

Norwegian Taiji Centre 40 years Jubilee

The Norwegian Nobel Institute

[1st September, 2023](#)



On 1st September 2023, on the occasion of its 40 years Jubilee, the Norwegian Taiji Centre organised a symposium on Health and Peace at the Norwegian Nobel Institute. In addition to taiji practices, the day comprised three opening addresses by distinguished guests, six main lectures, eight round cluster discussions in two sessions each and a closing address. This document collects summaries of these interventions.

Opening Addresses



Bethan Sian Jones

Historical Perspectives on Welsh Peace

Bethan opened her address by introducing Academi Heddwch Cymru, Wales' first peace institute. She reflected on the success of a previous conference held at the Temple of Peace Pamela to welcome the Norwegian Taiji Centre to Wales in May as part of their 40th Anniversary Jubilee Celebrations, with the Taiji practice supporting Wales on its journey to becoming a Nation of Sanctuary and a Nation of Peace.

Bethan went on to discuss Wales' long-standing commitment to peace-making and peace-promotion, drawing on examples such as the Welsh League of Nations Union (1922); the world's first department of International Politics at Aberystwyth (1919) and the establishment of the Temple of Peace and Health (1938). The main focus of her talk, however, was on the long-lost history of the Welsh Women's Peace Petition of 1923-24. Signed by 390,296 women, equating to a third of the female population in Wales at the time, the petition had been sent from the women of Wales to the women of the United States of America, encouraging them to put pressure on their government to join the League of Nations.

Forgotten about for almost a century, the petition was then located at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC and brought back to Wales where it is to remain. Now that the petition is back in Wales, a Partnership has been formed between the Welsh Centre for International Affairs, Heddwch Nain Mamgu, the National Library of Wales, the Women's Archive of Wales and the National Museums of Wales. This Partnership, coordinated by Academi Heddwch has been

awarded a quarter of a million pounds to mark the centenary of the Welsh Women's Peace Petition.

Large-scale plans to digitise the petition are underway so that people in Wales are able to see whether their grandmothers or great-grandmothers had signed the historic petition, or whether it was signed by someone who lived in the house they live in now. Bethan also spoke about the plans to georeference the petition with maps and official records, to both appreciate and understand the sheer scale of how many households signed the petition, and also to add the signatories with names and details of husbands, fathers and brothers who had fought and died in the First World War. She emphasised how statistics and records will assist in constructing these women's individual stories a little further, helping us understand who these peace builders were.

Cofio, Dathlu, Gwireddu - Remember, Celebrate and Realise is the motto of the project.

Bethan noted how the *Gwireddu*, the Realise, aspect of this phrase is important in that it is the 'so what' of peace history and probably the most challenging aspect of any peace heritage project. She asked, 'how do we fulfil the women's vision? How do we make it come true?' Finally, she questioned if Wales created a peace petition today, who would be asking what? What would be called for, and to whom would it be addressed? And in the same sense, if the people of Norway or the Sami people would draw up a peace petition today, what would that look like?



Torkel Snellingen

[Full Lecture](#)



Li Xikui

[Lecture](#)

Main addresses



Ingeborg Breines

How to speak and act in favour of peace and security in times of war.

Breines expressed great concern linked to the strong on-going militarization. Instead of dealing adequately with the multiple, interlinked and existential crises facing humanity, be it the ever more dramatic climate and environmental crisis, the extremely unequal distribution of wealth and possibilities or the fast growing nuclear threat, the world has entered a new arms race. Resources are being used for warfare more than welfare.

The war in Ukraine has huge and disastrous ramifications, and all efforts should be made to make it come to an end. Proposals for peace negotiations and cease-fire are, however, overlooked and ridiculed. She urged us, the West/NATO, to look at our own role in the present situation. We constitute some 10% of the world's population and spend more than 55% percent of the world's military expenditure.

Breines spoke strongly in favour of multilateralism, human security and a culture of peace. She brought to the forefront role models such as Bertha von Suttner, Mikail Gorbachev, Oscar Arias, Mahatma Gandhi and the UNESCO culture of peace program. She insisted on the need to strengthen the world's fragile peace architecture and not let provocative and humiliating rhetoric hamper international dialogue and diplomacy. Inner peace may be essential, when the hawkish

war narrative has become so dominant, in order to manage to stand up for the vision of a peaceful and just world, based on humanistic ideas of non-violence and cooperation.

