

# **TED<sup>X</sup>**Teen

x = independently organized TED event

So what? Says who? Who cares?

This book belongs to:

"Together we can gently remind the world – the leaders and the children – that peace is possible, because peace is a choice."

- Mattie J.T. Stepanek

So what? Says who? Who cares?



# Where Is TEDxTeen Taking Place?



### In the heart of SoHo NYC at the Scholastic Auditorium.

The Scholastic Auditorium provides a stimulating, one-of-a-kind environment for both children and adults that caters to a broad range of programming needs. The 4,000 square foot space was designed for multimedia events, including live productions and performances, live global webcasts, press conferences, product launches, screenings, and so much more.

# Take a minute to gain some global perspective.

We are a population of **6,807,385,075** (that's billions) – We are growing by **222,000** each day – We are a world of **6912** living languages – In **195** countries – On one planet (that seems to be getting smaller and smaller) – And that's the big issue.

Our coordinates don't matter – We live in an age where technology makes us all virtual neighbors, accessible at the click of a button – Isn't it time we get to know one another?

We are more alike than we are unalike.

We eat.

We breathe.

We sleep.

We need water to live.

We are friends, neighbors, children, parents, artists, teachers and leaders – We are global citizens – We Are Fam-i-ly (you know the song).

We face a few global problems that seem overwhelming – poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, natural and man-made disasters – How do we solve them?

We work together across borders, oceans and boundaries of ALL kinds – share our knowledge and collaborate on a global scale – In fact, it is the only solution – and our youth have the answers.

The We Are Family Foundation is honored to host the first TEDxTeen – where the Ideas Worth Spreading are from the world's teens. Welcome!



x = independently organized TED event

# CONFERENCE GUIDE

# 1. LEND US YOUR BRAIN

You are about to be hit by a blizzard of incoming ideas. Your mind will be zapped, pinged, prodded, and teased. But to benefit from TED's brand of brain therapy, you need to shut down the competition. Forget about work and school for a few hours. Forget about your email. Switch off your phone. Experience what is happening on stage, on screen and around you.

### 2. SEE EVERY TALK

The best moments seem to happen when you least expect them. TEDxTeen is not about what you already know. It is about how what you know connects to everything else.

### 3. TALK TO THE SPEAKERS

The conference time is limited, so we don't have time for long speaker introductions. We have included each speaker's bio in this program and relevant links to their work and additional information so you can take it all in after the conference. Attendees at TEDxTeen have the advantage – you can strike up a live conversation with them during the breaks. And we encourage you to do so! As you listen to their talks, write down questions, comments and ideas you want to talk about or ask them.

### 4. BREAKS ARE IMPORTANT

Your TEDxTeen experience is not limited to the auditorium. The TED brand is about "Ideas Worth Spreading." To get the most out of the conference, soak up the information during the talks and then use the breaks to discuss the information with fellow attendees, and let the conversation continue to push you to explore the ideas. Eat your food fast, use the bathroom quickly and keep your brain stimulated between sessions.

### 5. THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES

TEDxTeen is a one day conference. But today is not a finale - it is the beginning. The talks you saw today will live online following the conference at tedxteen.com and we encourage you to blog them, tweet them, share them, chat them and push them out around the globe. TEDxTeen is not just a conference, it is a community. Being here today you have first hand access and knowledge to amazing information and stories coming in from around the globe about teens who are doing extraordinary things, who have extraordinary ideas, who need your help to keep their conversations alive and who look to you for your ideas and contributions. Join in the community, contribute to the conversation and come together to tell the story of TEDxTeen to the world.

### 6. TEDxTEEN TECH PROTOCOL

The Scholastic Auditorium is WiFi enabled, and you will receive the network password at the conference. You are welcome to use your laptop during breaks in the open areas and we encourage you to tweet and share the information from the conference. However, we ask that attendees refrain from laptop use during the sessions. You need to focus, and keyboards are distracting. Use this program to write notes. Turn your cell phones, Blackberry's and iPhones off or to silent. Do not check them during sessions. If you must do so, please wait until the breaks. Video is prohibited during the sessions though feel free to record conversations during the breaks. Photography is permitted during the sessions and breaks, but please no flash photography, and keep the clicking noises during sessions to a minimum. Following the conference we hope you will share your photos with our online community.

# 7. RESTROOMS

There are restrooms located in the lobby outside the auditorium as well as on the 2nd floor, outside the Resource Center, behind coat check.

Top to Bottom: Scenes from previous TEDx events; TEDxParis and TEDxAtlanta.







