

Caring for a World in Transition

Building a Foundation for a Loving and Peaceful World



ANNUAL REPORT 2017

When we started this work in 2010, the idea was to create a foundation for something new. Leaders from around the world, with a special interest in core human values in decision-making, would be invited to meet each other in a safe space to share experiences and ideas without having to worry about being challenged by the outside world. By core human values we mean values like respect, compassion, honesty, peacefulness, care etc. Values we all have in common deep inside and, when activated, connect us all, i.e. spiritual values. We wanted to create a forum with a spiritual atmosphere of reflection to promote new thinking, new awareness and new vision for the future.

Looking back over the time that the Spirit of Humanity Forum has been active, we can see that very much of what was central in our conversations at that time has now become more generally accepted.

In Iceland, the two last governments fell because of a suspicion of a lack of values. In the making of the present government, politicians are trying hard to be more transparent, so an awareness of the need for healthy values is really increasing in our society.

At the present time, the state of the world calls us to a greater compassion and there is a need for balance and peace in personal life as well as in public affairs. Iceland is small enough to be like a showcase or a test lab for new thinking, as change can happen faster in a small society like Iceland than in a big country.

It is evident that the work of the Spirit of Humanity Forum is more important than ever. We have become more visible through media and publications, but the main focus should still be on the inner work of personal transformation, and on deepening our awareness through reflection and dialogue, as this is the very foundation of all that we do.

The world is in a state of transition and humanity needs people who practise and experiment with spiritual values, a new awareness and new ways of being.



Chairman of the Board Sigrún Olsen

Ms. Irina Bokova, Former Director-General of UNESCO in her message to the 3rd Spirit of Humanity Forum 2017



"As Member States and the United Nations take forward the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, core human values must be the compass setting for all our actions – indeed, the spirit guiding all our efforts.

...The themes of this international conference – 'building new connections, bridging divides, caring for each other and for our communities' – stand at the heart of UNESCO's humanist vision of the 2030 Agenda.

Spirituality is based on respect and human dignity, mutual understanding, individual fulfilment, social cohesion.

It is a transformative force, a path for each woman and man to contribute through themselves to creating more peaceful, inclusive and harmonious societies."

President of Iceland Guðni Thorlacius Jóhannesson in his opening address at SoH Forum 2017



If we only say: "I am just a poor, single individual – I cannot effect change – so be it," then things will never change.

But if I say: "Yes, I am small, I am a single individual, I am alone but with the help of others, if we unite, if we stand together – then we are mighty."

A global platform for leaders and change makers

The Spirit of Humanity (SoH) Forum offers a global platform for leaders and change-makers seeking to contribute to lasting transformation in the world. We believe that such transformation requires a shift in our way of being to embrace higher values intrinsic to humanity, such as love, compassion, solidarity and peacefulness.

Hence the task of the SoH Forum is to support this emergent new paradigm through exploring core values in governance and decision-making. It provides a safe space for dialogue, sharing, and co-authoring a new and compelling narrative about who we are, how we could be and what we can each do to create a promising future for all.



As far as possible, the Forum intends to model this new paradigm as it unfolds, by creating opportunities for silent contemplation, deep listening, mutual presence and an experience of 'we', a spiritual harmony amongst all that is.

The purpose of the Forum is to explore:

- 1. the process of change within the individual that enables transformation in a community or country;
- 2. the empowerment and sustenance of higher values and their practical implementation in personal, family, community and work life;
- 3. how the deeper dimensions of our humanity affect the direction of society;
- 4. how we can hold onto our higher purposes despite the many pressures that can take us off course;
- 5. how we can support each other in maintaining hope as we move towards a new future.

An emerging community of values-based practitioners



The Forum encourages the practical application of spiritual values or 'core human values' in the different fields and parts of the world where participants are active. We hope that the SoH Forums can encourage, empower, inspire and nourish participants spiritually in such a way that they can:

- begin or deepen their own spiritual practice on a daily basis to sustain the experiences they have received,
- develop friendships, and maybe collaborations, with other participants to support and inspire each other spiritually and maybe even develop practical work together.

