

# CHRISTIAN & JULIANNE (KRUEGER & LEE)

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## Christian

### Where are you based?

Switzerland

### Any particular experiences that made you want to explore "human flourishing"?

Most spiritual traditions teach us that we will find wisdom in silence. And yet we think too much, talk too much and do too much. I would like to explore how human beings can flourish in ways that are close to what the wisdom traditions preached. I'm interested to know if today's research findings bring us closer to that wisdom or take us farther away from it. Does today's definition of "flourishing" include this kind of spiritual wisdom?

### What do you think you most need at this moment to flourish?

To sit in silence. I respect and follow Sri Ramana Maharshi's teachings that the truth reveals itself when the ego has dissolved. I regard this to be the ultimate flourishing. I would like to abide in that state.

### Do you have a regular spiritual/religious practice? If so, please describe briefly including how long you have been practicing.

I have been doing my daily meditation for over 50 years.

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Christian Krüger(or Krueger) is Chairman of Krüger Holding AG.. Krüger Company provides solutions for cooling, heating, dehumidifying, and water damage restoration. Christian has led the family company since the age of 24 and is the third generation of his family to do so.

Two major experiences helped shape Christian's life view. One, as a student, he became involved with the international think tank Club of Rome, which produced *The Limits to Growth*, the best-selling environmental book that raised awareness worldwide about the need for sustainable growth. This experience helped him to see the global impact that bold thinking and smart action can bring. Two, for 15 years since the age of 21, he spent one

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month every spring in the remote mountains of South India with an Indian Swami who taught him how to give with love and sit in silence.

Christian is a firm believer that change occurs first with the changes in one's inner self, and this spiritual approach has been at the core of his philanthropy. Christian founded the Krüger Foundation and Krüger Foundation for Child Aid in India, and through these foundations, has worked to help disadvantaged children, refugees, and various spiritual institutions in India and other places in the world. In recent years, Christian and his wife Julianne have been organizing convenings on spirituality to help others connect to their true selves. He has also dedicated more than 40 years to finding alternative energy solutions by funding various research projects.

# CHRISTIAN & JULIANNE (KRUEGER & LEE)

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## Julianne

### **Where are you based?**

Switzerland

### **Any particular experiences that made you want to explore "human flourishing"?**

The pandemic exposed many of the social, political and environmental issues that were lying below the surface. The lockdown also made us sit still in one place and face ourselves. There is now a rush to return to the "normal", but before we start flying again and leave these days behind, I would like to pause and think about what it is that we went through. What should I fill my life with when everything we take for granted can be so completely shut down overnight and we aren't able to meet our loved ones? What should we empty our lives of? What should the "new normal" look like? I would also like to hear from others about what their experiences have been like.

### **What do you think you most need at this moment to flourish?**

A deeper direct experience of myself and the human condition so that I can understand better why we behave the way we do and how we can transcend our egos. Meditation has been helpful in this regard. More kindness and compassion to myself and others. A radical recognition and acceptance of how we are all interconnected.

### **Do you have a regular spiritual/religious practice? If so, please describe briefly including how long you have been practicing.**

I've been doing spiritual practices, such as energy work and meditation, on and off for over 20 years. These days, I meditate daily. I have tremendous respect for the very detailed understanding of the mind that the Buddha shared with the world and would like to study Buddhism more systematically.

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Julianne Lee is the CEO of JULIANNE LEE & Co., which publishes ARS VITAE, a publication series about what it means to live well. She and her husband Christian also co-founded Krueger & Lee, a Swiss-based non-profit organization, which organizes forums on spirituality



and science and meditation retreats. Julianne's work is about making the wisdom and practices of spiritual traditions accessible for the contemporary seeker.

Previously, Julianne was the first Spokesperson of the National Security Council of Korea, and the youngest Presidential Secretary and Spokesperson for Foreign Press Affairs in President Roh Moo-Hyun's administration in Korea. Prior to joining the government, Julianne was correspondent and news anchor at SBS, a major TV network in Korea. In 1994, she became the first female journalist in Korea to become solo anchor of a primetime news hour.