[Full Lecture](#)



Kristin Lund

My experiences from armed conflict – does gender matter in conflict resolution?

After 40 years in the Armed Forces, 15 of them abroad in international operations including 3 years working for NATO in the Netherlands and Afghanistan.

I have seen and felt how war and conflict affect different societies and us. Also, that war and conflict have different effects on men, women, and children. This was finally brought to the table when the UN issued UNSCR 1325 – Women, peace, and security in 2000.

I use experiences from Lebanon, Balkan, Afghanistan, Cyprus and the Middle East to underline the importance of gender equality and gender equity.

During these years, deployed in different operations, I have seen that gender matters and it's vital to include gender in all aspects to promote peace and security. No peace and security if you don't include them.

My way was through the armed forces.



Åse Holmberg

Giving resonance and room to spirituality in systemic practice

The spirit, which comes from the word “breath”, is our vital essence, the power of life. The spiritual force is important for living a meaningful life for ourselves and others in a global and diverse world. Human spirituality is part of an ecological or holistic view, our ontology, and influences physical, psychological and social life. This power of life is closely connected to existential perspectives like meaning, values, hope and faith, and helps people to find connection and direction in life. And hopefully, find inner peace.

For many, the spiritual life is a natural part of their lives; for others, it is more non-conscious and unreflective. In our time, we see increasing attention to spiritual perspectives. The world is characterised by progress, consumption, and quick fixes. There are also a lot of challenges in our time that can create unrest. Many people are suffering from mental disorders and feel lonely and outside society. Ontological questions emerge. Who am I and who do I want to be? How do I find meaning and coherence in our time? Although many people in our society are materially well off, there seems to be a longing for something more, something bigger and something deeper that science cannot give.

Spirituality seems to be something we exercise and experience, like a way of being about self, others, culture, nature, and life and includes a transcendent dimension. The invisible world seems to be much larger than the visible world. The spirituality of humans is bodily and closely connected to emotions and feelings. The body holds meaning, culture, rationality, and tradition.

A close relationship exists between the mind and the body. Spiritual experiences often exist partly in the language but are felt fully in the body. The spiritual body can be an important source of knowledge.

So how to make resonance to humans' spiritual life?

When listening to a client, there are a number of meanings or perspectives in any one story. From an experience-based viewpoint, it is easy to overlook spiritual perspectives, particularly if it is not important in our own lives, or we do not know how to deal with that aspect in therapy. From a client's point of view, they may be unsure if they are allowed to address their spiritual life or if the therapist can manage it. The spiritual can be a vulnerable topic, and clients may need to be met by an appreciative therapist. So how does the therapist get resonance with the spirituality of the client?

Resonance in this context means that something happens when people and stories meet each other. Looking at the concept, resonance is both a physical and a musical concept. The sociologist Hartmut Rosa says it is the moment when the world sings. Resonance is produced only when the vibration of one body stimulates the other to produce its frequency. Therefore, resonance is a kind of relationship with the world, formed through emotions and interests. It is not an echo, but a responsive relationship, where both sides speak with their voice but are also open enough to be affected or reached by each other. As humans, we are created for resonance. We need security, protection and care. That is what attachment theory has taught us. We know that our emotional and social development is affected by how we are met and received (Dallos & Vetere, 2022). We mutually create each other.

The ability for resonance is under pressure in our society. The pressure can lead to alienation, an exhaustion of the self, where relationships become instrumental. Many professionals seem to be most concerned with being proficient in different methods and interventions, which can take the focus away from the simple thing of being present at the moment and letting all voices be heard. If resonance is part of the solution, it is initially about bringing oneself into play as an instrument in relational interactions.



Bjørn Haugland

Climate Friendly Business in Norway Now

Haugland made in particular the following points:

- Given the importance of religion in conflicts and in people's lives it is important for the business sector to collaborate with religious institutions.
- The idea of a global, rule based and flat world is challenged.
- There is also a trend towards integrating the UN Sustainability Goals and defining better regulations and goals, by both CEOs and youth.
- Greenwashing is real but there is also an understanding in leading businesses that pushing for a real green transition will provide a competitive edge and help keep and attract talent.
- We see the need for wider collaboration, e.g. that businesses increasingly collaborate with the whole value chain (customers, vendors and suppliers) towards zero emissions.