# Schedule Of Events

**11:30am** (Lobby)

**TEDxTeen guests arrive** 

11:30am-12:30pm

(Resource Center)

and prepare!

The Conversation begins Meet, talk, think, share, eat Session

**12:30pm—1:40pm** (Auditorium)

**Chris Anderson:** What is TED/TEDx?

**Simon Cohen** Playstation, Pizza and a Living Buddha

Mousa Mosawy To Walk and Talk

**IMPACT** performs Leaders of Today

**Kimmie Weeks** Chalk & Gun Powder

P-Star Join Literacy

**Mousa Mosawy** performs Paradise Lost

1:40pm—2:30pm (Resource Center)

**BREAK:** Conversation, information and food

Session 2

**2:30pm—3:45pm** (Auditorium)

**Emmanuel Jal** The Music of a War Child

Jeni Stepanek, Ph.D. A New Hope for Peace: It's Not a Fairytale

**Dylan Mahalingam** explores The Ripple Effect

**Khadim Diop** performs Frankenstein

**Jennifer Corriero** Leadership: The Next Generation

**3:45pm-4:30pm** (Resource Center)

**BREAK:** Conversation, information and food

Session 3

**4:30pm**—**5:40pm** (Auditorium)

**P-Star** performs
Rapping into Literacy

**Sejal Hathi** Empowering Girl Changemakers

**Ory Okolloh** on Becoming an Activist

**IMPACT** performs Magic

Benjamin Quinto Wired for Change

In closing with

Simon Cohen Pizza and Harmony

5:40pm-6:30pm

Conversation and departures

The conversation continues online at **TEDxTeen.com**.

"Life's most persistent and urgent question is: What are you doing for others?"

- Martin Luther King, Jr.



**SimonCohen** 

**MousaMosawy** 

**IMPACT** 

**KimmieWeeks** 

P-Star



# **SimonCohen**

**Find more about me here:** Simon Cohen is a media ethics mayerick. Founder globaltolerance.com and Managing Director of global tolerance, Simon globaltoleranceconnect.com has worked directly with HH Dalai Lama, HRH The @globaltolerance Prince of Wales, Desmond Tutu, Gandhi's grandson, Karen Armstrong and even Wallace & Gromit!

> Simon is an international speaker and trainer on communications and ethics, having spoken and run workshops at the World Economic Forum, Parliament of the World's Religions, TEDx, Universal Forum of Cultures and several other international events. A staunch advocate for media ethics and a freelance journalist, Simon is a regular commentator in the international media, and has written for Newsweek, The Washington Post, The Times, The Guardian, and the BBC.

Simon has been recognized numerous times by Mediaweek and PRWeek as one of the top young media and PR professionals in the UK. He has received multiple awards from UnLtd and the Millennium Awards Trust as a leading social entrepreneur. In 2009, Simon was included in PRWeek's Powerbook of the most influential people in the PR industry. He is happiest on the dance floor or when he is playing with his six-yearold nephew Joshua.



# MousaMosawy Age 18

Mousa developed "First Aid Link," a movement that sent first aid kits with instructions and information on ways to avoid infection to families living in Iraqi conflict areas. Now, in addition to being a volunteer for the Iraqi Health Aid Organization, he has established a new project called, "The School of Light." The goal of this campaign is to equip the local school for the visually impaired with the tools that they need. Having already shipped supplies for upwards of 70 pupils, Mousa is on course to ensure that the institution is fully equipped and functional by June. "This one is special for me. It is extremely close to my heart as I am disabled myself." He is also working on a project titled "Iraq Youth Leadership Network" (IYLN), which focuses on gathering leaders to conduct workshops about activism and its importance in Iraq. Furthermore, the "Network" aids its constituents in setting up like-minded ventures within their communities.



# **IMPACT**

Find more about us here:

impactreptheatre.org

Disappearing Acts, Hughes Dreams Harlem and August Rush (Oscar nomination, best song)

People Magazine's Next Great Artist Showcase, Major League Soccer's Tribute to Pele, the Apollo, Lincoln Center, Great Mall (Washington, DC) and International Arts Festival, Bulgaria

Good Morning America and Nightline

IMPACT's mission is to use performing arts and the dynamics of leadership training to develop and empower youth. IMPACT believes that theater Film credits: arts and education play a pivotal role in providing opportunities and transitions for the leaders of tomorrow. IMPACT is rooted in creative selfexpression and anchored by a commitment to Safe Space, Outstanding Effort and Service to the Live performances include: Community. (S.O.S.) It offers arts and leadership workshops, performance opportunities and community service to promote positive development of youth by providing a learning environment that encourages, nurtures and challenges its students. All of IMPACT's original music, choreography, dramatic writing and video projects are created by members and staff. Over 300 people have **Television appearances:** taken classes since its inception, 60 of whom have graduated college or are currently enrolled.