Julianne received her B.A. from Brown University and M.A. from Harvard University. In recognition of her unique career, Julianne was named Young Global Leader and New Asian Leader by the World Economic Forum as well as the Next Generation Leader by the Korea Foundation. She currently serves on the boards of the Korea Foundation and Krüger Foundation.

# MOHAMMED & RODNEY (FETZER INSTITUTE)

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## **Mohammed**

**Where are you based?**

Kalamazoo, Michigan, USA

**Any particular experiences that made you want to explore "human flourishing"?**

Human flourishing is part of my current work and a general topic I am interested in.

**What do you think you most need at this moment to flourish?**

Peace and calm. A community to support me in my quest to become a better human.

**Do you have a regular spiritual/religious practice? If so, please describe briefly including how long you have been practicing.**

Islamic practices, quiet reflection, and meditation.

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I believe in solving problems and seeing opportunities in the most complicated and ambiguous of problems. In my area, we do advance reconnaissance and probe the unknown in the course of our programs and partnerships, which can span various topics from civic virtues and American democracy to social teachings of the faith traditions and social transformation.

I am especially fond of a collaboration with Healthy Minds Innovations to develop an app designed to optimize wellbeing via spiritual practices—neuroscience meets contemplation meets technology. This project not only has a functional side to it, it also addresses the mysteries of the mind, the question of purpose, and the invisible bonds in life. In all of this work, I particularly appreciate connecting with younger thinkers, scholars, and students of all kinds.

My formal education is in the humanities, social science, and human-computer interaction. My personal interests have no boundaries—I actually believe in blurring boundaries of any



kind, be it disciplines, functions, or identities. It's the spaces in between where creativity happens.

# MOHAMMED & RODNEY (FETZER INSTITUTE)

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## Rodney

### **Where are you based?**

Kalamazoo, Michigan, USA

### **Any particular experiences that made you want to explore "human flourishing"?**

My grandmother used to say all the time, "We are living in complicated times." As I look out in the world today, this seems to be even more so true. I am curious.

### **What do you think you most need at this moment to flourish?**

More time meditating on the theme of love - what is the distinction between being loved and being love itself.

### **Do you have a regular spiritual/religious practice? If so, please describe briefly including how long you have been practicing.**

Morning practices: reading, journaling and meditation; morning prayers.

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Rodney is an openly gay person of faith, a community organizer, and a reverend. Rodney currently is the Vice President of Ally Development at the Fetzer Institute, a foundation whose work is focused on building the spiritual foundation for a loving world. His role is to build out a network of friends and funding partners who desire to co-conspire in transforming the world into a more loving home for all.

Rodney most recently came from Demos, a "think-and-do" tank that powers the movement for a just, inclusive, multiracial democracy." Rodney served there in many roles, most recently as Executive Vice President leading the organization's programmatic, movement building, and communications functions. Prior to Demos, Rodney worked at the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force—the nation's oldest national LGBTQ advocacy organization—where his work focused on disrupting the national narrative that LGBTQ people aren't people of faith and that people of faith don't support LGBTQ equality and running smart field campaigns to win power for marginalized communities.



Earlier in Rodney's career, he co-founded Expansion Church where he served as its spiritual director, regularly preaching on Sundays using a framework of liberation theology. Rodney also served as the Executive Director of Resource Generation, an organization comprised of 18-35 year olds with access to wealth who are among the richest top 10% of individuals or families in the United States. Rodney received his Bachelor degree from the University of North Texas and a Master of Divinity from Union Theological Seminary in New York City. Rodney currently resides in Kalamazoo, MI.

# MELISSA (KRUEGER & LEE/SYNERGOS)

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## **Melissa**

### **Where are you based?**

Prague, Czech Republic

### **Any particular experiences that made you want to explore "human flourishing"?**

I am curious to understand the concept "human flourishing" more, particularly from a scientific perspective. I am energized at the idea that as we focus on flourishing we are setting our intent to create something positive. So often we hear about intractable problems in the world, like climate change. This makes me, at times, feel worried and powerless. I want to use my skills, talents, abilities to create a flourishing world. I look forward to gaining more knowledge and skills to do so.

