

MONTHLY TRUSTBUILDING DIALOGUES to Restore Faith in American Leadership
First Monday Monthly Dialogues to Restore Faith in American Leadership
Online “America’s Soul Community” encourages trusting community relationships
Follows up 10-2-211 inaugural Building Trusting Community Relationships

20th anniversary of 9/11 attack on World Trade Center in New York City
Virginia Swain was there and founded Reconciliation Leadership and Institute for Global Leadership in the aftermath

Worcester, October 17 – Small groups of people addressing such broad questions as “What would make America a better place?” and examining their personal role to make that new vision a reality will be gathering in a two-hour moderated online dialogue and continue first Monday monthly meetings. A public engagement project of the Worcester-based Institute for Global Leadership, these monthly constructive [dialogues](#) in “America’s Soul Community” are designed to empower participants to build a community of hope, political will and a new [leadership model](#) for America. Register at <http://virginiaswain.com/upcoming-events/> or [text at 508-245-6843](#). There is a [\\$10 voluntary donation requested to defray expenses](#).

The focused and intentional discussions are called dialogues and are hosted by trained volunteer moderators use the [World Café](#) format on the Zoom internet platform, allowing for video chat rooms and screen sharing. Participants meet in the large group and break into small groups, rotating among the virtual tables to address a series of questions in conversations that are then “harvested” for common themes. Fourth in a series of America’s Soul Cafes, the September 9 event attracts participants from across the United States and abroad, as previous sessions have included people from several states, Mexico and Europe who have an investment in America’s future.

After attending the inaugural Community meeting in January 2017, Lisa Stiller from Portland Oregon found the experience allowed her to feel “so connected to everyone so quickly! There was a very deep level of safety and trust built in at the start. The questions and discussion were open enough to allow for wide interpretation, and there was such genuine affirmation for our contributions.”

Dialogue is a deeper conversation that engages personal, business, and organizational life, according to Virginia Swain, founder, and director of the Institute for Global Leadership. America's Soul Community are natural and effective ways to host meaningful conversations that awaken collective wisdom and engage collaborative action. These events offer effective antidotes to the fast-paced fragmentation and lack of connection in today's world.”

“So many people are eager to take the “higher ground” on all sides of the political process,” says Swain. “It's time to step back and revision our country.” She sees America Soul Community as “respectful and celebratory ways to heal historic conflict patterns in the US as well as address the needs of people who are living in the underbelly and shadow of America as America's disenfranchised.”

The Community builds on a spiritually based process of redefining leadership articulated in Swain’s recently published work, [My Soul’s Journey to Redefine Leadership: A New Phoenix Rises from the Ashes of 9/11](#) (Xlibris 2017)). Hosts of America’s Soul Community are Robert Kauffman, Virginia Swain, Annette Farrington Kramer, Andrea Cruz, and Eric Donelson.

America's Soul Community is a project of the Institute for Global Leadership. After each online meeting participants are asked to consider a \$10 voluntary donation to defray expenses.

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Backgrounder

The Institute for Global Leadership's mission is to support emerging and seasoned leaders in a post-September 11th world in workplace, community, national and global settings. As founder and director, Virginia Swain has developed personal, interpersonal, systemic, and global competencies for all leaders ready to redefine leadership from their soul journey.

The challenges facing post-election America require a new spiritually based vision to re-define leadership. A dream of a Phoenix rising out of the ashes of 9/11 came to Virginia while she was in New York during the tragedy, giving a new lens through which to see the tragedy. *My Soul's Journey to Redefine Leadership: A New Phoenix Rises Out of the Ashes of 9/11*, a book by Virginia Swain is an example of how the Phoenix helped her to redefine leadership. To facilitate the spiritually grounded changes that are needed, Virginia proposes to use her 25 years of experience developing vocationally oriented Reconciliation Leaders trained to facilitate the Peacebuilding Process of Reconciliation to Develop political will. Invited to present at the State of the World Forum and the Hague Appeal for Peace in in 1999, Celebration of the Children of the World: A Model of Building Global Movement was the first Peacebuilding Process in the United Nations that provided the heart-centered leadership and facilitation skills needed to experientially bond people beyond team building to community building.

Drawing on her longtime commitment to Culture of Peace through the Global Movement for a Culture of Peace at the United Nations, friendship with a Hopi Elder delivering the Hopi Prophecy, and learning from the life of 2nd Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld, Virginia is committed drawing on all her resources to build an American culture that embraces a shared moral and spiritual vision. Virginia began hosting America's Soul Café monthly on-line cafes in January 2017 where people from around the country can share their wisdom and experience as they reflect on questions that arise from American life, personal responsibility, institutions, and systems. We seek creative solutions that arise from our sacred relationship to the earth and each other. She also is forming a cadre of Reconciliation Leaders in the US who will facilitate the PPR to help people find the creative, spiritually guided solutions needed in this time of conflict, alienation, and fear in America.

The Institute's programs provide Leadership training and coaching. It is believed that this combination effectively guides vocationally called leaders through their transformation to Reconciliation Leadership. Participants in the Reconciliation Leadership program are trained and mentored through courses, individual mentoring sessions and practice.

Founder Virginia Swain is a social entrepreneur, leadership trainer and coach who established the Institute after she was in the United Nations on September 11th and experienced its aftermath in New York. She has a master's degree in organization development with a specialty in community building in organizations at Lesley University. She has advanced training in mediation, using the Myers Briggs Preference System for teambuilding and spiritual direction, as well as certifications in counseling, ethnic identity and religious conflict, conflict transformation and mediation. For fifteen years, she has worked in the United Nations community and worked with the UN on conferences and with interreligious, interfaith, and ecumenical groups on five continents, including the Parliament of the World's Religions and the United Nations.

A former Peace Corps volunteer teacher in Liberia, West Africa, she was honored by her peers in the Boston Returned Peace Corps Volunteers in 2003 for "making it her life commitment to train emerging and seasoned leaders committed to a just, intercultural, sustainable and multiethnic peace in Worcester and the United Nations". She has also mediated and counseled severely conflicted conflicts in the United States and abroad, including debriefing Muslim and Government Peacemakers working for the United Nations Peace Treaty Process in Mindanao, Philippines, former Yugoslavians and Rwandans in the the United States, with students from more than 30 cultures at a post-Columbine inner city high school where she founded a Principal's Advisory Committee to give students a voice about their needs and fears. She also coordinated and co-trained one hundred student peer mediators and initiated teacher-student mediations in a Peer Mediation Program for five years, funded by MA Attorney General Tom Reilly to help students and teachers learn conflict resolution skills.

September 11, 2021, was the 20th anniversary of 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center in New York City. Swain's experience that day at the United Nations that day and being trapped in New York for three days afterwards, she founded the Institute for Global Leadership in her mind along with a new learning methodology, convinced that workplace, community, national and global leaders need a new definition of security, more of their humanity, intention, commitment, skills and courage to face the challenges of a post-9/11 world. Back in Worcester, Swain made her dream a reality and founded the Institute and Reconciliation Leadership™. With Anwarul K. Chowdhury as her patron, in a pilot program in 2002 at the United Nations, Swain invited seventy-five participant leaders from fifteen countries for the course over four presentations, "Designing and Implementing Interventions for Community, Institutional, National and Global Change." Since then, several hundred professionals attended at least one course of the expanded Basic and Advanced Programs, and twelve have certificates in the program.

Virginia Swain is available to discuss America's Soul Community, the need for Reconciliation Leaders and The Institute for Global Leadership's programs, and can be reached at 508-245-6843 or vswain@global-leader.org.