In this way, the SoH Forum wishes to support an emerging community of practitioners by sharing success stories of applying spiritual values or 'core human values' in decision-making at all levels of society.

Introduction

The Spirit of Humanity Forum became an official Icelandic registered non-profit organisation in October 2016. A new Director, Jóhanna Vilhjálmsdóttir, was appointed and the Forum welcomed Pure Land Foundation as a new partner. It was decided that the 3rd Forum would take place in Iceland at the end of April 2017 under the theme 'Caring for a World in Transition – building a foundation for a loving and peaceful world'.

A very successful 3rd Spirit of Humanity Forum was held in Reykjavik, Iceland, from 26 to 29 April 2017. 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. 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.

We aim to hold the 4th Spirit of Humanity Forum in spring 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 (spiritual) values. Also to spread the seeds of the SoH Forum. The community of the SoH Forum is now around one thousand people (who have been invited to the SoH Forum - around 500 have participated).

According to the vision of our partners, we have started to encourage our community to hold Regional Forums. One has already been held in London with great success and plans for the future. Another one is being organised in Argentina 2018. Also, to spread the seed of the Forum and uphold an interactive community, our partners expressed a will to engage the Forum more actively on social media, and build a strategic approach that extends our reach and participation. A new beautiful SoH Website was introduced and a social media specialist was hired who has now started building up our social media presence. We now have a considerable amount of very strong material from the 3rd Forum (from the panels and from interviews with participants) that is now being presented on our social media.

A beautiful and impressive introduction video has also been produced that will take us to the next step of visibility and growth, and will certainly open new doors. We started our own publication under SoH Press and our first book 'Peacefulness', edited by David Cadman and Scherto Gill, was officially published in November on Amazon. More books are planned in connection with future Forums.

In 2018, we will keep on building on the work that we have already laid the foundation for; further building up our presence on social media, strengthening our connections with youth leaders around the world, Regional Forums, publication and planning for the next international SoH Forum in Iceland in 2019.

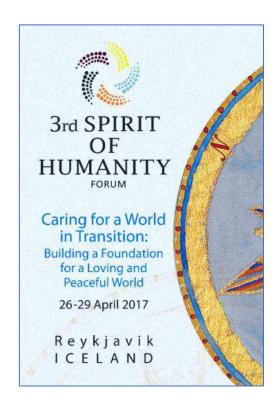


Director Jóhanna Vilhjálmsdóttir

Caring for a World in Transition

The 3rd Spirit of Humanity Forum was held in Reykjavik 26-29 April under the theme of Caring for a World in Transition - Building a Foundation for a Loving and Peaceful World, with close to 200 participants from all continents. The Forum was warmly welcomed by the Mayor of Reykjavik City, HE the President of Iceland, the Bishop of Iceland, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the President of the City Council of Reykjavik. Also the Director-General of UNESCO sent the Forum a message.

The format was simple. Plenaries in the mornings, and workshops and small groups for reflection in the afternoons. The plenaries each took the form of an 'interview' with a panel of three to four people sharing not only what they were doing, but also the spiritual transformation that inspired and sustains their work. Contributions were exceptional, in plenary, in workshops, in reflection groups and in one-to-one conversations during the breaks. The beginning and closing of the Forum were celebrated by Icelandic choirs, youth from Iceland played music and children



from Icelandic schools decorated the venue for us with a beautiful piece of art.

A pre-event was organised on the topic of 'Ideals and Values in Education and Sports - Are We on the Right Track?' in co-operation with Höfði, the Peace Centre of Reykjavík and University of Iceland, where leaders in education from all over the world came together.

The highly acclaimed film, 'A Quest for Meaning', was screened as an 'open event' to which the people of Iceland were invited. The film directors, Marc de la Ménardière and Nathanaël Coste, received a standing ovation from a very enthusiastic audience. Before the screening, dancers from Iceland Academy of the Arts premiered a special choreographed dance for the Spirit of Humanity Forum.

Participants reflections

Lord Alderdice, director, Centre for the Resolution of Intractable Conflict, Harris Manchester College, Oxford

"I was grateful to have attended what I found to be a very positive spiritual experience – not something one always finds at the conferences I attend."

