



NEWSLETTER

August 2023

Healing a World in Crisis
Leading with authenticity and love
The 6th SoH Forum, Iceland 2023



The Spirit of Humanity Forum, held from May 31st to June 3rd, 2023, in Reykjavik and Hveragerði, Iceland, brought together 120 leaders from 27 countries and various fields to explore the theme of "Healing a World in Crisis - leading with authenticity and love." In its 6th edition, the Forum provided a transformative retreat format, offering participants a unique and life-changing experience.

The Forum's reputation played a significant role in establishing a foundation of trust among the attendees, who approached the new retreat format with open minds. The retreat format provided a unique opportunity to set aside roles and titles and engage on a purely human level. Participants delved deep into the exploration of authenticity, love, and healing. Trust

was cultivated, allowing for authentic dialogue, the art of listening, and moments of silence, creating an atmosphere conducive to personal growth and collective transformation.

This is how the participants were invited into the space

Here our journey starts - our fascinating exploration through the inner landscapes of authenticity and love. We will walk together in our pursuit to understand ourselves and each other on a deeper level, to find ways to heal our world on all levels, our inner and outer systems. The ability to lead with courage, compassion and wisdom can only come from within. As all the brave warriors of truth come together, we ask you, as the honourable souls you are and as tradition demands: **Please leave all your weapons outside the entrance :o)**

Welcome reception by the City of Reykjavík



The reception hosted by the **City of Reykjavík** at the **City Hall**, set the stage for connection and sharing among the participants. The **Vice-President of the City Council Magnea Gná Jóhannsdóttir**, welcomed the attendees along with three of Iceland's most celebrated musicians:



Love is for you and me

Ragnheiður Gröndal, Guðmundur Pétursson (guitar) and Thorleifur Gaukur Davidsson (harmonica) opened with a beautiful version of Nat King Cole's famous song. They kept supporting us with music throughout the event.

[Watch & Listen HERE](#)

Connecting on a human level

The welcome was followed by a skilful facilitation by one of the organising team members, Thomas Bruhn, who with a playful silence exercise and couple of simple questions enticed everyone to meet on a human level instead of a work-role-relationship. This invited an instant connection, created a sense of unity and engagement, opening minds and hearts.

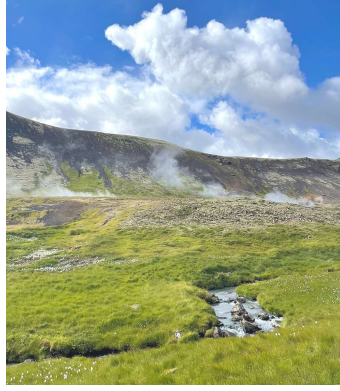


A glimpse of the reception

We had the fortune of having the talented photographer Sigrún Magnúsdóttir and the well-known filmmaker Steingrímur Thordarson with us document the event. Steingrímur lovingly produced a film with his well-known knack for capturing the atmosphere.

[Watch HERE](#)

THE RETREAT at Hotel Örk in Hveragerði



The importance of care in governance

This was highlighted by the Prime Minister Katrin Jakobsdóttir in the opening of the Forum. The Prime Ministers Office officially supported the 6th Forum.

Despite the absence of the **Prime Minister of Iceland, Katrin Jakobsdóttir**, who was called away to a political summit, her recorded interview by **Jóhanna Vilhjálmisdóttir, Director of Spirit of Humanity Forum**, played during Friday morning's session left a lasting impression. Her authentic reflections on spirituality, self-reflection, and the importance of care in governance resonated with the participants, highlighting the significance of personal experiences in leadership.



Exploring healing

Instead of thinking and analysing too much, we invited participants to move from the head to the heart and explore their own inner worlds to experience different dimensions of healing, gently guided by a team of individuals from different backgrounds. This created a spiritual atmosphere in which the guides could share some simple exercises and ideas and, then, more than anything else, hold the space as people explored and interacted with each other.