# Find more about me here:

kimmieweeks.com youthactioninternational.org facebook.com/KimmieWeeks @kimmieweeks

Executive Director, Youth Action International; DoSomething (Board of Directors); Global Agenda Council, World Economic Forum

BA Amherst College; MA University of Pennsylvania

# Awards:

Golden Brick (2007); Knight Grand Commander, Humane Order of African Redemption (2007)

### Featured in:

Peace in Our Lifetime (with Nelson Mandela, Gandhi, and Martin Luther King, Jr.)

# **KimmieWeeks**

Since coming face to face with civil war, human suffering and death in his former home country of Liberia at age 9, Kimmie Weeks has formed partnerships and led organizations that have provided education to thousands of students in West Africa, lobbied the disarmament of over **Affiliations:** 20,000 child soldiers and provided health care and recreation supplies to children since the age of 14. In 1998, Kimmie was granted political asylum by the USA after he escaped there fleeing multiple assassination attempts on his life by former Liberian President Charles Taylor. His **Education:** organization, Youth Action International, supports the needs of families living in post war countries.



# Find more about me here:

pbskidsgo.org/electriccompany pbs.org/independentlens/p-starrising

### Film credits:

P-Star Rising, Sita

# **Television credits:**

The Electric Company, Hijinks, P-Star and Angela, The Adventures of Super Jane, Sabado Gigante, Primer Impacto, One Nation,Latin Grammy Awards

# Theatre credits:

Take the Train to Maine

# Music:

Reggaeton Niños Vol. 1, Biggie Bounce, Welcome to My Show

# Beauty pageant:

Little Miss Harlem Black and Latino (2004), Miss All American State Finals, Junior Miss International

# P-Star Age 15

Priscilla Star Diaz (P-Star), recipient of the Latina of Distinction and Hip Hop Pioneers for the Future of Hip Hop awards, is one of the stars of the hit series The Electric Company on PBS Kids Go in which she sings and acts alongside celebrities like Ne-Yo, Tiki Barber and Dwight Howard. She is also the focus of the award-winning documentary P-Star Rising, which chronicles her life as a young rapper with her sister and father living in Harlem after he gained custody and moved them from a foster home. Diaz discovered that she could "spit fire" at a young age and before long, she was battling everyone, everywhere, and in 2005, she won the Citywide Hip Hop Competition as the youngest female entrant. In addition to being the first female in beauty pageant history to perform hip-hop on stage and win, Diaz models for various top clothing brands.

	P-Star   <b>19</b>

# "We're the ones we've been waiting for."

- Maya Angelou





JeniStepanek, Ph.D.

**DylanMahalingam** 

**KhadimDiop** 

**JenniferCorriero** 



# Find more about me here: emmanueljal.com @emmanueljal

# EmmanuelJal (From TEDGlobal 2009)

Hip-hop star Emmanuel Jal first exploded into dance halls with Gua in 2005. His music has energized music lovers of all ethnicities and nations. But Jal's life story is far darker. Swept up into the Sudanese rebel army at age seven, he finally escaped with 400 fellow soldiers,16 of whom survived, the rest succumbing to starvation, ambush and animal attacks. Rather than resort to cannibalism, Jal ate snails and vultures until he arrived at a refugee camp, where he was adopted by aid worker Emma McCune and later sent to England.

Jal found an outlet for his turbulent life story in music. His lyrics tell moving and disturbing stories, but wrap them into hope and love. He is active in charity work across Africa, fighting against poverty and child warfare. War Child, his biography, was released in early 2009 along with a documentary film.