Professor David Cadman, writer

"It is clear from the ways in which people have responded to the work of the Forum, that values such as love, compassion and peacefulness touch something deep within each one of us. When we hear them, especially when we hear them amidst silence and stillness, the words sound familiar, as if they belonged to us, as if they were part of who we are. This is the work of the Forum, to provided places in which these words, these qualities, find expression and are then carried into our lives wherever they may be."

Richard Dunne, headteacher, Ashley CofE Primary School, Walton-on-Thames

"Throughout the Forum, the richness of speakers and the opportunities to reflect on what they had said provided constant food for thought, as we explored ways to create a more peaceful, harmonious and loving world. Our times of silence, prayer and meditation ensured the spiritual dimension of our being was always being nurtured. It was a remarkable gathering of people and an inspiring three days away."

Gualai Ismail, co-founder of Aware Girls, an organisation led by young women, working for women empowerment, gender equality and peace in Pakistan

"Spirit of Humanity Forum is a place where amazing and powerful ideas are shared that strengthen the work I do back home. To learn from new ideas, take inspiration from what people are doing and from their achievements."

Emmanuel Bombande, Peacebuilding Scholar-Practitioner, former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Ghana

"The Forum created a conducive environment for good introspection and self-care linking our actions with the spirituality of the human person."

Eunice Ouko, MAS candidate Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights

"The Forum was a unique experience for me and opened a door that I didn't know how to open."

Monica Dias, financial consultant

"The panelists were inspirational, amazing people who had so much to give to all of us. One could tell there was a structure in the themes that built up to that final direct integration of spirituality in the discussion. It really inspired me to action."

Elín Ebba Ásmundsdóttir, therapist and director, Hlutverkasetur role-center

"I loved hearing from all these people telling their life stories, why they had come on this journey in life. In the academic world, people have stopped telling stories, they give results in a standardised form. I enjoyed every minute."

Nigel Cohen, associate, Values Based Education

"The conference was absolutely fantastic. It has left me full of hope and inspiration. I loved meeting great people - making great contacts - listening to inspiring speakers."

Alexander Scheiffer, co-founder, Trans4m Center for Integral Development

"I loved the spirit of the Forum, the enormously positive local ground support, the groundedness in Iceland, the immense and intense personal enrichment and spaciousness for deepening and establishment of friendships."

Steve Killelea, founder, Global Peace Index and the Institute for Economics and Peace

"The Spirit of Humanity forum provides an opportunity to contemplate our inner self, how we are spiritually connected to others, to meet other like-minded people and to deepen our understanding of our own personal spirituality."

Dr. Rama Mani, founder, Theatre of Transformation Academy

"As our world hurtles through turbulent transition, the Spirit of Humanity Forum offers an irresistible and timely invitation to us all. It invokes us to weave new narratives of the global community of care that we all long for, and know is possible."

Tina Monberg, mediator, public speaker

"I loved the diversity of people merging together to go deep into what is invisible to the eye."

Roda-Naccari Noguera, business facilitator, Fundació Naccari Rava

"I loved having political leaders, academics and basically influential people, who are living their lives based on the belief/knowing that they are spiritual beings having a human experience."

The Programme

Caring for a World in Transition

- building a spiritual foundation for a loving and peaceful world

Questions discussed at the Forum:

- In strengthening this spiritual foundation, how might leaders help transform processes of governance in different sectors of society?
- How might our 'duty of care' and a growing collective consciousness change decision-making processes in ways that express more love and foster compassion for each other and for the planet?
- How might leaders nurture themselves and others in order to sustain the spiritual foundation for a caring society?
- In what way might spiritual communities around the globe help shift human consciousness from fear and separation towards love and wholeness?

How do we ensure our actions are shaped by our inner values and clear purpose?



Contributors



Guðni Jóhannesson

HE the President, Iceland.

Guðlaugur Þór Þórðarson

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Iceland.

Óttarr Proppé

Minister of Health, Iceland.

Agnes M. Sigurðardóttir

Bishop of Iceland.