[Einat Bronstein](#)

Certified IFS Therapist, International Lead Trainer of IFS (Internal Family Systems), co-founder and co-director of the Israeli Institute of IFS.

[Paul Ginter](#)

A licensed psychologist, Clinical Director for IFS Telehealth Collective, a Senior Lead Trainer of Internal Family Systems.

[Arawana Hayashi](#)

Heads the creation of Social Presencing Theater (SPT) for the Presencing Institute. A choreographer, performer and educator deeply sourced in collaborative improvisation.

[Sister Jayanti](#)

Additional Administrative Head of Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University and their NGO Representative to the United Nations, Geneva.

[David Less](#)

Senior Teacher in the Sufi Order International and the International Head of the Universal Worship. Co-Director of Rising Tide International.

[Manish Srivastava](#)

Senior Practitioner at Presencing Institute and Core Faculty of Social Presencing Theatre (SPT). Artist, poet and coach.



The transformative sessions conducted by the guides employed various methods to help individuals explore their journey, break free from stagnation, and deepen their understanding of authenticity and love. The whole process encouraged self-awareness, empathy, and connection among the participants.

Addressing difficult questions



The Forum also addressed pressing global issues, such as the refugee crisis, through intense discussions that bridged personal experiences with systemic challenges. These conversations fostered a sense of empathy and reinforced the understanding that addressing global crises requires individual and collective action.

Genuine love and compassion





Throughout the event, the emphasis on love and compassion as essential elements for a better world was prominent. In his address at his residence, **the President of Iceland, Guðni Jóhannesson**, stressed the importance of genuine care for one another in restoring peace globally. This message resonated with the participants, who shared their experiences and perspectives, reinforcing the notion of a shared humanity and the hope for a brighter future.



However, the forum also highlighted the existence of global inequities and unequal mobility, which hinder the realization of our shared humanity. The visa challenges faced by participants from Zimbabwe shed light on the need for systemic change and intentional contributions to creating a regenerative and inclusive future for all.



The 6th Spirit of Humanity Forum was a profound, transformative and unforgettable experience. It serves as a reminder that, despite our world's challenges, hope for a better future exists. The Forum's call to lead with authenticity and love resonated with all participants, urging them to take action and contribute to healing our world in crisis.

Language of Peace

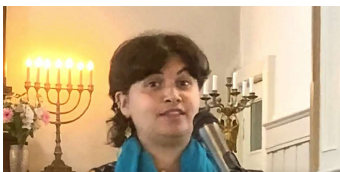


The Forum concluded with a special celebration event open to the public called '**Language of Peace**' at Fríkirkjan in Reykjavík. Selected participants, representing a wide diversity of humanity, shared their reflections on peace and the transformative retreat.



Pastor Hjörtur Magnasson generously opened the doors to the church and gave a much appreciated welcome.

"We do not claim to be religious, but we are spiritual beings, spiritual-minded. We do not claim to have the truth, but with humility we hope to be guided and be handled by the truth. Thus we like Spirit of Humanity."



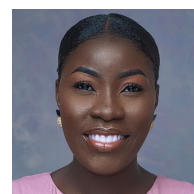
Muziwanele Thando Ngwenya from Zimbabwe created a beautiful 3 minute video-message for the Language of Peace event. [Watch HERE](#)



The church musicians and choir performed together with Ragnheiður Gröndal and Guðmundur Pétursson.

Participants quotes

"As an African working on conflict and governance, I was struck by the President's grace and humility. In his very informal, convivial speech, he stated; "Iceland is one of the most peaceful countries in the world. Genuine care for one another would restore the peace the world longs for." This was echoed throughout the Forum, which had a strong emphasis on the importance of love and compassion in creating a better world."



Linda Leogah Forkwa
Earth Fellow
Home For Humanity
Cameroon



"Link 'Leading with authenticity of love' to yourself and learn how you can continue to develop your will to change and break your limitations in order to act like a multiplier in many aspects where we need to change as a society. From the Forum I bring confidence, responsibility, inner work that can work outside and a sense of belonging to a network of support."