# JeniStepanek, Ph.D.

Find more about me here:
mattieonline.com
@jenistepanek

# Facebook fanpage

Mattie Stepanek Fan Page Mattie Stepanek Hero of Peace

# Published book titles by Jeni Stepanek

Messenger: The Legacy of Mattie J.T. Stepanek and Heartsongs

# Published book titles by Mattie J.T. Stepanek

Just Peace: A Message of Hope Reflections of a Peacemaker Heartsongs

Journey Through Heartsongs Hope Through Heartsongs Celebrate Through Heartsongs Loving Through Heartsongs

Jeni Stepanek, an award winning writer, is a noted advocate for children's, patients' and families' needs and rights in health and education and author of the new book Messenger: The Legacy of Mattie J.T. Stepanek and Heartsongs. She has her BA in Psychology and Journalism and her Ph.D. and M.Ed. in Early Childhood Special Education from the University of Maryland. Jeni's message about disability, hospice, family support, parenting, writing, motivation and spirituality has been carried by all media outlets. Like her son, the late bestselling poet Mattie Stepanek, Jeni is forced to battle a rare neuromuscular disease. A noted guest on Good Morning America, Oprah, Larry King, and The MDA Labor Day Telethon, Mattie created poetry from age 3 until he passed away in 2004 at age 13. The Stepaneks have a special relationship with the Muscular Dystrophy Association; Mattie served 3 years as their National Goodwill Ambassador and Jeni currently serves as a National Vice President. She also serves as the Executive Director for the Mattie J.T. Stepanek Foundation and Governor for the We Are Family Foundation. She lives in Rockville, MD near the Mattie J.T. Stepanek Park, with their service dog, Micah.



# Find more about me here:

lilmdgs.org jaymesfund.org lilmdgs.tumblr.com @lilmdgs

### Presentation credits:

Graphics by Pooja Dharan Graphics and animation by Dreamcurves.us

# DylanMahalingam Age 14

Dylan founded Lil' MDGs, an initiative of Jayme's Fund. This New Hampshire based non-profit strives to leverage the power of the Internet to educate, engage, inspire and empower children in all corners of the world to help meet the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Lil' MDGs now has more than 20,000 volunteers hailing from 39 countries. Together, they have positively affected over 1 million individuals worldwide while raising more than \$780,000 for tsunami relief and over \$10 million for hurricane relief. In addition, Lil' MDGs has mobilized youth to raise funds and resources to build schools, dorms, libraries, playgrounds, community gardens, and more in several countries. Lil' MDGs was recognized by the United Nations as the best practice in e-content and technological creativity, demonstrating young people's potential to create outstanding digital content and serving as a platform for people from all UN member states to work together to meet the MDGs. Dylan travels internationally as a youth speaker for the United Nations Environment Programme and United Nations Development Programme and he is also a panelist and speaker for their Global Forum on ICT & Development. Most recently, Disney has selected Lil' MDGs to be one of its ongoing volunteering opportunities in New Hampshire.



# Find more about me here: impactreptheatre.org

# Khadim Diop Age 12

On August 18, 1997, in Harlem Hospital kicking and screaming a star was born (premature). At the age of 5 he stated aspirations of making a difference in the world.

He has been attending the Learning Tree since 2000 where he has performed in their annual plays. He found his love for the stage while performing "The Black Man" (Anonymous) in 2005 and has also performed in "Gulla" in 2008 and was so good that he was asked to be in it again in 2009. He is also an excellent artist and has been drawing and collecting his illustrations since he was five.

Khadim joined IMPACT at the age of 11 in July 2009 where he has quickly risen as a star performer. Since his audition he has excelled as a dramatic spoken word performer as well as a developing rapper and hype man.

Khadim is an inspiration to all and will continue to make his IMPACT on the world.



Find more about me here:
tigweb.org
@takingitglobal

# **JenniferCorriero**

Jennifer has a BA (Liberal Studies) with a focus on Business, Communications, Technology and Culture and a Masters in Environmental Studies from York University. Jennifer is co-founder and Executive Director of TakinglTGlobal, an award winning non-profit organization with aims of fostering cross-cultural dialogue, strengthening the capacity of youth as leaders and increasing awareness and involvement in global issues through the use of technology. In 2005, Jennifer was named a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum and in 2007, as one of Canada's Top 100 Most Powerful Women by the Women's Executive Network. In 2003, Jennifer was a member of the Official Canadian Government Delegation to the World Summit on the Information Society. She has presented and supported civil society engagement at events including the World Urban Forum, International AIDS Conference. World Summit on Sustainable Development, Youth Employment Summit and Global Knowledge Partnership International Forum. Jennifer has been a youth engagement strategy consultant for a range of organizations including Microsoft, TD Bank, VanCity Credit Union, Ontario Science Centre and the Canadian Government.

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"Judge a man by his questions, rather than his answers."

