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Motherhood?

NEELAM  
SHIVHARE



## Peace Revolution





## DAAJI

Daaji is the Heartfulness Guide. He is an innovator and researcher, equally at home in the fields of spirituality, science, and the evolution of consciousness. He has taken our understanding of human potential to a new level.



## J. FREDERICK ARMENT

Frederick is an author, lecturer, and founder and chair of International Cities of Peace. He mentors peace leadership in over 400 member cities. His books include *The Elements of Peace: How Nonviolence Works*, *The Economics of Peace: Freedom, the Golden Rule, and Broadening Prosperity*, and *The Physics of Spirit: Four Energetic Propositions to Enliven the Human Condition*.



## ICHAK ADIZES

Dr. Adizes is a leading management expert. He has received 21 honorary doctorates and is the author of 27 books that have been translated into 36 languages. He is recognized as one of the top 30 thought leaders of America.



## VICTOR KANNAN

Victor is a practitioner of Heartfulness Meditation, and has been a trainer for more than 30 years. As a career CFO he combines the benefits of meditation in everyday management and responsibilities. He lives with his wife in Atlanta and has a daughter.



## FABIO KOHLER

Fabio is an artist and musician. He grew up in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, graduating in stage design from UNIRIO. Currently living in Freiburg, Germany, he teaches drawing and percussion in learning institutions and works as a freelance artist, receiving orders from around the world.



## CHRISTINE PRISLAND

Christine began her spiritual journey at the age of 24 with an overland trip to India, where she met her teacher in 1972. She has been a Heartfulness practitioner and trainer ever since. She has been an editor for 35 years, and also a university administrator at Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada.



# International Cities of Peace

**J. FREDERICK ARMENT** is in conversation with **CHRISTINE JONES** about his organization, International Cities of Peace, as well as other ways he promotes peace in the world. The foundation of it all is the importance of relationship, community, and love. This is the first of a series of conversations.

**Q:** Fred, you are the founding director of the organization, International Cities of Peace, which was established fifteen years ago. You are stewarding its growth with the goal of 1,000 cities by 2030. Currently there are 414. You're one of the co-founders of the Dayton International Peace Museum, and you see yourself as a facilitator of peace. You have dedicated your life to peace efforts.

The idea of facilitator is very important to me. I used to be called a director, and I dropped that because everything is collaboration, just as the trainers at Heartfulness Centers

are facilitators, and there is a relationship based on the facilitating of peace. Rather than telling people how to find peace, directing them, or coordinating them, I consider myself a lead facilitator. I run a team called ICP Central, which we're keeping very small, because the cities of peace themselves are what should be given accolades. They are the people. They are the leaders. They are the teams that work in their community, not because of money (although money is always useful) but because of love of community and love of place. We facilitate that love, and that is what creates cities of peace.

**Q:** What inspired your inclination toward peace initiatives? Was there an event that happened when you were young that moved you in this direction?

Maybe playing basketball at 11 years old, and wondering what the heck was going on, and how an 11-year-old could contribute to the world. I became a writer, not because I knew a lot but because I had so many questions. Questioning is what drove me to the idea that we need peace in this world.

We opened the Dayton International Peace Museum in 2005. I shook everyone's hand as

they arrived, and whoever came through that door had their unique way of creating peace. We documented all the ways people work for peace, and I realized that everyone is working for peace. That was a big epiphany. It's like the idea that even someone in prison for murder loves his mother. The heart is why everyone works for peace. We documented statecraft, mediation, etc., and came up with 30 different ways to work for peace.

Then I wrote a book called *The Elements of Peace*, describing those 30 ways. It depends on who you are, your background, your values, but it doesn't depend on someone telling you to work for peace. It's what you do, whether you're a nurse, a teacher, a plumber, somebody who works with their hands, their mind, or their spirit; everyone works for peace. That epiphany set me in a new direction in the early 2000s.

**Q:** I admire your tremendous capacity for acceptance of all the different ways communities and individuals build peace. Some come with a political view; others work in villages in Africa; in Heartfulness, we believe inner peace leads to world peace. Do you have a personal practice that keeps you grounded and centered within all these different ways people define peace for the world?

Yes. When you look around the world you see that honesty is undervalued. My father was honest, and his honesty made me take a look at myself and helped me be in communion with everybody else. If you're honest, you realize we're all one, and the person who is holding a gun is the same as you. Working for peace is what our essence is about. There are 8 billion people on the planet, 8 billion ways to work for peace, and we need to respect that.