Dagur Bergþóruson Eggertsson

Mayor of Reykjavík City, Iceland.

Prof the Lord Alderdice

House of Lords, UK / Chairman, Centre for Democracy and Peace Building, Belfast.

Ambassador Ragnar Ängeby

Former Swedish Diplomat dealing with Security Development and Peace, Sweden.

Alexandra Asseily, Co-Founder, Centre for Lebanese Studies / Founder, Garden of Forgiveness, Beirut.

Karen Blincoe

CEO, Chora Connection, Denmark.

Irina Bokova

Director-General of UNESCO – written message to the Forum.

Emmanuel Bombande

Chair of the Board of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict, Former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Ghana.

Hrund Gunnsteinsdottir

Yale World Fellow 2016 / Director and Founder of Krád Consulting, Iceland.

Prof Mike Hardy

Professor of Intercultural Relations and Executive Director, Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations, Coventry University, UK.

Gulalai Ismail

Chairperson, Aware Girls, Pakistan.

Four Arrows

AKA Prof Don Trent Jacobs, Native American Writer, Educator, USA.

Steve Killelea

Founder and Executive Chairman, Institute for Economics and Peace, Australia.

Sister Jayanti Kirpalani

European director, Brahma Kumaris, UK.

Lungelwa Nothemba Makgoba

Director and shareholder, TLOU Royal holdings (PTY) LTD, South Africa.

Dr Rama Mani

Founder, Theatre of Transformation Academy, Research Associate and Convenor, Enacting Global Transformation Initiative, Centre for International Studies, University of Oxford, France/India.

HE Ambassador Philip McDonagh

Poet, Diplomat, Permanent Representative to the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Ireland.

Emilie Parry, Doctoral Researcher, School of Geography and Environment, University of Oxford, UK.

Golo Pilz

Adviser, Renewable Energy, Brahma Kumaris & World Renewal Spiritual Trust, India, India/Germany.

Dr William Vendlev

Secretary General, Religions for Peace, USA.

The Rt. Hon. Baroness Sandip Verma

Chairperson, European External Affairs Committee, Former Minister of Energy & Climate Change, Former Minister of International Development, UK.

Prof Yu Xia

Director, Beijing Academy of Educational Sciences, China.

Dr Vladimir Yakunin

Chairman of the Supervisory Board, Dialogue of Civilizations Research Institute / Head, Department of Public Policy, Faculty of Political Science, Moscow State University, Russia.

Facilitators

Prof David Cadman, Writer / SoH Forum, UK.

Maureen Goodman, Programme Director, Brahma Kumaris UK

Dr Scherto Gill, Research fellow, Guerrand-Hermès Foundation for Peace / University of Sussex, UK.

Mark Milton, Founder, Education 4 Peace Foundation, Switzerland.

Kurian Thomas, Program director, Fetzer Institute, USA.

Johanna Vilhjalmsdottir, Director, Spirit of Humanity Forum, Iceland.



Experiential workshops



Integrally CARE-ing for a World in Transition:

Applying the Integral Worlds approach and its underlying CARE process to effect individual, organizational, and societal transformation

Professor Alexander Schieffer, Trans4m Center for Integral Development

Self-compassion - the heart of caring

Dr Sarah Eagger, Spirituality Special Interest Group, Royal College of Psychiatrists Professor David Peters, Westminster Centre for Resilience, University of Westminster

Principles of Harmony

Dr Richard Dunne, Ashley CofE Primary School

The Contagion of Loving Courage:

An Indigenous Perspective for remembering our Oneness

Four Arrows, aka Professor Don Trent Jacobs, Fielding Graduate University

Composing Cultures of Care:

Healing, Not Fixing, What is Broken

Dr Jason Meek (and colleagues Dr Carrie Macleod, Tina Monberg, Sophie Vrolijk), The iDeal World, Mediation and Dialogue Facilitation Expert Roster for the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Heartfulness, Connectedness and Transformative Presence:

Meditation and creative practice, through drawing, appreciative inquiry and heartfulness practices

Dr Miriam Subirana, Instituto IDEIA (Instituto de Diálogos e Indagación Apreciativa)

