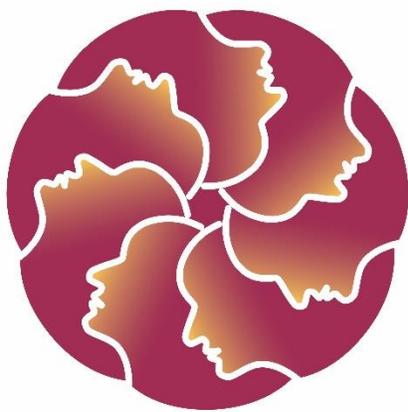


**Activity report**  
**Mind & Life Europe**  
**2017**



**MIND & LIFE**  
EUROPE

# Introduction

In the year 2017 we began to implement the new vision of Mind & Life Europe as convener, community builder and catalyst in the field of contemplative science. After the successful conference on Power & Care in Brussels in 2016, the year 2017 focused on further developing our 'own' European version of the Varela Award programme, as well as launching a number of communities of scientists and practitioners in specialised fundamental and applied research fields.

We also successfully hosted our fourth European Summer Research Institute (ESRI), again at the beautiful island in Chiemsee in Germany.

We are very grateful to the many people who supported the growing network of people who made these events possible.

With warm regards,

Sander Tideman, Co-Director

# European Varela Awards



Mind & Life Europe has created its own European version of the Varela Awards which started more than a decade ago in the US. After a thorough selection process, we awarded nine young scientists with European Varela Awards. The grant funding associated with the Award gave them the chance to initiate or continue rigorous research at the crossroads of empirical and human science and contemplative thought and practice.

The awards are a key vehicle for increasing the number of exemplary scientists, scholars and clinicians involved in contemplative sciences.

## European Summer Research Institute



In 2017, 120 scientists and practitioners gathered at the fourth edition of the European Summer Research Institute from 26 July to 2 August in Chiemsee Germany. Last year's theme focussed on 'Exploring Experience', in both theory and embodied practice through meditation, yoga and interpersonal reflection.

The ESRI is dedicated to cultivating a new generation of scientists and scholars in the contemplative sciences. It is a summer school where scientists, educators, professionals and researchers working in the field of contemplative science can assemble as a community to share ideas, experiences, and knowledge from their work.

# Contemplative Phenomenology



In 2017, the Initiative for Contemplative Phenomenology held its first meeting in Nemours, France. A group of 30 philosophers, psychologists, neuro-cognitive scientists and medical doctors gathered to explore and describe the lived experience of contemplative states.

Through a strong team of the best specialists in Europe and beyond, this community is capable of teaching each of the various aspects of first-person inquiry, especially those that are relevant for contemplative disciplines.

# Contemplative Education



At the ESRI 2017 a group of education experts convened to start the MLE “Community on Contemplative Education”, with a view to build a platform for innovators inspired by contemplative science in education. Professor Katherine Weare has agreed to serve as Principal Investigator and will lead a mapping study on contemplative education in Europe.

The first step is a survey (sent to 50 experts in the field), followed by the publication of a white paper and the hosting of an expert meeting in 2018.

# Contemplative Management



Building on the Mind & Life Europe book ‘Caring Economics’, several events were held in 2017 in the emerging field of contemplative practice in business. This included a seminar at the World Economic Forum in Davos with Matthieu Ricard, Arianne Huffington and Bill George.

We also took part in the conference on Contemplative Management at Corvinus University in Budapest in May 2017. We established a partnership with film producer Julian Wildgruber of the highly acclaimed film ‘From Business to Being’. We supported the premiere of this film in Zurich (July) and Amsterdam (September).

## Thought for Food



In 2017 we convened a group ‘Thought for Food’ that will study the role of the mind in food and nutrition. We will convene experts in the food, health and well-being sectors in dialogue with experts in the mind and behavioral sciences and contemplative practice.

The aim is to develop new insights that can lead to science-based policies and practices for fostering sustainable health and wellbeing for people and the environment.

# Outreach events



Mind & Life Europe organised a special screening of Mind & Life - Early Dialogues and the presentation of Francisco Varela's anthology, 'Le Cercle créateur', in Paris at the Chilean Embassy in Paris on 12 December.

We also held an evening dialogue with Matthieu Ricard in Paris, where he described his own personal journey at the intersection between science and Buddhism, and the promise that this holds for humanity.

We participated in meetings on 'Mindfulness in Politics', organised by the UK Mindfulness All-Party Parliamentary Group, at the Houses of Parliament in London. With keynote speaker Jon Kabat-Zinn, the meetings assembled some 50 people from Europe who work on mindfulness in policy making.

## Mind & Life Europe Association meeting



At the annual General Assembly Meeting approximately 25 Association members, hailing from across Europe, convened in Paris on 12 February. We discussed the MLE Vision 2020, which is focused on building the community of contemplative researchers as our core activity, along with translating insights from our research for specialized fields such as education and health care. In this way, the developing field of contemplative studies can contribute to finding solutions to the pressing societal challenges in these areas.

# Gatherings with the Dalai Lama



Mind & Life Europe had several encounters with H.H. the Dalai Lama. Sander Tideman and Katherine Weare participated in a seminar on education in Frankfurt, where Wolf Singer engaged with the Dalai Lama in a public dialogue.

Michel Bitbol and Matthieu Ricard presented at a conference with the Dalai Lama at the University of Pisa that conferred an honorary degree to the Dalai Lama in psychology and psychotherapy. Our Board Chairperson Amy Cohen-Varela presented the Laudation.

We also met with the Dalai Lama in Latvia and discussed a joint event on contemplative science in the Baltic States and Eastern Europe.

## Preview 2018

In 2018, Mind & Life Europe continues to dedicate itself to finding new solutions for the challenges we face today.

- Launch of the **Power & Care** book. This book is based on the conference we held in 2016 in Brussels with H.H. the Dalai Lama and is edited by Tania Singer, Matthieu Ricard and Kate Karius.
- A meeting of the **European Neurophenomenology, Contemplative and Embodied Cognition Network** (ENCECON) will be held. The inaugural meeting took place in 2016.
- The **European Summer Research Institute**, Germany, will be held from 20-26 August. The theme 'Kinship, Conflict and Compassion' allows us to explore the new insights at the crossroads between various social sciences and contemplative approaches. It also holds special relevance for the challenges in today's society.
- We will continue to explore the possibilities to host new **dialogues** with H.H. the Dalai Lama during his visits to Europe.

# Calendar 2018

General Assembly Meeting	24 February	Brussels, Belgium
Summer Research Institute (USA)	2-9 June	New York, USA
Community of Contemplative Education meeting	15-17 June	The Netherlands
European Summer Research Institute	20-26 August	Chiemsee, Germany
International Symposium for Contemplative Studies (ISCS)	8-11 November	Arizona, USA

## Our people

All our activities would not have been made possible without the dedication of our Mind & Life Europe team.

Sander Tideman, Co-Director

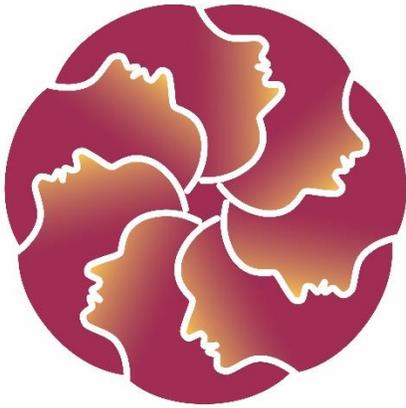
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