Axel Gegenschatz
Board Director, Advisor & Investor
Former CEO of Natura & Co
Argentina

"My time in Iceland and especially in the gathering of the Forum, was absolutely magical and transformative. I am deeply grateful for being included in the retreat and for the opportunity to get to know so many wonderful people. The experience was characterised by grace, humility and an incredible commitment to do good, whatever that means. I will be happy to contribute to the Forum in the future, in any way that I can."



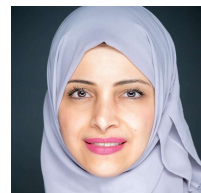
Einat Bronstein
International Lead Trainer of IFS (Internal Family Systems)
Co-founder and co-director of the Israeli Institute of IFS
Israel



"Hosted in extraordinary Iceland, the Forum was one of superb introspection, focusing on skills that enhance one's ability to lead effectively during challenging times. The international flavour of the participants was outstanding, while blending together unique leaders from around the world. The exploration, experiential atmosphere, and subsequent transformation was astounding and life changing. I would not hesitate to return if invited again."

James Steward
Head of School
Hiroshima International School
Japan

"The Noor that stepped into this space is totally different. Now I am more open, more present and I have very high hopes that we together can do something about humanity. The title 'Spirit of Humanity' is very profound. I experience that we are all one. It is just a matter of choice to feel the other, to be close to others and by doing so we will create a positive change."



Noor Balfaqqeh
Corporate Affairs and Communications senior manager
Unilever
Saudi Arabia



"It was an extraordinary experience, heartwarming and heart opening in a way I did not expect. There were many special moments like when I found myself in a conversation with a person from the other side of the globe and her story sounded so very much like my own story that at one point we just cracked up laughing and hugged because it was so unbelievable. You go away with more compassion, more understanding, less fear and with courage just to do what you know is right and needs to be done."

Martin Frick
Director

'On top of connecting to some wonderful people and starting both new friendships and work partnerships, the Forum was transformational for me in several ways. For the first time in my 75 years, I discovered I had a sixth sense - my body! It was a total revelation to start to learn how to listen to my body. It gave me critical new insights into my relationship with my amazing wife and I also gained new clarity on how to promote the shift to a Wellbeing Economic System. It was a joyful, inspiring and crucially important event for me.'



Stewart Wallis
Chair
Wellbeing Economy Alliance (WEAll)
United Kingdom



"The Forum asked us to contemplate how leading with Authenticity and Love can be the conduit towards peace. Over three days evolved a deep and meaningful connection to self and others. Our inner contemplation drawing on the mind, body and spirit, brought forth a realisation that to move from crisis to peace requires a higher consciousness than what currently exists globally. The Forum illuminated the path to a place of higher consciousness, for it is in this place peace can be found, that is the legacy and gift of this wonderful global gathering."

Miriam Coleman
Founder
Mountain View Consulting
Australia

"It was an absolute pleasure. The whole setup was excellent and very interactive. It gave me a great opportunity to connect deeper to self and I had the opportunity to meet a whole number of new people. Grateful, I am looking forward to participate further in the events."



Henri van Eeghen
CEO
KIT Royal Tropical Institute
The Netherlands



"One of the most wonderful things is the diversity of people who are brought together. It is diverse in many ways, peoples background, peoples level of doing inner work, the type of work that they have done, what they are doing out there in the world. That for me was part of the magic. Many people were activists, trying to manifest change in the world, others were in a more

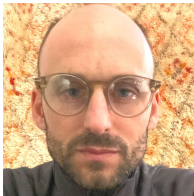
reflective place. It is that combination, the inner work for outer change that appeals to me the most. The networking is wonderful but the question remains how do we manifest in the world? I had a fantastic experience. I now want reflect on: How can we together take this out into the world to many more people? How would that happen once we all go our own ways?"