Big Ideas for Social Change:

Toward Ecological Civilization

Dr. Andrew Schwartz, Center for Process Studies, EcoCiv

Earth-Renewing Spiritual Practices

Dr Jenneth Parker, Schumacher Institute for Sustainable Systems

Professor Vala Ragnarsdottir, Institute of Earth Sciences, Institute for Sustainability Studies at the University of Iceland

Empowering our sense of Self:

the Inner Curriculum

Dr Neil Hawkes and Jane Hawkes, Values-based Education

The POD Effect - the Power of Seven:

When the power of the individual (ME) works in collaborative PODS of seven (WE), we can link up to create societal shift (US)

Lynne Franks, SEED

Diverse perspectives, multiple expressions:

practices of love and respect

Luis Pinto and Linda O'Toole, Learning for Well-Being Foundation

Experiencing The Circle Way ('a leader in every chair') on the subject of 'loving thyself' Cees Hoogendijk, OrgPanoptics

The Significance of our Moment in History:

At the extremes of separation and individuality, what does reconnection to the Earth and to each other look like?

Tom Stedall, Schumacher Institute

Enacting New Paradigms to Shape our Shared Future:

A Performance-Forum in Transformative Leadership

Dr Rama Mani, Theatre of Transformation

Connecting your inner life and your role in civil society and democracy

Amy Lazarus, Inclusion Ventures

What is my responsibility for peace?

To understand how individual and collective memories of the past influence our present identities and how we live and tell our lives.

Alexandra Asseily, Centre for Lebanese Studies

Filmscreening of the documentary 'A Quest for Meaning'



(En Quête de Sense) by film directors Nathanaël Coste and Marc de la Ménardière. 450 attended. A story showing how new insights and experiences can quickly bring realisations, transform consciousness, shift and empower values. The directors received a standing ovation. A discussion between the directors and the audience was facilitated by Mark Milton from E4P afterwards.

Ideals and Values in Education and Sports - Are We on the Right Track?

An event organised in connection with the Forum





In collaboration between Höfði Peace Centre, Education 4 Peace and SoH Forum, a successful event was held on the 25th of April at the University of Iceland with 60 participants. Leaders from different fields of education from different parts of the world gave lectures followed by workshops. Professionals and students in education from Iceland were invited.

There is a growing acknowledgement of the importance of mental and emotional health, and awareness of the consequences of stress, bullying and other disruptive habits on children's future participation in society. What role should and can the educational system and sports associations play in promoting compassionate communication, the diminution of interpersonal violence, and respect for ourselves, others and our environment?

With increasingly diverse societies, and new and persistent challenges, such as climate change, mass migration and limited natural resources, the need for new methods and innovative ways of thinking becomes ever more apparent. Are we offering the new generation life skills with the capacity to cultivate inner peace and find peaceful solutions for the inevitable challenges that lie ahead? The aim of the conference is to create a venue for discussion on education and sports in Iceland, where academics and practitioners from Iceland and all around the world will share their know-how and expertise with inspiring approaches on building inclusive and peaceful societies.

Speakers

Pia Hansson, Director of HÖFÐI Reykjavík Peace Center

Mark Milton, the Founder of Education 4 Peace Foundation

Sunita Gandhi, Ph.D., Cambridge University, UK, Co-Founder of the Council for Global Education, USA, Íslensku menntasamtökin ses, and Dignity, Education Vision International, India

Neil Hawkes, Founder of VbE

Rakel Ýr Isaksen and Bergrún Ísleifsdóttir, Experts in Special Education at Álfaheiði preschool

Jóhanna Einarsdóttir, Dean of the School of Education at the University of Iceland

Brynhildur Sigurðardóttir, Principal of Garðaskóli Elementary School

Fríða Bjarney Jónsdóttir, Project Manager/Consultant for Multicultural Education in Preschools in Reykjavík

Hanna Ragnarsdóttir, Professor at the School of Education at the University of Iceland

Richard Dunne, Headteacher of Ashley School (UK)

