

## UPF Melbourne, Australia Holds Second Peacebuilding Seminar of 2023

Greg Stone  
May 6, 2023



Melbourne, Australia - The second seminar of UPF-Australia's Way 2 Happiness and Peacebuilding Seminar Series focused on "Understanding Mind and Body Relation" and was held in Melbourne and online on May 6, 2023.

The interactive series focuses on three pillars of finding meaning and connection by managing oneself, and mind and body unity; managing our relationships; and managing our relationship with our natural environment well. In essence, it provides a holistic life education approach to foster good people, good education and good global citizens, promoting common benefit and sustainable development.

Twenty-five participants attended in-person, while four joined online from Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide.



Each of the three 15 minute presentations was followed by 20 minutes of group discussion and Q and A with the speaker. RMIT University lecturer in finance, Dr. Jennifer Huang, was the emcee.

The first speaker, Mr. Shashi Kochar, OAM, founder of nonprofit Friends of the Children Foundation, which cares for the environment and supports children's hospitals and schools, gave a presentation titled, "Personal Responsibility and Happiness." Happiness starts when we realize that life does not owe us happiness, he said. It cannot be pursued and ensues from how we live our lives and take responsibility.

The second speaker was UPF-Australia vice president, Dr. John Bellavance, who also serves as the coordinator of the International Association of Academicians for Peace (IAPP)-Oceania. He spoke on two topics, the first was "The Story of Mind (Reasoning and Consciousness) and Brain (Biology)." He posed the questions: Who are we? How can we understand consciousness? Is the cosmos without purpose? Do I just follow what my body wants? Am I an outcome of my body and mind (consciousness)?

With respect to human development, two parallel currents occur: one focuses on physical satisfaction and

science, while the other focuses on the mind by seeking to elevate human consciousness through pursuing moral ideals and practices transcendent of the human body. It is critical to understand these two currents when pursuing human development and self-actualization, Dr. Bellavance highlighted.



The second topic was on "Conflict Between Mind and Body - Peace Begins with Me." Since wars begin in the mind, the defenses of peace must be constructed in the mind. Although the mind and body work together, there are times when they come into conflict. Understanding the conflict between the mind and body and resolving this is vital for our personal development.

Afterwards, a guided meditation was led by Ven. Bhikkhuni Bodhicitta, a Sri Lankan Theravada Buddhist nun based in Melbourne and Sri Lanka who is also the spiritual director of the International Centre for Inner Peace and Happiness Inc.



The third and final speaker, Mrs. Anne Bellavance, president of Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP) Australia and vice president of WFWP International, Asia Pacific 2 (Oceania and Southeast Asia), talked about "Love; Managing Mind and Body Well." She pointed out that the first and most important method for bringing our mind and body into unity is by becoming a person of love - loving another. Emotions such as empathy, gratitude, remorse and love are felt in relation to others, which results in the growth of our hearts and care for others.

One new Ambassador for Peace was appointed: Mrs. Iman Riman, an award-winning journalist and producer at SBS radio, who was recognized for her contributions to community relations through her involvement with many community networks and organizations promoting harmony and collaboration, which has proved her belief in and respect for diversity and inclusion and peacebuilding. She has worked as a support and advocacy worker for victims and survivors of

domestic violence as well as for migrant youth. Mrs. Riman was instrumental in establishing the Victorian Arabic Social Services and the Victorian Lebanese Community Council and served as a board member of such community organizations as the Australian Muslim Centre for Human Rights and the Al Kamal Arabic School. She has volunteered with the Children First Foundation looking after sick children and with the Australian Multicultural Community Services looking after the elderly.

Reflecting on the seminar, one participant said: "Very well done. [It] gave food for the soul and was a profound experience."

The partners of the event were affiliated organizations WFWP and the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU).

To view a recording of the seminar, [click here](#).