### **What do you think you most need at this moment to flourish?**

For the past 4 years, I have been on a deep dive journey of self-understanding and healing. At this moment, I need community to share where I am on my path, the learnings I have gathered so far and to gain what I can from them their wisdom and different life experiences. I feel a desire to be connected to people who are also on this journey and approach life with curiosity and can understand where I am at this point in a life transition.

### **Do you have a regular spiritual/religious practice? If so, please describe briefly including how long you have been practicing.**

I have a daily ritual of meditation, stretching and journaling. I have been doing this more regularly during this time of Covid, so for the past 18 months. Prior to that I practiced yoga and meditated around 2-3 times a week.

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Melissa Durda is a philanthropy consultant leading a number of mindfulness and spirituality-related projects. At Krueger & Lee, a Swiss-based non-profit organization dedicated to providing programs and publications on spirituality to help answer some of the



fundamental questions of life, she is active in organizing the Spirituality & Science Forum and the Spiritual Book Salon.

At Synergos, a global nonprofit organization that brings people together to help solve complex issues around the world by advancing bridging leadership, Melissa oversees the *Spiritual Civilization* and *Funders of Mindfulness & Spirituality* programs for members of the *Global Philanthropists Circle*, where members seek to increase awareness of what drives people to work towards the greater good in order to accelerate positive change. She is the Executive Producer of the *Cultivate the Soul: Stories of Purpose-Driven Philanthropy* podcast series. Melissa is a certified holistic life coach and the founder of Durda Holistic.

## JOANNA (KRUEGER & LEE)

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### Joanna

#### **Where are you based?**

Prague, Czech Republic

#### **Any particular experiences that made you want to explore "human flourishing"?**

Human flourishing is defined as "an effort to achieve self-actualization and fulfillment within the context of a larger community of individuals" and self-actualization is something that I've been working on in the past few years. I am very interested in learning how human flourishing can be explained from a scientific angle to deepen my understanding on the subject. I look forward to advance in my flourishing journey while making a difference in the journey of those I meet.

#### **What do you think you most need at this moment to flourish?**

There are a few things I believe I presently need in my journey. 1) Cultivate positive relationships with like-minded individuals. 2) Find my purpose and live it. 3) Accept and love myself fully.

#### **Do you have a regular spiritual/religious practice? If so, please describe briefly including how long you have been practicing.**

I do meditate and journal almost daily. Not at a set time, it is not a routine, instead I follow my intuition and do it when I feel I want/need it most. I've been doing this for the past 3 years. I recently began the practice of Japa meditation, which I practice while I walk in nature.

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Joanna Safarik is a committed professional with a diverse set of skills and experiences stemming from her eclectic career spanning five continents.



She worked as Political Action Committee Manager for the Credit Union National Association in Washington, D.C. where she excelled at fundraising and planning and executing major political events. She later joined a major U.S. national political organization in Capitol Hill as a Major Donor Program Director and was part of a winning presidential re-election campaign.

In Europe, she has collaborated with the Czech Parliamentary Institute as researcher on U.S. campaign finance law and later took a career detour into Alternative Education. Later, following her passion for social justice and development equality, she teamed up with one of the largest NGOs in Central and Eastern Europe to consult and assist on an education project in Angola. She served as Director of Outreach for a Czech-American social impact enterprise and co-founded PeaceJam Czech Republic, an affiliate of the PeaceJam Foundation whose mission is "to create young leaders committed to positive change in themselves, their communities, and the world through the inspiration of Nobel **Peace** Laureates who pass on the spirit, skills, and wisdom they embody."

Joanna has a B.A. in Economics from the University of Maryland, a Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management from the University of Chicago and is currently completing her M.B.A. studies.