Þórarinn Alvar Þórarinsson, Project Manager at the National Olympic and Sports Association of Iceland

Clémentine Raphel, youth ambassador, Education 4 Peace and SoH Forum (CH)

Elmar Givelet, youth representative (FR)

Sabína Steinunn Halldórsdóttir, Project Manager for the Youth Association of Iceland (UMFÍ)

Arna Hólmfríður Jónsdóttir, Assistant Professor in Early Childhood Education and Educational Leadership at the University of Iceland

Cultural events

One of the most important pillars of the Forum is a warm, spiritual atmosphere, with time for reflection and silence. Cultural items play a meaningful role as they colour the atmosphere, create spaces and help us to connect with our hearts. Cultural items at the 3rd Forum were:

- Flensborgarkórinn youth choir.
- Young ballerinas performing a butterfly dance from Ballettskóli Eddu Scheving.
- Rama Mani with Theatre of Transformation.
- Domus Vox women and girls choir.
- Two young musicians: violinist Herdís Mjöll Guðmundóttir and pianist Sólborg Birgisdóttir.
- Dancers from Iceland Academy of the Arts premiered a special choreographed dance for the Forum.



The Venue

The Forum took place in Háskólabío, the University cinema. The venue was beautifully decorated by the Icelandic artist Linda Stefánsdóttir joined with the Children's Cultural Festival in Reykjavík and worked with many hundreds of children at many schools, creating Dream catchers, and Water and Butterfly Glass Art, which transformed the venue into a beautiful piece of art.



Media coverage



A media production team filmed the Forum and interviewed the speakers. We also contacted the media for interviews and articles, and ensured that the Forum got good press coverage in Icelandic media.

Our Media Team:

- Sigurgeir Arinbjarnarson, cameraman, Iceland
- Diana Masciale, TV Producer, New York
- Jim Paymar, Media expert, New York
- Steingrimur Thordarson, cameraman and film producer, Iceland



Speakers who were interviewed in Icelandic media:

- Gulalai Ismail in Kastljós news TV programme – The Icelandic National Broadcasting Service.
- Lord Alderdice and Four Arrows in Morgunblaðið about the Spirit of Humanity Forum.
- Elmar Givelet with his mother Brynhildur at Rás 1 radio – The Icelandic National Broadcasting Service.



Nathanaël Coste and Marc de la Ménardière authors and film directors, Kamea Meah
 Films, France – directors of A Quest for Meaning.



A social media group of youth was formed during the Forum, sharing news by conducting interviews and making their own report on Facebook every day.

Invaluable work given as gifts to the Forum



At the heart of the Forum is a golden core of helpers. The Forum received, and keep receiving, invaluable support as gifts, free of charge. Their commitment was limitless, a true spirit of humanity!

Artwork Design

George Edwards (Brahma Kumaris, Australia) designed all the Forum's material: flyer, posters, flags, roll-up, back-drops, printed programme, the booklets 'Peacefulness' and 'Caring for the Earth' as well as the SoH Presentation brochure. George supported is in 2012 and 2014 too.

Proofreading

Lynn Henshall (Living Values Education Programme) is tirelessly proofreading all our written material. She has an eagle's eye for details!

Technical Management

Toots Beckett (Brahma Kumaris, UK), with many years of experience as a producer of events, lent her full-hearted engagement and expertise in overseeing all the technical work, with every little detail cared for. She gave the same generous support at the 2nd Forum.

Events Manager's Support

Elin Alfreðsdóttir (Brahma Kumaris, Iceland) gave invaluable support to Event Management.

Registration and practical back-up

A whole team from Lótushus (Brahma Kumaris, Iceland) played an invaluable role supporting us.

Photography

Gurdev Singh Deogon (GNNSJ, Birmingham, UK) provided the Forum with a huge treasure of high quality professional photographs. Asya Tbdili and Parham Shafti also provided photographs.

Interviews

Jim Paymar (media expert, New York) made all the interviews with speakers and participants.

Social media

Diane Masciale (TV producer, New York) helped with social media during the Forum.

Driver

Hjörtur Dagur Pétursson (Brahma Kumaris, Iceland) was available all around the clock, meeting and driving people, tirelessly assisting with all kind of errands.