- There is a growing change in perception, towards a consciousness that nature is a limited resource that we share.
- The business sector is inherently competitive but Skift promotes the idea that rather than to be “best in the world” businesses should strive to be “best for the world”.
- Changing the value set is profitable. Kofi Annan has pointed out that business cannot succeed in a society that fails.
- Norway enjoys high levels of competence and trust in society and institutions and has many resources.
- It could serve as a laboratory and showcase for the green transition, and thereby live up to the quote of Roosevelt (1942): “Look to Norway”.



Egil Lothe

Pursuing peace - appreciating opportunities

Lothe contrasted several concepts of peace. One can envision peace as the antithesis of war, conflict, killings. A more profound vision is peace as a reflection of harmony, friendship, compassion and love. It is then a quality of our relations to god or dharma and to each other as human beings. Peace as absence of war builds on a linear causality: for instance peace is brought by a negotiation and a peace treaty. On the other hand peace as harmony builds on a diffusive causality: our attitude, understanding, respect are just as valid, lasting and significant in bringing peace. This perspective does not invalidate the political approach but reminds us that we affect the world through how we affect our immediate proximity. Our family could very well be a war-zone! Also, religious institutions provide individuals with a platform to act with an agenda.



Bjørn Pettersen

Whence whither why?

Pettersen reflected on the paradox that we spend 1/4 - 1/3 of our lives sleeping. Furthermore, for around two hours our mind is completely inactive. We know so much about the universe but so little about ourselves. To enlarge our consciousness, training our endurance and our humility, we have invented a form of conscious sleep: meditation.

Three dimensions of humans: material, mental, spiritual. Of the body: physical, subtle, cosmic. Of the mind: Consciousness, subconsciousness, unconsciousness. Of attention: Wake, dream sleep, deep sleep.

Correspondingly, learning at Mt Tron can be expressed along three dimensions: the language of the body, reading the mind, and knowing thyself.

Peace can only be felt inside. There is no outer peace without inner peace.

Pettersen concluded by quoting sister Teresa Hsu: "The whole world is my home. All living beings are my sisters and brothers. Selfless service is my religion."

Round clusters

The symposium featured eight group discussions on topics related to health, peace and taiji. Each was facilitated by a team consisting of a taiji practitioner and a symposium speaker.

[Link to guidelines](#)

1. Inner development (Sandra Myrland & Åse Holmberg)

What inner practices of ours can help nurture health and resolve conflict?

The group explored many different practices that people could practise by themselves, and their personal reflections and experiences with them. Mostly we explored introspective meditative practices of reflection and emotional processing. Many argued that such practices could bring health to the individual, and thus an openness and a new way of meeting others which would potentially influence meetings and conflicts. We touched on researched instances of how embodiment and presence could influence more people than the ones we would be in direct contact with. We also touched on how meditations apart in time and space, could serve as a connective experience and build community across countries.

We also discussed barriers to taking time to do these practices, and helpers for doing the practices, and that different practices suits different people – and choosing something that resonates with the person is perhaps the most important. Collective meetings for meditation could also help a great deal for setting time to do them in a busy life.

Points made in the discussions and words from the participants:

Practices promoting health:

- *Accessing the joy/spiritual flow/flowstate through any activity that takes you there, will bring health. Activities can for example be analysing dreams, painting, writing, singing*
- *Breathing sessions where one could process body experiences, alleviate stress-responses. For example if a person were having bodily reactions like not breathing properly while being in crowded places and not having personal space wanted, through living in a big city, breathwork could release this tension in the body, and bring more ease to the same situation next time*
- *Breathing practices! Because I forgot how to breathe in my daily life. I recognized when my breathing stopped (I held my breath), and what thoughts and actions came from that – They were thoughts and actions of clinging, not flow.*
- *Deep breathing*
- *Being in contact with my breath, and accepting the situation I'm in, being honest with myself about feelings and thoughts*
- *Looking into the nature, have a walk with my dog - Would lead to better health*
- *Reduce stress and get enough stress – Would lead to better health*
- *Practice of presence – staying in the present moment*
- *Listening deeply to what I am*
- *Feeling: Reflections/awareness of the feelings, practice acceptance/love towards them, practising forgiveness for them.*
- *Singing to relax; If it doesn't create stress for the person to sing.*
- *Conscious breathing relaxes the body and a connection to source (or what any person identifies a feeling of peace and connectedness to) and can thus bring health. If we do not, loss of connection with source and feeling of that type of connection, could lead to sickness*
- *Reducing stress would result in health*
- *The practice of relaxing!*

