

MIND & LIFE
EUROPE

ACTIVITIES REPORT
2015

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES 2015

2015 marked the third year of Mind and Life Europe activities. It was a year of consolidation and planning, including the second successful European Summer Research Institute at the Fraueninsel, Chiemsee, Germany and planning for the 2016 *Power & Care* conference in Brussels in September, 2016. There were several additional important developments, setting the stage for the next phase of development for Mind and Life Europe.

European Summer Research Institute – 2nd session

The theme of this year's ESRI was "*Contemplative Practices, Science and Society*" and "*focussed upon what is actually happening as contemplative practices seriously enter the worlds of mainstream Science and Society: how are meditation practices affected by the prevailing culture and belief systems, and how do meditation teachers themselves adapt to the changing meaning of practices in society?*" as explained by Paul Grossman, Board member and member of the ESRI 2015 Planning Committee. An extraordinary faculty included: **Tania Singer, Matthieu Ricard, Andreas Roepstorff, Clifford Saron, Paul Grossman, Katherine Weare, Rebecca Crane, David Germano, Martijn van Beek, Joanna Cook, Francis Tiso and Antoine Lutz.** The event was attended by over 120 students and researchers from 31 countries, demonstrating the relevance and need for Mind and Life Europe's field-building and consolidating initiative.



Varela Grants Program

MLE has received generous funding from the Hershey Family Foundation for approximately 6 MLE Varela Awards. These awards will be announced in late December 2015. The awards program is being administered for MLE this year in conjunction with Mind and Life Institute. The Awards are intended for younger researchers starting out in the field of contemplative science, thereby seeding the European field of research and applications.

Friends of Mind and Life Association

The Association, located in Paris, France, was created in January, 2015. The Friends is a supporting organization for MLE, and also supports the work of our Communications Officer, Geraldine de Vries who is located there.

Publication



'Caring Economics – Conversations on Altruism and Compassion, between Scientists, Economists and the Dalai Lama' is the title of a publication edited by MLE Board members Tania Sanger and Matthieu Ricard and with a foreword by the Dalai Lama. This powerful book resulted from the Mind and Life Dialogue held in Zurich in 2010. The book is available in several languages on Amazon.

Film by Franz Reichle

A long-time friend of MLE, Franz Reichle, has started work on a feature length film tracing the history and development of Mind and Life from its inception. The documentary uses original footage including interviews with Francisco Varela, the Dalai Lama and a broad spectrum of MLI and MLE Board members and other members of the Mind and Life community. The film, parts of which were premiered at the ESRI in Chiemsee, will be a tremendous asset for Mind and Life and will surely attract the interest of a broad public. We look forward to completion of this important historical document in 2016, and are grateful for the dedication and care that Franz brings to this project.



New Managing Director



Sander Tideman was appointed as incoming Managing Director for 2016. This concludes a lengthy search process, and MLE is pleased that Sander has accepted the position. Sander's career has been devoted to the integration of contemplative practice and philosophy with practical initiatives. He is familiar with the Mind and Life community both in Europe and the United States. We look forward with enthusiasm to working with Sander Tideman to further the vision and work of Mind & Life Europe and its community of scientists, scholars, and contemplatives.

Board Event - Charles-Antoine Janssen

On September 24th, Board members Tania Singer and Matthieu Ricard gave presentations on their research to an audience of 120 guests at the home of Charles-Antoine Janssen and his family outside of Brussels. Tania described the research foundation for a new project – the *ReSource* Project – in development, and Matthieu gave a presentation on altruism based on research from his book by the same name. Both presentations were greatly appreciated by the guests, as a “preview” of the quality and depth of *Power & Care* - a Mind and Life Europe Dialogue to be held in Brussels in September, 2016.

The Board and staff

Board: Amy Cohen-Varela (President), Tania Singer (Vice President) Charles-Antoine Janssen (Treasurer), Matthieu Ricard (Secretary), Roshi Joan Halifax, Paul Grossman, Wolf Singer.



Staff: *Cornelius Pietzner (Interim Managing Director), Geraldine De Vries (Communications Officer), Madeline Ducret (Assistant).*

Board meetings

The MLE Board conducted several meetings during the course of the year, and a two-day retreat in Rolle, Switzerland in July 2015. The Board decided to pursue the development of thematic hubs in accordance with MLE's goals of field-building and dissemination.

These hubs include:

- Contemplative neuroscience, neurophenomenology
- Comparative phenomenology and enaction
- Education
- Caring Economy
- Contemplative programs in healthcare and medicine
- Applications of mindfulness (analysis and critique)

Board Meetings 2015:

Board Meeting - January 12th - teleconference

Annual General Meeting - February 20th - Paris

Board Meeting - February 20th - Paris

Board Retreat – July 10-12th - Rolle, CH

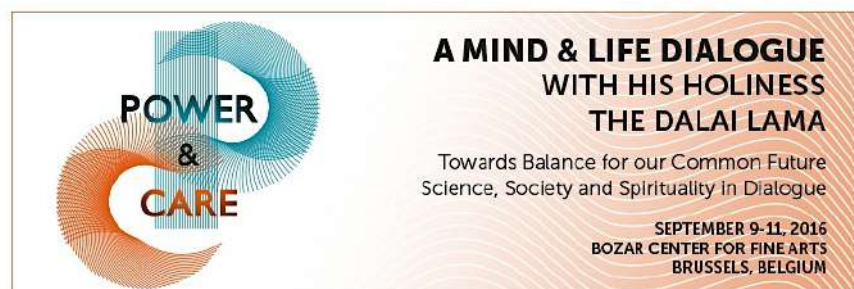
Board Meeting - September 3rd - Chiemsee, DE

Annual General Meeting - February 5th, 2016 - Paris

OUTLOOK 2016

Power and Care

In 2014, MLE embarked on the development of an ambitious theme, leading to a major event. *Power & Care* is a two and a half day Mind and Life Dialogue of leading experts with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and will be held from Friday, September 9th morning, to Sunday, September 11th noon, 2016, at the BOZAR Center for Fine Arts in Brussels, Belgium. Two thousand people are expected at this Dialogue.