Event manager

Jóhanna Briem was with us for the second time and did a wonderful job again.

Insights and lessons learned



What did we feel was an important part of what we learned from each of the themes discussed at the Forum?

Bridging Divides: Dialogue for Peace and Mutual Engagement

In what way might spiritual communities around the globe help shift human consciousness from fear and separation towards love and wholeness?

<u>Learning:</u> The importance of understanding each other and our communities. Understanding how the past is carried forward into the future. We are also ancestors for future generations to come.

Caring for Each Other: Fostering Compassion

How might our 'duty of care' and a growing collective consciousness change decision-making processes in ways that express more love and foster compassion for each other?

<u>Learning:</u> When you are in a minority or you have a different perspective from the majority, then you need courage not to be swept away by the impulse to 'conform' and be accepted. The courage to be different and to follow our conscience and inner feelings brings real transformation in our self, our communities and the world.

Caring for Our Planet: A new Way of Being

How might our 'duty of care' and a growing collective consciousness change decision-making processes in ways that express more love and foster compassion for the planet?

<u>Learning:</u> In caring for the Earth, against all the odds, we need courage, virtue and fearlessness. We have to keep our vision large, farsighted and forward thinking.

Governance, Communities and Peace

In strengthening our spiritual foundation, how might we transform governance in different sectors of society?

<u>Learning:</u> Each one has a unique journey and the more that journey is lived with honesty and truth, the greater is the impact of our life on the world.

Spirituality in Leadership

How might leaders nurture themselves and inspire others to sustain a spiritual foundation for a caring society?

<u>Learning:</u> In spiritual leadership and nurture, it is the interaction with ordinary people and the impact we have on each other that matters the most. The smaller picture creates the larger picture. The spirit is primary and everything else is secondary!

Spreading the seeds



We wish to support a community of people who are driven by a spirit of humanity, who share the will to contribute to positive changes in the world through change of consciousness, self-transformation and living by the highest values intrinsic to our humanity, such as love, compassion, respect, empathy and solidarity. We wish to spread seeds from the Forum and relate to our friends in an interactive way, so we are working to develop our presence on social media.

New Website

A new Website was introduced at the beginning of March. It was based on our ideas shared in EC meeting in Oxford in September 2016. Our friends at Webspeed in the UK did an excellent job even though there were thresholds on the way which delayed the work.



Social media expert

In July, Tom Chick, who participated in the 3rd Forum, was hired to take care of all our contributions on social media channels. Tom set up his own digital media consultancy 'Social Wired' in 2016. His background is in sport and his work for the international governing body of World Rugby for over seven years included global events such as the Rugby World Cup and the Rio Olympic Games. Whilst Tom acknowledges the power of sport and social media, he was always looking to use his experience and knowledge to help shine a light on organisations that were doing meaningful things in the world, and SoH is exactly that for him.











To spread the seeds of the Forum, we regularly post on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, and we upload all videos on YouTube. We have 1950 followers on Facebook compared with 1100 in September 2016. We want to increase our connections with humanity slowly but surely – it is not about collecting likes, but about reaching people with hope and aspiration.

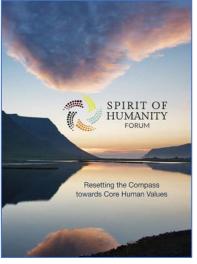
All our partners, who have Facebook accounts, have been made admins and are invited to:

- invite new followers among their friends,
- share anything they feel is suitable on SoH Facebook page,
- ask us to share anything in particular on SoH Facebook page.

Spreading awareness of SoH

We have completed a new introduction brochure and a new introduction video, which are both available on the Website.

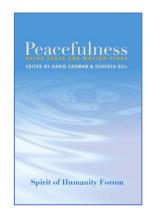
- Introduction brochure SEE HERE
- introduction video SEE HERE



SoH Press

We launched 'SoH Press' after the 3rd Forum. The first book of the SoH Press 'Peacefulness: Being Peace and Making Peace', edited by David Cadman and Scherto Gill, was published on Amazon on 3 November 2017.