Meeting others, after inner work or practice that promotes health:

- *Taiji, Meditation, qigong practice. This is because if you find inner peace and help balance your own emotions, it helps reduce stress and anxiety in the body. These practices would also help you when you meet other people – and the way you meet other people will influence a conflict. Having the groundedness and peaceful feeling within would bring that experience into the interaction, and bring a different perspective than a stressed one*
- *Meditation and seeing triggers as gifts so that we explore them can lead to resolving conflict and new meetings between people, with understanding and empathy*
- *Breathing sessions would give the person contact with the body again, and an opportunity to explore triggers, instead of playing them out in their lives, perhaps causing conflict*
- *Doing a practice of remembering to relax and resolving what creates tension could be helpful, as the person wouldn't bring tension to an interaction – Which could subconsciously communicate to the other person that they should tense up. This practice would be any practice where one would practise to be accepting, and relax instead of wanting to fix tension.*
- *Being in contact with myself and looking after myself, and asking myself why this is a conflict for me, could help quicker resolve things and lead to peaceful interaction*
- *It is political and important to create health and peace within*

Meeting/influencing others in direction of peace and helpful states:

- *Practising loving presence would influence our surroundings and people – the way we are being met is very influential regarding conflict or collaboration, and in general on the state of the person we meet*
- *Peace meditation in a group in public space has been proven to significantly reduce*

crimes the same day in a city. Our embodiment impacts the world around us

- Receiving healing thoughts from friends are felt and makes a difference

Connection

- A participant told a story about a war between countries, where women in different countries united in meditation (coordinated through internet) – in a meditation on peace. Sharing this common immersive and felt activity they unite. And it might influence the people around them and their motivation to act in alignment with the meditation, in addition to a feeling of connectedness.

2. Indigenous wisdom and artificial intelligence (Thomas Gramstad & Bjørn Pettersen)

How will the relationship between artificial intelligence and indigenous wisdom develop, and how will this affect health and peace?

Many people use ChatGPT to get or produce knowledge summaries, news updates, and tailored standard "form" letters. Does this hurt the expression of individual uniqueness in writing? Do we lose energy and emotions in such letters and texts? What about experiential and body-based knowledge which may be lost in abstractions? Indigenous knowledge is experiential and body-based, and connected to the local, it has roots. AI can systematise local indigenous knowledge like herbal medicine, and AI can preserve and keep alive languages threatened by extinction. But AI, at least today, does not include affective knowledge and experience-laden values/wisdom. Perhaps music can be the connection: It connects us to emotions, and memories and other experiential knowledge, and AI can also work with music and other art, transforming them. And if everything is conscious at some level -- including rocks and minerals -- are the machines and robots we create a way of giving rocks and inanimate objects a voice? Some indigenous people say that rocks talk. Towards the AI, we are like the sorcerer's apprentice -- AI seems inevitable, we cannot stop creating and developing it.

3. Language and communication (Natalia Lalla & Bethan Sian Jones)

How can we develop language and communication to become architects of peace and promoters of health?

Awareness of one's own mental-, feeling- and physical space seems important in order to be able to find words which communicate peace. Awareness of the fact that the other person has his/her own mental/emotional and physical space is another prerequisite for peaceful communication.

Including connection with one's immediate experience, with awareness of and contact with one's heart, can potentiate non-violent communication style. Awareness of and contact with one's senses can make this immediacy possible, so that the healthy aspects of communication and being are taken care of.

To become aware of one's own space and quality of the relationship to another in the moment of communication, one needs to take some time for this. Taiji practice is a good tool to use for improving the quality of communication, as we can see communication as movement and taiji - as a moving meditation.

Being aware of the fact that each person always sees the situation from her own unique perspective, and taking time to check in with that particular person's perspective, provides the possibility to discover and work out misunderstandings. Time we can use to verify what we believe the other said, is time well spent. This seems important especially nowadays, as we are surrounded by «quick language», competition, not listening. Making conscious contact with one's own breath - can help to process what the other is saying.

Using language that expresses clearly one's own thoughts, feelings and impressions provides a non-invading style of language based interaction. The quality of self-awareness provides health as well as peaceful interaction.

Using art e.g. poetry can invite to create a common platform through including dimensions beyond words - with a possibility to create a common platform in interactions.

4. Living in society, being together (Wenche Berger & Egil Lothe)

What are healthy principles for peaceful coexistence and joint action?

