

Learning to Lead with a Motherly Heart: WFWP USA Leadership Retreat 2017

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Introduction

This year's annual retreat in Las Vegas was very unique, even historic, as it occurred just 15 days after the terrible tragedy and massacre of 58 people during a concert near the Mandalay Bay Hotel and Resort. In addition to the ascended, hundreds also were wounded. The city and nation are still shocked to the core.

At the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of WFWP this year, WFWP USA had planned our retreat at the International Peace Education Center (our WFWP Co-Founders' residence), a place of beauty, tranquility, and peace.



It was also notable that our flyer showed the very symbol of Las Vegas, the sign at the entrance of the city, which by then had become a memorial place for the victims and their families. There was no question in our minds and hearts that Heaven called us women and mothers to pray for and love the families who lost their loved ones, and who are still hurting. We therefore decided to adjust our schedule to be able to visit the site on two separate occasions.



Purpose and Goals for the Retreat and Seminar

1. Connect and reconnect all women with WFWP Founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, WFWP USA's upgraded vision, mission, and goals for vision 2020 through HDH, music and testimonial sharing
2. Introduce Leadership of the Heart and feminine leadership style through teamwork, delegation, and education
3. Update participants on new developments, guidelines, and tools for their chapters
4. Be inspired, refreshed, and empowered to take ownership of the vision, set goals for 2020, and commit to share and implement what was learned in their chapters

Overall 57 women from around the country attended, among them 12 young women and some mother-daughter pairs. Others came from as far as the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, and Trinidad and Tobago. The participants were treated to three days of spiritual and practical guidance and tools for strategy and goal setting, so that they could be strengthened, refreshed, and empowered to continue their important work for peace. The schedule also was spiced with exercises such as Qigong, meditation, facials, makeovers, dance, the movie "Hidden Figures," and a Bridge of Peace for friendship and sisterhood.

Opening Night

Much excitement was in the air as women arrived on Thursday, the spirit of which continued throughout the entire weekend. Local Pastor Ken Doo of the Las Vegas Family Church welcomed the ladies warmly, delighted to see so many women come to the Founder's home and residence. He expressed his heartfelt greeting and best wishes for a successful conference.

"If I could change one thing in the world today, what would it be?"



A very appropriate ice-breaker lead by WFWP USA Administrator, Kiyomi Schmidt, opened the heart of each woman in the room. Each person had to answer the question on a Post-It: “If I could change one thing in the world today, what would it be?” Submissions were mixed and redistributed, and each sentence was read out loud by someone different than the original author. The responses included messages like: end all wars, stop racism, make sure all human beings have adequate education, end poverty, let all women know their value, and create better schools.

This exercise showed that we were all already on the same page and described the task of peace leaders and our purpose for coming, so that we all felt we are in the right place at the right time.

Opening with a Prayer for Peace and Healing and Why We Are Here

Vice President Katarina Connery, who served as an excellent emcee throughout the full program, called President Angelika Selle to the stage to welcome all present. President Selle began by asking everyone to stand and honor those who passed in the massacre and their families with a moment of silence and followed by her heartfelt prayer. She then gave a brief overview of the internal and external purpose of this year’s retreat and seminar all revolving around this year’s theme: “Igniting a Culture of Heart.”



Morning Sessions

Each day began with a morning session to awaken the spirit and body. Spiritual readings and words of Mother and Father Moon, music, internal guidance, and pair share created awareness of the profound spiritual roots of WFWP, the depth of heart of the founders for God and humanity, and the call on all women and mothers at this time to “educate and nurture the world with Mother’s Heart,” as Mother Moon urged.

Day One –Connecting to the Vision and Mission of WFWP in action

The “**What is WFWP?**” session was a refresher and eye-opener for many new participants, and showed the long term members of WFWP that their sacrifice and investment over many years is bearing great fruit. As President Selle narrated the colorful slides from national to global levels, all were able to see the big picture of the vision in action.