**Q:** That helps me understand the statement that peace is not a hope, it's a right.

Yes, we have a right to harmony in our lives; we start with the heart, and we work out from there. There are physical reasons, spiritual reasons, emotional reasons, and intellectual reasons, but it starts with the heart, and that's why Heartfulness Centers are very important for humanity. The heart is the essence.

**Q:** When I read your book, *The Physics of Spirit*, I realized the spiritual influence in what you do. It felt like a very advanced version of Heartfulness and I was so moved by it.

Thank you. *The Physics of Spirit* is part of the questioning I had. The old idea of science and physics is that there's a dichotomy, a tension in our little universe, between

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matter and spirit. Yet, every law of physics tells us it's not true—that dichotomy doesn't exist.

So, what is it about the material world and the spiritual world that is intertwined? I'm not a physicist, but physics helped me to understand that matter and spirit, matter and light are interchangeable. As human beings, we have a heart-soul that brings in light and turns it into material things and relationships. So, I consider the soul is a vessel for the spirit, and the soul is an evolved entity within us that brings in light from other people, from the sun, from what we do every day. It brings love in and it moves love out. It's a vessel that provides the

mechanism within us to feel love and to give love.

**Q:** We do an intention for peace every night at 9 p.m. We share it with people who join virtually. That intention is: "Our hearts and the hearts of all are filled with lightness and love. May everyone be radiant with joy. And may the entire earth be engulfed with peace."

When I read your book, it was fascinating to me that you relate light and love with the soul, because that is really the foundation.

In Heartfulness meditation, the first thing we teach people to do is to bring their attention

to their heart and feel the presence of divine light, which is the source attracting them from within. In your book you wrote, "Spirit is also not matter. In theological terms, spirit is defined as incorporeal, immaterial, or ethereal. Spirit is often described in the context of light. For instance, in the Gospel of John in the Bible, God is light. In Hinduism, Diwali is the festival of light. In Islam, *Ayah-an-Nur* means God is the light of the heavens and earth."

This is the part that really moved me: "Spirit is consonant with at least two characteristics of light. It has no mass that can be measured, and in theological thought, it is pervasive



throughout the universe as a massless and omnipresent field of potential. Spirit is a form of energy, though mysterious and little understood. As with all mysteries, once revealed, either in life or death, spiritual energy will necessarily be incorporated within the expanding laws of physics." After reading your book, my question is: Do you think the solution to world peace is scientific or spiritual?

Since I believe that matter and light are in essence the same, I have to say that all roads lead to peace. We may go to church, the synagogue, or a sports arena; we may be a nurse in a hospital; whatever, it is our personal way. What's inside us reciprocates with

whatever we're doing and creates the relationship with the universe that allows us to work for peace every single day.

The reason most people don't know I have a spiritual nature is because I'm busy doing my life's work, which is creating the organization so that people can be empowered to arrive at a peaceful condition within themselves and their communities.

Q: I didn't know that side of you until I read, *The Physics of Spirit*, which is only 11 pages, yet you pack so much in there.

I'm part of the "Intention for Peace" team. During the pandemic, we created a virtual

platform to be connected. It remained after the pandemic Monday through Friday. Then we partnered with the Dayton International Museum of Peace in a 64-day intention they sponsored. It was an initiative titled, "A Season of Non-violence." Our combined efforts spanned from January 30 through April 4, 2024, coinciding with the memorial anniversaries of the assassinations of Mahatma Gandhi and the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. So many more people joined us in the intention for peace during that time, and after that we have continued it every night. The physics of the spirit seems to have a plan that's much bigger than you, me, cities of peace,





Heartfulness, or the Dayton Museum of Peace. That was a turning point for me. I felt a shift inside, and I could now truly relax.

That's absolutely true. And I think that goes back to your previous question: how do I keep calm within the storm. I work in war-torn areas, and I see things that are unspeakable. It goes back to the intention of the museum, the intention of my books, the intention of the heart. You know, with International Cities of Peace, we start out with a letter of intent. It's from intention that everything comes forth. That's why we're

going to stay small centrally and expand to 1,000 cities or more in the coming years. We're just allowing people to do what they are already intending to do. We'll help out here and there, but essentially it's these teams, these communities.

Our mission is world peace. I'm not doing this to fill my day. I'm doing this for world peace. So every day I acknowledge my intention. I believe in this, and think we'll be able to get there if we can create the infrastructure that allows our intentions to start in community, build to the region,

build to the nation, then build to the world.

We have to have an infrastructure, the material aspect, and that's why cities of peace are for people, whether it's Cleveland, Beavercreek, or our 413<sup>th</sup> city, Chiwere, Malawi. It's amazing what they've come up with as the vision, mission, and goals for their community; we just put it out there for them to create the city of peace ideal. Every single day I open my email and there are stories that inspire, and stories that challenge us.