"This book will be on my desk and not my bookshelf for quite some time," writes Mike Hardy CMG OBE in his foreword. As Professor of Intercultural Relations and Executive Director of the Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations at Coventry University, he praises this volume's unique approach, that is, "connecting peace and peacefulness to the noblest state of being human and, in so doing, seeking to overcome the simplistic divisions between the inner and outer peace, the positive and negative peace, personal, communal and political peace. Indeed, the most important contribution of the book rests on its insisting on a spiritually-



rooted and ethically-oriented peacefulness in our personal and communal relationships, as well as in global socio-economic-political structures."

Next steps and future plans for SoH Press

- Co-publishing with organisations around the world in different languages.
- Publication connected with the Forum in Argentina in 2018.

Publication connected with the theme of our next Forum in Reykjavik 2019.

Regional events

We wish to encourage our friends and previous Forum participants, to organise SoH Regional Forums in their respective regions. Welcome to contact us with ideas.

SoH Forum in London



On the initiative of our friends from the last Forum, Catherine Allinson (Future Earth) and Kate
Monkhouse (Caux, the Initiatives of Change Centre, Switzerland), SoH participants from the UK came together in London for a very successful one day SoH Regional Forum. It took place on 3
November and was hosted by the Initiatives of Change (IofC), UK. 25
UK-based participants from former SoH Forums participated.

Imad Karam (Executive Director, IfoC international) offered IfoC's wonderful location as a London

home for the UK Forum. Richard Dunne offered to host the next meeting at his Centre for Harmony in north London (Hertfordshire).



"From the seed planted in Iceland at this year's international Forum a wonderful stem has arisen, one which will need careful nurturing as we progress on this new UK journey. We do not yet know if it will be a glorious flower which draws people into its nectar-filled heart for just a year or so, or a mighty oak which withstands the ages to relate stories to generations hence, or something in between... this was a high quality discourse and a vigorous appetite for more."

Catherine Allison
Future Earth

The Spirit of Humanity Forum goes to Argentina

Alan Gegenschatz, Dr Juan Hitzig, Sara Caputo and Javier Casas Rua, who participated in previous SoH Forums in Iceland, want to replicate the Forum in Spanish with the specific needs of South America in mind. We welcome this initiative, indicating the strength and the potential for Forums in other places. This will support the emergent spiritual community and enlarge the circles of spiritually-inspired leaders in all fields of endeavour and cultural contexts. Here are their own words:

"In our last 'opening' session, at the 3rd Forum in Reykjavík, there was space to hear ideas and propose creative ways to expand the energy we have lived during those days. One of the proposals was to organise local Forums to spread the seeds of transformation more widely and share the Spirit of Humanity (SoH) experiences with people who cannot be with us in Iceland. We feel proud of taking the torch of SoH to our region. We committed ourselves to be faithful to the essentials of this idea. We want to invite spiritual leaders and change-makers from our region to reflect deeply on new approaches that can engender greater harmony between peoples, and between humanity and our planet. We are looking forward to focusing on the issues that matters in a Latin American perspective and being open to share other views in a global perspective."

The Forum will take place 24–27 October 2018 in Villa La Angostura, a small, picturesque village in the Andean Mountains, surrounded by lakes and ancient trees.



Partnership & Collaboration

The partners are the backbone of the Forum, having carried the main financial responsibility and its representatives being closely involved in the conversations and reflections developing the Forum.

Brahma Kumaris, Lotushus Iceland

www.lotushus.is / www.brahmakumaris.org

City of Reykjavík

www.reykjavík.is/en

Education 4 Peace Foundation

www.education4peace.org

The Fetzer Institute

www.fetzer.org

Guerrand-Hermès Foundation for Peace

www.ghfp.org

HÖFÐI Reykjavík's Peace Centre

www.fridarsetur.is/en

The Pure Land Foundation

www.purelandfoundation.com

Ambassador Ragnar Ängeby

Former Swedish Diplomat dealing with Security Development and Peace

Dr Miriam Subirana

Culture of Peace Foundation www.fund-culturadepaz.org