Our discussion soon focused on us as individuals and our relationship with ourselves and other people in our communities, friends and family. We are all important as we are, and we need each other, all the time. It's about "me" and "us". One healthy principle is understanding this. Inner peace and listening may impact our relationships and society deeply. We reflected on the sticking exercise as a strong listening and connection experience, with self and partner.

We believe we can peacefully coexist, when we are able to accept ourselves and others as we are. When we remember to listen. When we are helping those who need support in our society. When we teach our children how to coexist peacefully. When we find ourselves - our true nature.

5. Balance of environment and health (Lars Sandved, Ling Poon & Torkel Snellingen)

How can we align the ecologies of our minds with mother nature?

Some main points of discussion from the round cluster:

- Local food

- Awareness of the relation between food, nutrition and health
- Nature, human, animal

First Round: The first round table was held in both Norwegian and English. The participants could speak both languages.

Topics of the round table session: Ecology of our minds. The facilitators introduced the topic by going through the question and definition of some words: How can we **align** the **Ecologies of our minds** with **Mother Nature**?

Discussion from the round table:

This is how we have adapted to nature through evolution.

We are disconnected from nature. An example is ultra-processed food.

We don't have a public food culture. It's disconnected - we're walking away. Make food from local ingredients!

Growing your own food. You need to implement it in your everyday life. It's about choosing another path.

What is healthy food? It is only food companies and pharmaceutical companies that define what is healthy food. Nutritious?

Learn how food is made, where it comes from. Drawing lines - understanding more through hands-on experience.

We need to see things more holistically. Everything is connected. Prevention - to avoid disease - and to save money. It's also about preparedness, that you can't just import.

Wealthy and rich? Healthcare has a lot of health problems. And the way we eat together. School: Sustainability. Dig around in how our grandmothers did. Some examples of problematic food are: baguette, panini and ultra-processed food.

The Covid vaccine is a huge experiment that no one knows the consequences of. 80 percent of what we eat today is carbohydrates from grains (Hippocrates Wellness Institute). Integrated and integrative medicine. While in Norway, doctors are doing everything they can to oppose naprapaths, osteopaths, homeopaths and acupuncturists.

There is far too little alternative medicine.

With the aim of increasing the proportion of organic. Six pieces of advice. We need to be more on the supply-side: We need to be a big sister: "This is fun". We are straps(?) - open your arms. Team up with more people (this is where "align" comes in).

Second round. Some new participants. The participants from the first round were supposed to gather and summarise for 10 minutes. The discussion was much shorter due to limited time and translation between Norwegian and English.

Keywords and discussion from the round table:

What is nature?

External environment. Human. Animal.

Humans see through symbols. A big deceit in our mind - and the biggest deceit is money. Indigenous people have more direct contact with nature. We lose contact with nature. But

through taiji, meditation, we become more like them...(?) We are deceived by a capitalist dream world. But there is a new path to a different ecological and economic understanding. Concepts. Definition of nature changes. What is born: Nativity = Nature. Putting names on things and splitting the words align, ecology and Mother Nature, is already distancing us from reality. Observe Nature and Emotions. Obtain contact with the animal within us. Reach quietness that way.

6. Norway in the future (Sarah Reimann & Ingeborg Breines)

Imagine Norway in 2050 as a trailblazer on health and peace: what would it look like?

Throughout the entire discussion, holistic thinking was a central theme. Health was viewed from multiple angles, including individual health, the healthcare system on a community level, and the health of the planet. The participants discussed the interconnectedness of these aspects. Holistic thinking in medicine was a recurring topic and people emphasised that both physical and mental health are indispensable for overall well-being.

Participants acknowledged that the visions we hold now determine our future, and that today's ideas and actions will define the future landscape of Norway.

The participants pictured that in 2050, society will have reached another level of consciousness, with cooperation between the laws of nature and human life as important keys. There was agreement that nature's laws should govern society and that these laws should be incorporated in all areas of our lives, including economy, science and education. The model of the "Økokommune" was proposed as one specific possible solution.

Participants saw a future with more contact to nature, more collaboration between people and sharing of food resources and water supplies. Oneness of outer nature, represented by ecology, and the inner nature of humans was pointed out. People reflected on how society and individuals should act as one organism.