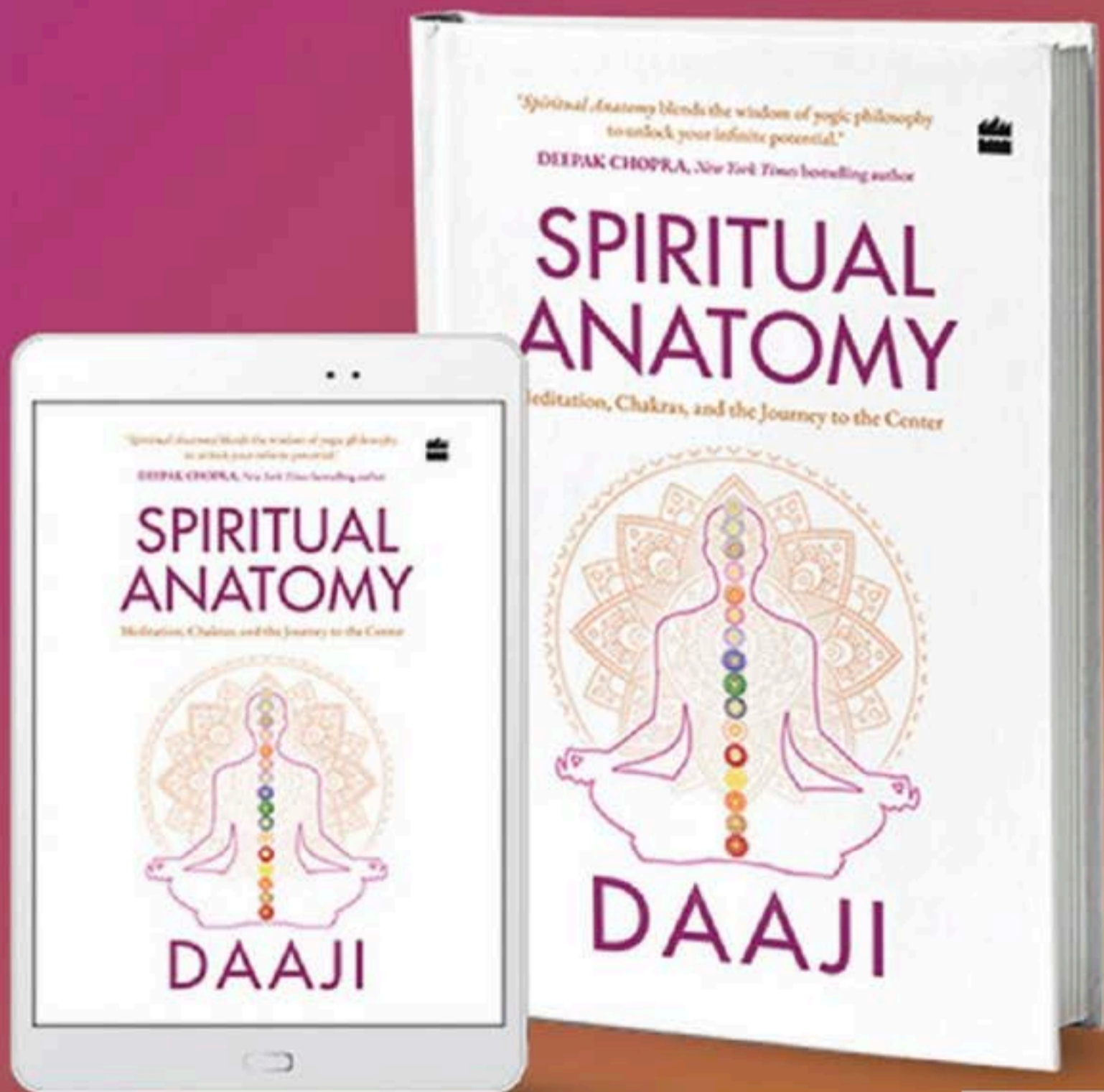
The idea is to create a tipping point for global peace; we just need an infrastructure to go there. The international cities of peace ideal is thousands of years old—we didn't create it. All we do is allow people to remember in their DNA this ideal that has been with us since the first village was created. The idea was to create a city of peace right then, and we've forgotten that. It hasn't been flourishing because we get lost in the chaos. If we settle down and remain calm, and realize that everything's going to be all right because we're in a universe of love, then we can work very carefully and methodically for peace.

*To be continued...*

For more information visit [www.internationalcitiesofpeace.org](http://www.internationalcitiesofpeace.org) and [www.fredarment.com](http://www.fredarment.com).

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