- Voltaire



P-Star

**SejalHathi** 

**OryOkolloh** 

**IMPACT** 

**BenjaminQuinto** 



Find more about me here: empoweragirl.org

# SejalHathi Age 18

Sejal, a Biology and International Relations student at Yale University, founded the nonprofit Girls Helping Girls and, as CEO, has since helped train and mentor thousands of girls worldwide to incubate entrepreneurial projects addressing global issues.

Sejal has been a USA Ambassador for Ashoka's Youth Venture, a National Board of Directors member for Youth Service America and Girls for A Change, a Youth Advisory Board member for State Farm Insurance, and a founding and Steering Committee member of the World Bank's Youth, Development, & Peace Network of North America. A published writer, Sejal also coauthored a monographic book at age 16. She has been invited to speak for and advise political leaders, corporate executives, and philanthropists and her work has been recognized by CNN, USA Today, ElleGirl magazine, ABC7, and the Boston Globe.

Additionally, Sejal has received national awards from the Coca-Cola Company, Nestle Corporation, National Merit Corporation, Taco Bell Foundation, Kohl's Corporation, Discover Financial Services, the National Society of High School Scholars, the US Secretary of Education and the President of the United States for her academic and extracurricular achievements.

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# Find more about me here:

# OryOkolloh (From TEDGlobal 2007)

Ory Okolloh is a blogger and open-government kenyanpundit.com activist. She runs Mzalendo, a pioneering civic mzalendo.com website that tracks the performance of Kenya's @kenyanpundit Parliament and its Parliamentarians. With a vote tracker, articles and opinion pieces, the site connects Kenyans to their leaders and opens the lid on this powerful and once-secretive body. (This is a Parliament that finally agreed to have its proceedings televised in August 2008.)

> Okolloh's own blog is called Kenyan Pundit, and it tracks her work with Mzalendo and her other efforts as part of the rebuilding of Kenya, following the postelection violence in late 2007 (she collected a powerful series of diaries of the violence, dozens of essays from Kenyans and others – well worth a read).

> Okolloh is part of a wave of young Africans who are using the power of blogging, SMS and web-enabled openness to push their countries forward and help Africans to truly connect. Tools like Ushahidi help to link a people whose tribal differences, as Okolloh points out again and again, are often cynically exploited by a small group of leaders. Only by connecting Africans can this cycle be broken.



Find more about me here: youthlink.org natural-immunogenics.com

# **BenjaminQuinto**

Benjamin has tried to make a difference on the planet, first through entertainment, then activism, and now collaboration and health. After getting involved at the United Nations as a teenager, he served as Associate Director of the ONE DAY Foundation and Youth In Action before launching the Global Youth Action Network (GYAN) in 1999. GYAN became a cornerstone of today's youth movement, connecting thousands of organizations. Benjamin has also helped to launch the 2000 National Youth Conventions, Global Youth Service Day, Chat the Planet TV and Three Dot Dash, raising the profile of youth voices and contributions. He has been a frequent speaker at UN Headquarters and international conferences, featured in several books and documentaries, and recently published a collection of his photography, "A Book of Smiles." Currently, Benjamin co-manages Natural-Immunogenics Corp, manufacturer of silver hydrosols pioneered by his father, while serving on the boards of several non-profit organizations including Global Youth Action Network, TakingITGlobal and We Are Family Foundation.

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# About TED

TED is an annual event where some of the world's leading thinkers and doers are invited to share what they are most passionate about. "TED" stands for Technology, Entertainment, Design — three broad subject areas that are, collectively, shaping our future. And in fact, the event is broader still, showcasing ideas that matter in any discipline. Attendees have called it "the ultimate brain spa" and "a four-day journey into the future." The diverse audience — CEOs, scientists, creatives, philanthropists — is almost as extraordinary as the speakers, who have included Bill Clinton, Bill Gates, Jane Goodall, Frank Gehry, Paul Simon, Sir Richard Branson, Philippe Starck and Bono.

TED was first held in Monterey, California, in 1984. In 2001, Chris Anderson's Sapling Foundation acquired TED from its founder, Richard Saul Wurman. In recent years, TED has expanded to include an international conference, TEDGlobal; media initiatives, including TED Talks and TED.com; and the TED Prize.

# **About TEDx**

In the spirit of ideas worth spreading, TEDx is a program of local, self-organized events that bring people together to share a TED-like experience. At a TEDx event, TEDTalks video and live speakers combine to spark deep discussion and connection in a small group. These local, self-organized events are branded TEDx, where x=independently organized TED event.

The TED Conference provides general guidance for the TEDx program, but individual TEDx events are self-organized.\*

\*Subject to certain rules and regulations.