While the notion of power can be seen as a neutral concept, neither harmful nor beneficial by definition, the western historical perspective links it to concepts such as domination, instrumentalization, or sovereignty. At the other end of the spectrum is the notion of *caring for*, an enabling force in the service of individual and social transformation. Care evokes concepts such as altruism, compassion, interdependence and responsibility and is customarily seen as incompatible with the notion of power. How can these forces be allied in order to engender projects and actions that promote the flourishing of living beings and our environment?

Power & Care includes three separate events - a Pre-Conference for speakers at the end of April, 2016, the main conference to take place at BOZAR Center for Fine Arts in September, 2016, and a Public Talk by the Dalai Lama on Sunday afternoon, September 11th, 2016. "*Individual Engagement and Global Responsibility*" is the title of the talk, to be held at Brussels Expo. Between eight and ten thousand people are expected at this public event.



The Power and Care team consists of: Tania Singer (Planning Committee), Matthieu Ricard (Planning Committee), Amy Cohen-Varela (Planning Committee), Charles-Antoine Janssen (Planning Committee), Cornelius Pietzner (Conference Director), Geraldine de Vries (Communications), Ilios Kotsou & Caroline Lesire (General Coordinators), Patrick Oliver (Conference Coordinator - Public Talk), and Frans Goetghebeur (Adviser).



European Summer Research Institute – 3rd session

The ESRI 2016 will take place again at the Fraueninsel, Chiemsee, Germany, from August 22nd to 28th, 2016.



Encecon

The European Neurophenomenology, Contemplative and Embodied Cognition Network will meet in June 2016 in France. The overall aim of the network is to support European scientists engaged in empirical and theoretical research on embodied cognition, contemplative neuroscience, and neuro-phenomenology. The network is intended to address concrete theoretical and methodological challenges currently hampering the empirical investigation of first-person experience, its relationship to brain and body and its potential for promoting well-being. This objective will be approached by gathering in a community of researchers interested in both the empirical investigation of the mind, brain, and body and the integration of direct experiential inquiry and rigorous first-person methodology with these third-person approaches.

Strasbourg - Fall 2016

MLE has been asked to co-sponsor a conference with the Dalai Lama at the University of Strasbourg organized by the Fédération du Bouddhisme Tibétain, and the University of Strasbourg. A number of Board members and Association members have been asked to speak at this event.

Activities

Throughout the coming year we will expand our network, facilitate new research, give young people access to the emerging field of contemplative science, and translate the findings and benefits into specific programs as well as make them accessible to others. We

also need to raise substantial funds as the projected and initiated activities will not occur without financial support.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank all of our donors and friends for their generous and steadfast support. Mind and Life Europe is grateful for the engagement of so many people, and we look forward to deepening and expanding our work in the year to come.

With our best wishes,



Amy Cohen Varela
Board Chair



Cornelius Pietzner
Managing Director

FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2015

*All figures CHF

ACTUALS TO BUDGET			
INCOME		ACTUAL	BUDGET
1) Donations			
	unrestricted	123'200	325,000
	restricted	177'511	130,000
2) Earned Income			
	ML ESRI	64'625	80,000
	Other	676	20,000
Total income		366'012	555,000
EXPENSES			
1) Research Related			
	Projects	11'403	20,000
	Operations		30,000
	Co-workers	2'000	40,000
	<i>subtotal</i>	<i>13'403</i>	<i>90,000</i>
2) Conferences, Events			
	ML ESRI	199'080	225,000
	Power and Care 2016	54'595	25,000
	Operations	25'000	30,000
	Co-workers	50'000	55,000
	<i>subtotal</i>	<i>328'675</i>	<i>335'000</i>
3) Organizational Development			
	Fundraising	1'500	15,000
	Project Development	4'656	10,000
	Operations/Com munications	132'755	15,000
	Co-workers	58'980	90,000
	<i>subtotal</i>	<i>197'890</i>	<i>130,000</i>
Total expenses		539'968	555,000
Excess of Expenses over Income		-173'956	

MIND AND LIFE EUROPE- BALANCE SHEET SUMMARY				
		2015		2014
		CHF		CHF
Current assets				
	Total Checking/Savings	1'052'040.70		1'271'501.50
	Total Receivables	6'716.23		9'805.45
Total Current assets		1'058'756.93		1'281'306.95
Total Fixed assets		2'600.00		4'350.00
Total Assets		1'061'356.93		1'285'656.95
Current liabilities				
Total Current liabilities		51'467.30		101'811.02
Equity				
Total Equity		1'009'889.63		1'183'845.93
Total Liabilities and Equity		1'061'356.93		1'285'656.95

ACTIVITIES DETAIL	ESRI	Power & Care	Others	Total
	CHF	CHF	CHF	CHF
Income				
Members contributions	0	0	300	300
Contributions	80'499	72'012	148'200	300'711
Ticket sale income	64'625	0	0	64'625
Other income	0	0	376	376
Total Income	145'124	72'012	148'876	366'012
Expenses				
Direct Event costs	-54'886	-49'262	0	-104'148
Personnel costs	-85'684	0	-8'980	-94'665
Office running costs	-58'511	-5'333	-265'298	-329'141
Total Expenses	-199'080	-54'595	-274'278	-527'953
Financial result	0	0	-10'265	-10'265
Depreciation and amortisation	0	0	-1'750	-1'750
Income over Expense	-53'956	17'418	-137'418	-173'956