

Dick Schwartz discusses Spirit of Humanity Forum

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Message from Dick

Recently I attended an amazing conference in Reykjavik, Iceland, along with five others in the IFS community (myself, Jeanne Catanzaro, Frank Anderson, Toufic Hakim, Mark Milton, and Julia Sullivan called the Spirit of Humanity Forum. We were among 230 people from 40 countries who gathered for three days to discuss how to bring more compassion and love to governance. Those of you who attended the IFS Annual Conference last year heard about this forum in Mark Milton's keynote address, which is what inspired me to attend. The most amazing thing about the Forum was the level of world leaders in attendance who, in general, were not only extremely accomplished, but also humble. (For a list of leaders in attendance, [click here](#)). There were over 70 presenters (myself included) and no one spoke for more than 10 minutes to the large group about what they were doing-it was clear that those who came were not there for self aggrandizement, but to contribute to this urgently needed movement. Thus, we heard stories of people from all over the world who had created international peace programs, worked on environmental legislation, engaged in conflict resolution, or otherwise contributed in myriad ways to the vision of a more compassionate world.

We were fortunate to become acquainted with many of the attendees. For example, Jeanne and I had a fascinating dinner with Scilla Elworthy, who founded The Peace Direct in England, and Dishani Jayaweera, who leads dialogues among the warring groups in Sri Lanka. It was only afterwards, when we Googled each of them, that we learned of the scope of their accomplishments (<http://www.peacedirect.org/us/peacebuilders/sri-lanka/> and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scilla_Elworthy). I also found that a number of the wonderful and inspiring leaders in attendance already knew about IFS, and many others became excited about IFS (including Gabor Karsai, the director of the Forum). For example, we got to know a delightful woman named Tania Singer

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tania_Singer) who told me that she was introduced to IFS by Tom Holmes who teaches IFS in Germany. Tania incorporates elements of IFS in her latest research project to produce a self awareness program for the public. It was this aspect of the conference that was the most rewarding for me.

There was also something about being present with so many talented people and learning about how they had devoted much of their lives to the cause of what we, in IFS, would call "bringing Self leadership to the world" that filled me with renewed hope and commitment. On some level within me is a heightened sense of what we as an IFS community can do to contribute to this global movement, and an increased desire to do it. There was a constant call for the change to begin within each activist, and we can offer a method and map for doing that.

We also offer a technology for Self-to-Self dialogue that can enrich the methods they are already using (I had a long conversation with Scilla about this). And we can bring a de-polarizing and compassion engendering view of people that can inform their efforts. I am very grateful to Mark for bringing us to this forum and for his work to create it.

Dick