The participants discussed that for a life in peace and health, the absence of fear is a crucial condition. The Norway of the future should therefore be well prepared for challenges like floods and pandemics, such that basic needs of all citizens can be met at all times. Today's difficulties can teach us where and how to improve.

The participants agreed that future governments should focus on the well-being of its people and that preparedness does not include arming up with weapons. The importance of global cooperation and getting rid of the enemy image was pointed out. All participants agreed that the peace we want to see in 2050 includes both inner peace and peace between nations.

7. Peace and martial arts (Allan Hiley & Kristin Lund)

How can martial arts philosophy contribute to bringing peace?

It seemed to be widely recognised in the group that a big part of bringing about peace in broader society was experiencing inner peace or harmony on an individual level and in your closest relationships and community. The reasoning that followed was that several things contributed to bringing about harmony; and martial arts seemed to have many of the components integrated in some of its teachings.

Deep listening/Embodiment - martial arts gives you new perspectives to use your body as an anchor to slowly go through your own tension/trauma/stored emotion to arrive at a less reactive and more calm place, more in harmony with yourself. This will help to more easily share understanding and forgiveness when a conflict arises, and you will be able to see it for what it is without being triggered into the limbic part of the brain, where it can be very difficult to see other people's perspective, and instead stay connected to the prefrontal cortex where holding two or more perspectives comes naturally.

Partner work/conflict resolution - Here one learns how to navigate direct conflict, and at least in taijiquan it is an emphasis to stay relaxed, calm and connected to yourself and the partner you are working with, to never get agitated and reckless, or the other can use that against you. Getting used to navigating conflict in this way and actually experiencing someone trying to push you over or agitate you is thought to have a carryover effect to your other relationships and potential future conflicts.

Education was also brought forward as an important part of bringing peace, and the point was made that not only ordinary school education but practising martial arts was a good way of educating children/people to how to deal with themselves and others in stressful and difficult times.

Populations with higher levels of inner peace and awareness would possibly be more resilient in withstanding the propaganda necessary for the government to gain support to go to war.

It was also mentioned research into communities surrounding schools in the USA that started to integrate meditation every day, and that it had a significant positive impact on the amount of crimes committed in the area.

Major General Kristin Lund also shared some interesting perspectives on the similarities of the military and martial arts philosophy. She found that they both incorporated the reaching for traditionally high-held human values, namely courage, valour and sacrifice. She seemed surprised and intrigued to find the similarities.

8. Business and education (Snorre Christiansen & Bjørn Haugland)

With which incentives and which values can we create a symbiosis between business and education?

Many in the group expressed nostalgia for the time of apprenticeship. Higher education was viewed as too separate from work. One could develop a learning model which splits time between the two. This would acknowledge the importance of learning from colleagues “on the floor” and would give people an early taste of the relevance of their studies.

The crucial role of teachers for the well-being of society was stressed.

We could learn from alternative models of pedagogy such as Steiner schools and Montessori. We could put emphasis on safety and on listening, and train more to achieve feelings of flow and mastery. Craftsmanship should be valued more. We could question the idea of a tabula rasa compared with the fulfilment of everyone’s potential. We could develop human aspects such as understanding our historical roots. We should encourage critical thinking.

We should develop a clearer picture of the purpose of education and what the world needs. What goals should we serve? We should strive to find the right mix of equality and individuality, in a spirit of fairness. We should cultivate freedom and responsibility. And not forget to keep a sense of humour.

Closing address

Eirik Myrhaug

Nature within and nature without

It is crucial to broaden our view of our perceptions of nature. We humans are symbolic beings, and we use images and symbols to orient ourselves in reality. What we perceive in nature reflects a kind of inner nature within us, an imaginary image that we add to reality. When I worked as an engineer and looked at a waterfall in nature, I often fantasised about what it would be like to channel the waterfall into pipes and construct a power plant. This was something I had expertise in, and it gave me the opportunity to develop and realise my own self in a continuous process.

It's important to recognize that not only individuals, but also collectives, have their own egos and fantasies. Our entire economic system constitutes such a collective self-image, where we see opportunities for growth and development. The ego of the national society is a collective imagination of the nation itself. If we ever want to do something about the relationship between the environment and our health, we should take a closer look at the irrational beliefs that we have inherited from the cultures of Europe in the past.