Vice-President Connery continued with slides highlighting the many new and more recent developments of WFWP USA, such as the webinars, Leadership of the Heart Curriculum, Become a Friend feature on the website, and more. One lady remarked, “I just saw the Philosophy of Peace in action, [and it was] very inspiring!”

The presentation was followed by a lively activity in which the participants were divided according to age group, to discuss what each was looking for at their stage in life. These desired goals and traits were then sorted into WFWP themes, so that we could realize what WFWP has to personally offer each of us.

Pres. Selle and Vice Pres. Katarina gave an overview of purpose of the Leadership of the Heart Curriculum as well as a taste of the first part of three, entitled *Discover the Leader Within*.

Self-Care and Self-Worth



We played a recording of **Ambassador Suzan Johnson Cook** when she spoke for WFWP in July of this year. She highlighted one important point: to make sure and take a “selah,” or a break, pause, and time for regrouping and nurturing the self. She inspired the ladies to the point of applause.

Vice President Juanita Pierre-Louis, who founded Life-Healing Ministries, energized the group with a song, “Waging War,” sung a cappella, and shared about healing oneself and keeping a sound mind, spirit, and body.

Tanya Selle, daughter of Pres. Selle, enlightened the ladies with a presentation on self-esteem and

confidence. She had us repeat the mantra, “I can do this,” five times, starting with a meek pose and voice, incrementally growing to a powerful pose at the top of our lungs, allowing us to feel free and let loose.

Christina Kartel, former WFWP USA Administrator, spoke on her favorite topic of “Dress for Success” and gave tips for makeup, clothing color choices, and more.

Overall the point was that women and mothers need to learn how to take care of themselves, honor their body, keep their spirit high, and also look their best, representing WFWP and Mother Moon.

The **Take a Selah Activity** was designed to give back to our chair ladies and supporters. WFWP staff had prepared facial masks to use, and scented bath “teas” of Epsom salt, lavender, and chamomile to mix, bag, and take home. One young lady and masseuse, Youngwha Grice, provided massages, which was highly appreciated!

The day ended with a **Friendship Bridge of Peace**. The ladies were separated into two lines. One pair at a time, the ladies met together on center stage to receive the surprise of a new friend and sister. The new friendships created were celebrated with some lively dancing led by dance instructor Concha Marchitelli.



Day Two – Practical Tools to create growth and impact

The ladies began to delve into professional training and information. Vice President Katarina Connery introduced the long-awaited and sorely needed **WFWP USA’s Chapter Manual**, which she had carefully put together. This practical manual and guidelines were designed to assist the ladies in the field to run a successful chapter in alignment with all chapters in the US. Mrs. Connery gave an overview of its contents, highlighting important topics including developing your own leadership skills, passions, and priorities, building a diverse team where your weaknesses are your teammates’ strengths, and emphasizing the culture of empowerment instead of hierarchy.

As financial transparency is an integral part of the new culture, Mrs. Irmgard Baynes, WFWP USA Financial Administrator, enlightened the audience with our funding sources, how they are invested, and bookkeeping tips.

Hanabeta Deshotel, Membership Coordinator of WFWP USA, surprised us all with her passionate, eloquent, motivational, and also informational presentation on why membership is important, giving many suggestions, ideas, and pointers as to how the chapters and/or individuals can increase their numbers.

Schools of Africa

Everyone enjoyed hearing from our Schools of Africa Coordinator, Mrs. Fannie Smith, who over the last few years invested her mind and soul into this project, shared about the current state of fundraisers for Africa. Then, as always, she honored the efforts and accomplishments of several chapters with lovely gifts for each chapter representative. She also surprised the staff at HQ with a small token of appreciation with handmade pottery, thanking everyone for all their hard work.



Outreach with Heart was the next session, shared by Pres. Selle, and Mrs. Aimmee Kodachian, two women who love this area of their work. Pres. Selle emphasized that the first product you sell is YOU, so take time to study and understand what you represent, and own the vision. **Talk show host Aimmee Kodachian** followed with a most succinct and poignant talk highlighting 4 types of people, and how to interact with them to develop a comfortable reciprocal relationship. She said “You have to know who you are talking to!”

