toward unity in this world is going to be very difficult, if not impossible.

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Trauma-informed Leadership



Trauma-informed Leadership is a new term that has emerged during the last few years when the subject of trauma has been, and keeps being, addressed big time in summits, conferences, films, books and conversations.

Listen to a very interesting introduction

Thomas Hübl [HERE](#)

3 min on Facebook [HERE](#)

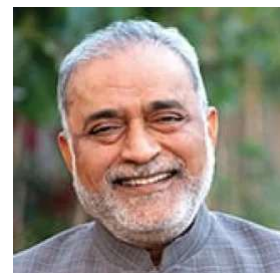
- How to implement trauma-informed leadership in an organisation?

The best implementation is to live it

If I stop looking at people in terms of dysfunction, what is lacking, what is not enough, where they are good and where they are bad, then I stop perpetuating that internal polarisation and instead I will naturally become a hub of more integration. The implementation works through the way of living in an organisation. Also be aware that in many organisations other people go through a similar development, but it may just not be overt or outspoken.

The habit of making great decisions

DAAJI challenges us to think about how we make decisions, and shows us how a regular meditation practice can lead us to knowing right from wrong, naturally and easily, by listening to the heart and allowing it to guide our choices.



“Compound interest is the eighth wonder of the world. He who understands it earns it, he who doesn’t, pays it.” Sometimes, I think about this quote (often

attributed to Einstein) in a different content: making good decisions.

On average, we make hundreds of decisions every day. What to wear? What to eat? How to put aside half an hour to help a loved one in need? What to say to a disgruntled customer? Which stock to buy? When we make good decisions, they have a compounding positive effect on our lives, and when we don't, we suffer the consequences.

Often, we think it's the big decisions that matter most. For example, whom to marry? Which career to choose? And so on. But decision-making is not a one-and-done deal. Decisions form a continuum, where many smaller decisions come before and after the bigger ones. When we steadily improve our batting average in making good decisions, the better we will be in achieving our goals.

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The melting pot

- 5 aspects of cultural diversity

Elizabeth Denley looks back on her childhood, which kindled an awareness and interest in cultural diversity. She offers some key learnings from those formative years that have helped her to embrace the possibility of humanity coming together in kinship, mutual love and respect.



Growing up in a steel town in Australia after the Second World War was a smorgasbord of multicultural diversity. My neighbors and school friends were from many parts of the world, including China, Lebanon, Italy, Greece, Croatia, Israel, Palestine, Russia, Germany, Poland, and the UK. By my teens that had expanded to Indonesia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and by my twenties to all countries of the world. Back then, Australia was known as the Lucky Country as there was work for everyone. That does not mean racism and prejudice were absent, especially for Indigenous Australians. As a melting pot it was still a work in progress, with a lot of teething problems that are still being resolved today.

The Steelworks was a place for migrant workers, so over 50% the town's population was composed of new arrivals, and wave after wave from other shores joined the workforce as I grew up. While the adults didn't always get on, we children adapted to each other's ways very quickly. We shared each other's food at lunchtime, climbed the same trees, played softball and netball

together, and laughed at jokes and common experiences. By the time I finished school, the first thing I did was travel to other continents to learn more about their richness of culture and history.

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How One Blind Spot Distorts Reality

By Deepak Chopra, Special to SFGate

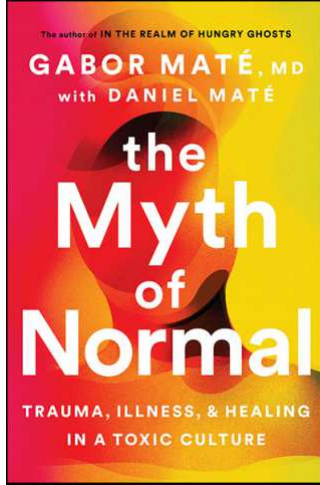
There's an old joke about a man who falls off the Empire State Building. As he passes an office window on the way down, someone shouts, "How are you going?" and the man answers, "I'm okay so far." I don't know anyone who doesn't laugh at the punchline the first time they hear the joke, but there's also a wince thinking about the thud that awaits the man at the end. Science has been okay—so far—in explaining how nature works, riding the crest of success for several centuries now. But the thud is near at hand, as outlined in a very readable, perceptive online article titled "[The Blind Spot](#)" jointly written by two physicists, Adam Frank and Marcelo Gleiser, and a philosopher, Evan Thompson. The blind spot referred to in the title has been of tremendous but hidden importance in your life. The blind spot refers to science's rejection of consciousness as a key factor in describing reality.