Vision for the future

By 2050, Norway is a nation that has led the way by focusing as much on the inner ecology of humans as on the outer ecology of nature. In 2023, a new tool was introduced to the public, namely an ecological economic resource and balance sheet, which replaced the Gross Domestic Product. This opened the way for a renaissance in the years that followed, with a focus on human inner development. This development had been prepared since the end of the 20th century, through the influence of spiritual traditions from India, China and Japan, which gradually reached a wider part of the population.

Yoga, meditation, taiji, qigong, Christian contemplation from Christian mystics, and similar practices became increasingly popular. This led people in Norway to discover their roots in shamanism, first in Sami culture and later in the Norse tradition. Gradually, a deeper understanding of human health and wellbeing developed, as well as the realisation of the necessity of being closely connected to nature.

This became a powerful and unifying force that gradually created inner peace within individuals and inspired peace between peoples. In the face of the climate and nature crisis, cooperation between people became vital.

Thoughts at the end of the Taiji Center's 40th anniversary

I would like to congratulate the Taiji Center and Pamela Hiley for their invaluable efforts in introducing taiji to Norway. This has had a significant impact on Norwegian culture and the spiritual life of the nation.

During this event, I have listened to all the inspiring contributions and I am deeply touched by the rich knowledge and insights that individuals have shared. This bodes well and is a valuable fruit of the Taiji Center's work.

In my summary, I want to take the Sami spiritual culture as my starting point, while at the same time including Western thinking and philosophy. My experience with clients and training people on the shamanic path has given me the opportunity to observe my theoretical thoughts in practice.

Central to this perspective is the circle - symbolised by the four directions, Mother Earth and Father Sky, and all the forces that exist between them. In a shamanic context, we call this the medicine wheel. The medicine wheel represents the movement of energy, not only around the circle, but also in an "energy castle." Humans are part of this energy, a symbolic connection between Mother Earth, our solar system and the entire universe. We humans are somewhere between the largest and the smallest, with our average heights of 167 cm for women and 180 cm for men in Norway.

Within this energy field, energy moves through the day and year in a cycle of innovation, organisation, order and disorder.

I see taiji and qigong as ways of moving the body within this energy field, a practice that stems from early shamanic experiences in the East. Like the body, society is a living organism. Man, through his imagination, has created an ego, and society has created what we call "the state". These two egos are the conditions for the development of our consciousness. Man's mental reactions often go against nature - in the fall we reject disorder, in the winter and at night we become withdrawn, angry or sorrowful, in the spring and in the morning we must accept, and in the summer and during the day we act - it becomes almost a compulsion. Nature, on the other hand, works in harmonious order. There is a continuous spiral and wave movement between something static and something dynamic in existence. This pattern is found in many areas, including the right and left hemispheres of the brain, and it also manifests itself in ecological economics, where ecology represents dynamic thinking, while economics is characterised by static thinking that always seeks growth.

It seems that the majority of people are in a kind of sleepy consciousness in relation to this field, and we need to wake up. When you wake up a sleeping creature, you have to be careful, because you can be attacked yourself. So we have to work with an agile consciousness. Ecological economics is a form of yin and yang.

Therefore, I propose that we start by creating a new social accounting system that gives a more realistic picture of our economic system. I have done this work in the book "Økokommunen: Think local, act global". This accounting shows both the social system's costs for social life and the economic system's costs for Mother Earth.

We need to rally around a common idea. Therefore, I propose:

A political idea and an invitation to a brainstorming session: Build a sustainable Norway together! Dear municipalities in Norway, we are facing global challenges such as the climate crisis, loss of biodiversity, unfair distribution of wealth and national conflicts. In response to this, we invite you to a groundbreaking brainstorming session where we can analyse and explore our resources together in light of today's global perspectives. We will start the brainstorming session after the municipal elections to give us time to gather our best resources and engage in building a sustainable future together.

We look forward to seeing what each municipality can contribute and how we can work together to create a fair, sustainable and harmonious future for all of us. Together we can make a difference and shape a Norway we can be proud of.

Appeal: The most important thing is what we focus our attention on, as quantum physics has also taught us. For society and the individual to move towards an ecological economic direction and within the qigong/taiji movement opens up new possibilities for our life on this planet.

That is why we stand together in the circle here at the Nobel Center to celebrate the Taiji Center's 40th anniversary and the idea of peace that lies behind it.

<https://www.nb.no/items/77cab208c6cfcc4408b748cd1351b141?page=117&searchText=%C3%B8kokommunen>

On pages 115 and 116 are the ecological financial accounts.

[Lecture at Sarahkka](#)