Time for action and setting goals! Participants had the opportunity to create SMART (Specific Measurable Attainable Relevant Timely) goals. After spiritual and practical pointers for goal setting, each region gathered and discussed their goals. Several people shared, and it was quite inspiring to see that the seminar had made an impact and re-inspired ladies who have given so much already.

The evening ended with reflections from each participant and a heart-warming movie, “Hidden Figures.”



Day Three - Outings and Networking

On the last morning, Vice President Pierre-Louis and President Selle took turns to share about their experiences with Mother Moon and WFWP International President Yeon Ah Moon, about their heart, and how they expressed their feminine type of leadership style at this time. Both ladies also represented black

and white America, and as they exhibited their heart of oneness and love, they inspired many ethnic participants, since racism is quite prevalent in our nation. In fact, several African American and African women expressed their hope in WFWP, that this organization will be a catalyst for bridging the racial divide in America.

The rest of the day after breakfast was reserved for outings and free time: one group ventured out to the Red Rock Canyon to enjoy God's creation, and the other group visited Father and Mother Moon's former residence and the shooting memorial site.

Those who went to the former residence re-experienced what it was like when both founders were actively working. Rev. Doo, Pres. Selle, Las Vegas Chairwoman Mary Hida, and local member Lorna Todd (she was employed there at one time) recounted many deep moments.

The group then drove up to the Memorial Site, the Welcome to Las Vegas sign, in order to pay their respect, love, and prayers. The night before the visit, all retreat participants signed a poster from WFWP USA. Each lady placed a bouquet of flowers alongside the names and photos of ascended souls. We prayed surrounding the WFWP poster on the fence. Bystanders were moved and participated silently, as our women ended with the song "America the Beautiful." Compared to the night visit two days before, the site seemed brighter to me, because of the love that is being poured out there by so many at all hours of the day. We felt that our prayers were appreciated by the souls, and we committed to continue to pray for their families who are still hurting.



Conclusion

This ended our amazing and unforgettable retreat and seminar 2017. Just like the city of Las Vegas will not be the same again, our women feel that something has shifted in their hearts and minds during this retreat, transformation has taken place, and they are going home with deeper love, stronger commitment, and greater hope.

Our deepest gratitude goes to God, our Founders (whose presence and guidance we felt throughout), our devoted and hardworking staff, and all chairwomen and members or guests who have invested into WFWP throughout the years. There is no doubt that **together** we can make peace a reality.



Reflections

"I learned to let go, and let God. I try to control everything and God has told me multiple times, multiple ways, and I have been resisting. I will own it now."

"The dynamic duo of Angelika and Katarina was excellent! Angelika's vision and how she expressed her heart and the heart of Heavenly Mother was deeply moving as always. Katarina's insight and organizational/ development skills are superb. I could listen to her for days."

"The format of the retreat was excellent. By that I mean - the flow of the workshops and how each one moved from the general to the specific, and from ideology to hands-on tools, with ample time in between to rest and reflect."

"Thank you so much for putting on such an extraordinary retreat. The location was marvelous. The presentations were informative and inspiring, and provided lots of tools which are useful for our chapters. The group activities were good even though we had short time; it helped sisters to open up a bit and bond more. Throughout the retreat we felt so much love."

Tours:

- **Former residence of Reverend and Mrs. Moon:** *Even though I had visited the house in Las Vegas twice before, this time, having the chance to see their bedroom reminded me of the old (Family Federation for World Peace) Chongpa-dong church in Korea. We used to visit and pray there. We toured their rooms and even seeing where Reverend Moon used to cut members' hair was moving.*
- **The memorial place:** *Seeing people there who don't even know the victims but were praying/ having a moment of silence made me feel hope, love, and pain at the same time. We really do need peace to be ushered quickly in the world, and most importantly we need true love.*