# Ways to take TEDxTeen & TED home with you.

### **TEDxTeen**

### 1. TEDXTEEN.COM

Check back on TEDxTeen.com following the conference. The inspiring talks you saw today will go live and are waiting to be shared with the world. Help us get the word out and be a TEDxTeen ambassador.

### 2. SOCIAL NETWORKS

Join in and continue the conversations from today's conference on our Facebook and Twitter pages. And share the talks and content amongst your social networks and invite them to join our TEDxTeen community. facebook.com/TEDxTeen; @TEDxTeen

### 3. IDEAS WORTH SPREADING

Tell your friends, family, peers and colleagues about your experience at TEDxTeen and share the information. Hold your own mini TED salon at home and discuss the talks with your friends.

### TED

### 1. DIVE INTO TED TALKS

Join TED.com to share in the excitement of Ideas Worth Spreading.

### 2. CREATE YOUR PROFILE ON TED

Join like-minded people around the globe in setting up your TED.com profile – then use your profile to save your favorite talks and share knowledge within the community.

### 3. JOIN THE CONVERSATION

TEDTalks are enhanced by the ideas and conversations that they spark. Add your own comments to the discussion pages, under a specific TEDTalk, in one of the lively Themes or on the TED blog. You'll be interacting with an intelligent, curious group of people worldwide.

# The We Are Family Foundation (WAFF)

is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the vision of a global family by creating and supporting programs that inspire and educate the next generation about respect, understanding and cultural diversity – while striving to solve some of our biggest global problems at the same time.

WAFF believes our problems are going to be solved by investing in our youth – teaching them that people of all ethnicities, religions and cultures are of equal importance, so that they will embrace the value of others who are different.

And, our problems are going to be solved by supporting those youth who are actively engaged in changing our world, those who have ideas and are invested in solving

Investing in and supporting our youth is what the We Are Family Foundation does.

our global problems - the game changers.



# Online:

wearefamilyfoundation.org threedotdash.org TEDxTeen.com

# Twitter:

@wearefamilyfdtn @threedotdashorg @tedxteen

# TEDXTEEN Alley Kat Productions for feeding us well

Thanks FedEx Office for printing the words and images we need

**John-Paul Teutonico Photography** for capturing the moments

**Ketchum** for spreading the word about TEDxTeen

**Production Junction** for filming our human knowledge

**Scholastic** for providing the safe space to share our conversations

THINK Global School for their partnership and for daring to take education to the next level

**Unboundary** for their design brilliance

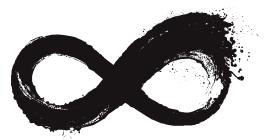
**uPPstream** for a smooth production

**Volunteers** whose time and energy are invaluable

**We Are Family Foundation Team** for Everything Else

Each additional name makes the compassionate voice a more potent force in the world. Let us make the silent majority a challenge to extremism and hate.

Become a partner and sign the charter of compassion in the auditorium lobby today!



# Charter for Compassion

The principle of compassion lies at the heart of all religious, ethical and spiritual traditions, calling us always to treat all others as we wish to be treated ourselves. Compassion impels us to work tirelessly to alleviate the suffering of our fellow creatures, to dethrone ourselves from the centre of our world and put another there, and to honour the inviolable sanctity of every single human being, treating everybody, without exception, with absolute justice, equity and respect.

It is also necessary in both public and private life to refrain consistently and empathically from inflicting pain. To act or speak violently out of spite, chauvinism, or self-interest, to impoverish, exploit or deny basic rights to anybody, and to incite hatred by denigrating others - even our enemies - is a denial of our common humanity. We acknowledge that we have failed to live compassionately and that some have even increased the sum of human misery in the name of religion.

We therefore call upon all men and women ~ to restore compassion to the centre of morality and religion ~ to return to the ancient principle that any interpretation of scripture that breeds violence, hatred or disdain is illegitimate ~ to ensure that youth are given accurate and respectful information about other traditions, religions and cultures ~ to encourage a positive appreciation of cultural and religious diversity ~ to cultivate an informed empathy with the suffering of all human beings, even those regarded as enemies.

We urgently need to make compassion a clear, luminous and dynamic force in our polarized world. Rooted in a principled determination to transcend selfishness, compassion can break down political, dogmatic, ideological and religious boundaries. Born of our deep interdependence, compassion is essential to human relationships and to a fulfilled humanity. It is the path to enlightenment, and indispensable to the creation of a just economy and a peaceful global community.





# Ideas Worth Spreading