Peggy Dulany
Board Chair and Founder
The Synergos Institute
USA

"What has been so powerful is how embodied the experience has been. To move past the language of 'spirit', 'love', 'crisis or 'healing', into the wisdom that is held in our collective body, or 'social body' which is a word I learned. My thoughts are now how I integrate this outside a container like this. How we bring the essence of an experience like this into the world, particularly for me, to bring it to the young people I know who do not have the resources or the time to be in this kind of space, but are really doing this work, without the language. That felt really powerful, to move beyond, to dissolve that barrier, and let something new grow."



Ila Malhotra Gregory
Speaker, facilitator, weaver
YouthxYouth
United Kingdom



"A passage, a portal, a profound gathering beyond appearances. I am thankful to have been part of the Forum this year and full of joy and reverence for what is emerging with it."

Diego Galafassi
Founder & Film director
Hum Interactive Studios
Sweden/Brazil

"What a success this Forum has been!

This format works much better than the 'classical' congress style:

- much more interaction with many more people, on a more profound level,
- staying together in the same hotel and having evening programs,
- breakfast, lunch and dinner together enhances exchanges,
- the morning meditation is a very important component,
- the possibility to go to your room for a nap, or do some work, or brush your teeth,
- meeting in rooms with views and air instead of a dark auditorium."



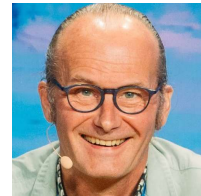
Olivier Onghena-t Hooft
Founder & Executive Chairman
GINPI
Belgium



"In life it so often happens that we only focus on the doing, but when we come to the awareness of the being that is very beautiful. So the whole event were focused on the process of experiencing what is the being within and it really felt as if it was a family coming together. The things we were talking about were things that can impact the world. Because when I change and I come to that awareness of the being that I am, what I do is not just for me and my limited family, but it impacts everything else that I am involved with."

Sister Jayanti Kirpalani
Additional Administrative Head
The Brahma Kumaris
India / United Kingdom

"For me it was a meeting of hope, because it is important that we do not only have people who are thinking about solutions, but also an inclusive strategy to get everybody to embrace the change that we need to make. We need to touch the heart of the people, we cannot only use intellectual arguments. To speak heart to heart is much more promising than just speaking from one intellect to the other."



Claude Turmes
Minister of Energy
Government of Luxembourg
Luxembourg

Leogah's experience



A Cameroonian Peace-builder's Perspective

Joining the 6th Spirit of Humanity Forum in Iceland, on behalf of the Home for Humanity movement, was a life-changing experience for me as a young Cameroonian peace-builder traveling to Europe for the first time. The Spirit of Humanity Forum took the form of a transformative retreat with the theme "Healing a World in Crisis: Leading with Authenticity and Love," through the 1st – 3rd of June 2023. It hosted 120 participants from around the world ranging from leaders, practitioners, professionals, thinkers, and change-makers from

diverse fields. The choice of theme, given our current divided earth, was timely and resonated deeply with all the participants.

Participants came with open minds, the energy was palpable, and everyone was eager to learn, connect, and contribute to the conversation.

A highlight of the SoH forum was our invitation to visit the residence of the President of Iceland, Guðni Thorlacius Jóhannesson. As an African working on conflict and governance, I was struck by the President's grace and humility. In his very informal, convivial speech, he stated; "Iceland is one of the most peaceful countries in the world. Genuine care for one another would restore the peace the world longs for."

This was echoed throughout the forum, which had a strong emphasis on the importance of love and compassion in creating a better world.

[Read MORE](#)

Planning the 6th Forum



Stefanía Ólafsdóttir, Mark Milton, Thomas Bruhn, Lotta Arbman, Amit Paul, Maureen Goodman, Sylvie Berti-Rossi, Jóhanna Vilhjálmsdóttir

The planning of the 6th Spirit of Humanity Forum was an extraordinary journey for all of us that unfolded through a series of profound conversations and shared visions. We started this journey by leaving the format of previous forums and creating a more intimate and immersive experience for all participants.