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Inspiring new books

The Myth of Normal

By Dr Gabor Maté with Daniel Maté



A groundbreaking investigation into the causes of illness, a bracing critique of how our society breeds disease, and a pathway to health and healing.

Over four decades of clinical experience, Gabor Maté has come to recognize the prevailing understanding of “normal” as false, neglecting the roles that trauma and stress, and the pressures of modern-day living, exert on our bodies and our minds at the expense of good health. For all our expertise and technological sophistication, Western medicine often fails to treat the whole person, ignoring how today’s culture stresses the body, burdens the immune system, and undermines emotional balance.

Now, Maté brings his perspective to the great untangling of common myths about what makes us sick, connects the dots between the maladies of individuals and the declining soundness of society—and offers a compassionate guide for health and healing. Cowritten with his son Daniel, *The Myth Of Normal* is Maté’s most ambitious and urgent book yet.



[Read MORE](#)



No Bad Parts

By Dr Richard Schwartz

Discover an empowering new way of understanding your multifaceted mind—and healing the many parts that make you who you are.

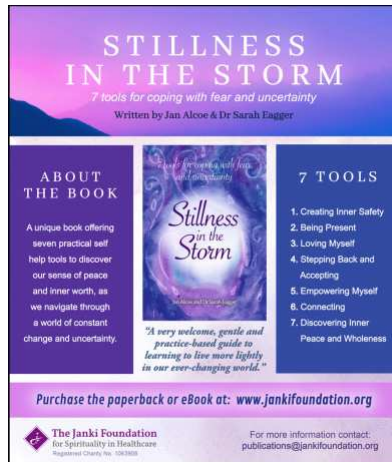
Is there just one “you”? We’ve been taught to believe we have a single identity, and to feel fear or shame when we can’t control the inner voices that don’t match the ideal of who we think we should be. Yet Dr. Richard Schwartz’s research now challenges this “mono-mind” theory. “All of us are born with many sub-minds—or parts,” says Dr. Schwartz. “These parts are not imaginary or symbolic. They are individuals who exist as an internal family within us—and the key to health and happiness is to honor, understand, and love *every* part.”

Dr. Schwartz’s Internal Family Systems (IFS) model has

been transforming psychology for decades. With *No Bad Parts*, you'll learn why IFS has been so effective in areas such as trauma recovery, addiction therapy, and depression treatment—and how this new understanding of consciousness has the potential to radically change our lives.



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Stillness in the storm

7 tools for coping with fear and uncertainty

by Jan Alcoe and Dr Sarah Eagger

We live in a world of change and uncertainty - we always have. But presently it's as if a storm were raging around us, churning up feelings of anxiety and fear and making it difficult to respond resourcefully to our own

needs and those of others. This unique book offers seven practical self-help tools drawn from a broad range of positive psychology, therapeutic, and spiritual models and approaches, each designed to help us discover the 'stillness in the storm' --our sense of peace and inner wholeness.

The book includes simple exercises, audio meditations and commentaries, emergency responses, and positive affirmations to help the reader put its powerful ideas into everyday practice.



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Exploring our interconnectedness through ART

Sundaram Tagore Gallery

presents the New York artist

Ghiora Aharoni's first [solo](#)

[exhibition at the Chelsea](#)

[gallery](#). It showcases intricate

assemblage sculptures
incorporating iconography and
text referencing scientific,
spiritual, mystical and cultural
beliefs surrounding humanity's
creation narratives.



Spiritual Practice

By Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat

The Basic Practice

Kindness is the first of the three great treasures advocated by Lao Tzu. The Buddha taught that generosity is a primary quality of an awakened mind. Muhammad regarded kindness as an essential sign of faith. Jewish and Christian ethics are built upon deeds of kindness, as are the daily interactions of people of primal traditions.



The spiritual practice of kindness encompasses a range of small acts and habits that we know as old-fashioned good manners — saying "please" and "thank you," waiting your turn, lending a helping hand, or cheering someone up with a smile. It applies not just to your relationships with other people. Etiquette in the spiritual life extends to things, animals, plants, and the Earth.

This practice also means being generous with your presence, your time, and your money. Give freely without expecting anything in return. Just do it. Kindness is not a quid pro quo endeavor.

Read more at [Spirituality & Practice](#), a multifaith and interspiritual website devoted to resources for spiritual journeys.

Join us for Friday's for Silence



Welcome to stay connected with the Spirit of Humanity Community by joining us in **a simple spiritual practice** to empower yourself and help shift human consciousness towards core human values:

Fridays for Silence – building a subtle network of pure thoughts

Every Friday at 11.00 am GMT/UTC = Icelandic time for 15 minutes

[LINK HERE](#)

Spirit of Humanity Forum

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