We were eight in the planning team. We all had different personalities, and we wanted to recognise the uniqueness of each team member and the diverse perspectives everyone brought.

We live in a culture of speed and efficiency. In accomplishing tasks quickly, we may overlook the importance of genuine connections, listening to others, self-reflection and the wisdom that can arise from a more attentive way of being.

Thus, we deliberately took our time, creating space for reflection and introspection. Embracing the concept of co-creation, we listened with open hearts and minds and didn't try to rush things.

Instead, we took time to honour the diverse perspectives within our team and ensure that decisions were made collectively, with the comfort and well-being of all in mind.

Our differences became our strengths, and we realised that true innovation often requires stepping beyond the boundaries of security and familiarity and having faith in the process and what emerges.

In this journey, as in life, we met challenges in our relationships.

Diverse viewpoints and personalities sometimes lead to moments of tension and disagreement. However, we found that by approaching these challenges with openness and respect, we could navigate them, realising that those were also opportunities for personal growth.

By embracing patience and creating spaces for authentic conversations, we feel that we managed to create an environment where true innovation and transformation could unfold.

It was an extraordinary experience for us that exceeded our expectations, and moving further, we are committed to carrying this valuable lesson with us, both in our work and personal lives.

We hope to enrich our experiences, build meaningful relationships, and nurture a more compassionate and harmonious world.

Message from Ragnar Ängeby



Dear participants in the 6th SoH Forum,

As one of the founders of the Forum, I would like to make a short reflection on our common way forward.

We were a group dedicated to building peace; we were seen around us as having good practices that needed a more comprehensive network. Based on that, the Forum was started.

Every day information in the media tells us about war and violence. We absolutely need better practices on how to prevent wars and violence and stop them from elapsing. Peacebuilding is about common learning, seeing and having an integrated approach. It is not about mechanistic thinking but using your inner part of love. That's why healing is necessary to make peace. All decisions and controversies must be based on basic human values where love is key.

You have all taken part in a retreat to deepen your insights about yourself and the world. To find the truth in yourself, the authenticity.

How will you use the power of these insights to enhance the way of enlightened love? How can we build a peaceful society together? I look forward to your reflections on the retreat, including your practices.

For me personally, I'm still working on understanding my way in life. What is my task?

What is your task and the Forums task?

Go further and work with yourself and your life!

As a poet said: **It is the way forward that is the goal.**

[Ragnar](#)

Free of Charge



Our work is primarily carried out on a voluntary basis, driven by a passionate team dedicated to bringing about positive changes in the world and nurturing meaningful connections. It is through the collective efforts of our volunteers that we are able to create a transformative and inclusive platform for all participants.

Partnerships are based on shared values and purpose. A partner's support can manifest through financial support, voluntary work, sharing knowledge, and contributing their unique skills and resources to enrich our collective efforts. Thus the value lies not only in financial contributions but also in the diverse perspectives and experiences that our partners bring to the table.

SoH Forum does not charge for any event and offers all events for free. We invite attendees or participants to donate voluntarily based on their own willingness and ability. We feel that inviting voluntary donations encourages inclusivity and community engagement.

[Donate here](#)

Fridays for Silence

[building a subtle network of pure thoughts](#)



Please join us in this simple spiritual practice, to empower yourself and help shift human consciousness towards core human values

Every Friday at 11.00am GMT/UTC

Please check your LOCAL time

Only 15 minutes

Join Zoom Meeting: [LINK](#)

Meeting ID: [889 5914 0554](#) Passcode: **Silence**

- Mikes are automatically turned off
- We see each other in small windows on the screen
- We are guided by a few words in the beginning and then sit in silence in each others presence
- A few words at the end indicate that the time is over

WELCOME

Spirit of Humanity Forum

Hrísmóar 4, 210 Garðabær, Reykjavík
Iceland

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