

# The Inaugural Learning Companionship International Life Work Conference Malaysia, 2023





The first international conference organized by AKASHA and co-organized by the School of Reconciliation, IofC Indonesia, was successfully carried out and left very lasting impressions and stories for each participant.

The conference happened on 3-6 June 2023 at the Armada Hotel, Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia, with the theme of “Remaking My Life; I am not Going Through All This Alone.” A theme that implies that whatever life difficulties we have experienced, we will always have a support group that will always be there for us.



**There were 181 participants from 14 countries, 175 adults and 6 children. 113 Malaysian, 22 Indonesian, 22 Mainland Chinese, 11 from Taiwan, 13 from Hongkong, Cambodia, Japan, South Korea, South Africa, Nagaland and Philippines. Participants from Indonesia came in droves as many as 19 adults and 3 kids.**

This is the largest number in the history of lofC Indonesia sending delegates or participants to an international lofC conference. Each participant gave their best effort to join the conference starting from applying for the passport, booking the flight and paying the conference fees by themselves.

However, this is not sudden. All the Indonesian participants have studied at IGCP (Inner Growth Companionship Program) and the School of Reconciliation for more than 1 year. This participation happened because most of them have studied in the School of Reconciliation and found the importance of sharing and learning from others' life stories.



A group of approximately 20 people, including men and women of various ages, are standing on a stage. They are all holding small, lit candles in their hands, raising them in the air. They are dressed in a mix of traditional national costumes and modern attire. The stage is lit with warm, golden light, and there are stage lights visible above them. In the foreground, the silhouettes of an audience are visible, looking towards the stage.

# Opening

The conference opened beautifully on Saturday night, where every participant wore their traditional national costume. In the Opening, the committee from AKASHA performed a welcoming dance to all participants. Then continued to call all the representatives to the stage to receive a candle, then to light it as a symbol of hope for life. Whatever it is in life, there will always be hope.





Then we exchanged gifts to value our partnership between countries who have worked together with AKASHA including the School of Reconciliation. We gave a map of Indonesia and batik clothes to AKASHA as it is our highest cultural value for Indonesian and we received an award charter made by pewter from AKASHA. It was a very beautiful night to start with for all.



# Quiet Time

Every morning the conference started with Quiet Time (silence to listen to the inner voice), followed by Panel discussion, sharing session, and in the afternoon we had an open space session where we could select and initiate the topics we were passionate to address and form groups to brainstorm and progress them.

The first morning Quiet Time (QT) was delivered by Charles Ooi Hui Kwan, a senior of lofC from Penang Malaysia. It was about Connection - Learning from Life, when Charles took the lead to share his life story and where he found the QT was very helpful to guide his life.

The second QT was led by Fung Ming from Hong Kong. It was about Correction. After sharing her life story, Fung Ming asked us to reflect on “What are the things in life that I need to put it right?”. All participants took their time to have a moment of silence and share their reflection in the Learning Group Circle.

Then the next day of QT was led by Megumi Kanematsu from Japan. It was about Direction. She shared her life story, then Megumi asked us to reflect on “Is there anything we feel is missing in our lives?” All participants took their time to have a moment of silence and share their reflection in the Learning Circle Group.







# Plenary

The next session was Plenary; As I am, So Is My Family. The speakers were Nenden (Indonesia) as keynote speaker, Huda (Indonesia), Victor Kung (Taiwan), NS Loh (Malaysia), Vitono Haralu (India) as speakers, and Meir (Indonesia) as the host.

Nenden shared about how she first got to know lofC and had many reconciliations with her family, so that made her more committed to working with lofC, establishing the School of Reconciliation (SR), becoming a Trustbuilding and CoP trainer, and now she is the National Program Coordinator of lofC Indonesia.

The outcome of her hard work in SR is that most who came to this conference are her SR students. They joined her classes, and this is a celebration of her good work for 10 years of establishing SR.

Huda shared that his family background has set an example for getting along and interacting with people who are different from him. Huda's father ran a business with the Chinese. This is a legacy for Huda to continue to be a bridge between one group and another. It is in line with what he is currently doing at lofC Indonesia with the Trustbuilding Program.

Mr. Loh shared how he is finally free from the guilt that was haunting him for years because of his mother's death. Then Mr. Kung said that inner healing is an inevitable thing. Everyone must go through that process. It cannot be avoided.

The next day of Plenary was talked about "As I am. So Is My Community". There were Renjou (Taiwan) as keynote speaker, Isabelle (Malaysia), Dr Wang Bing (Shanghai, China) and Hayati (Indonesia) as speakers, and WenY (Malaysia) as the host.

Renjou started his speech as a great master of speech on healing. He mentioned that "A matured life is a life that can stand hurt and wounds. Many people are suffering in relationships because they are not able to communicate.

We need to see ourselves properly, and it means that we see our past-self and present-self properly. And this is just the beginning of our healing journey. Then, he invited the participants to enter a meditative state to embrace their inner children with positive words. Everyone was touched and most of them cried.

Then Isabelle shared about her relationship with her mom, as she rarely received proper appreciation from her mom. Due to the work of reconciliation she did with her mom, she finally received a long and proper appreciation written by her mom.

Then from Dr. Wang, he said that some problems are not meant to be resolved, only observed. Also he said that even in death we learn how to move on in life.

Hayati shared how much gratitude she had for being out-front with all respected people. In the midst of her journey of healing, she found that lofC and SR has helped her a lot, and this space for growth needs to be expanded and experienced by many. One outcome was that she took the chance to be the National Coordinator in Indonesia.

The last day of the Plenary was about "As I am. So Is My Country". There was Nandor Lim (Malaysia) as the keynote speaker and the host, Dr. Asma Abdullah (Malaysia), WenY Yu (Malaysia), Fung Ming (Hong Kong), Huang Kun (China) were the speakers.



Nandor shared:

“We found many things happening in our own nation. When you run away from your nation to work or live in another nation, does it solve the problem? This is deep input to reflect on because we know that a few friends of ours were running away from Malaysia. Then the song reminds me that “It’s better to light one candle, than to curse the darkness”. And no matter how much you talk about change, it is useless if you do not put it into action. And while doing your part for your nation, people might dislike you or even hate you. Mature life is when I allow myself to be disliked, misunderstood, and hated by others.”



# Open Space

In this session, Nandor explained the 4 principles of Open Space;

- 1) Whoever comes are the right people
- 2) Whenever it starts is the right time to start
- 3) Whatever happens is the only thing that could have happened
- 4) When it's over, it's over

Huda and Hayati opened a workshop called "Friends For Life". There were more than 10 people coming to this workshop. After experiencing the cards, they shared their findings, such as these cards are magical in helping them open about something that happens to them. It engages well with something that they feel vulnerable about, and it is a fun way to start a conversation with friends.

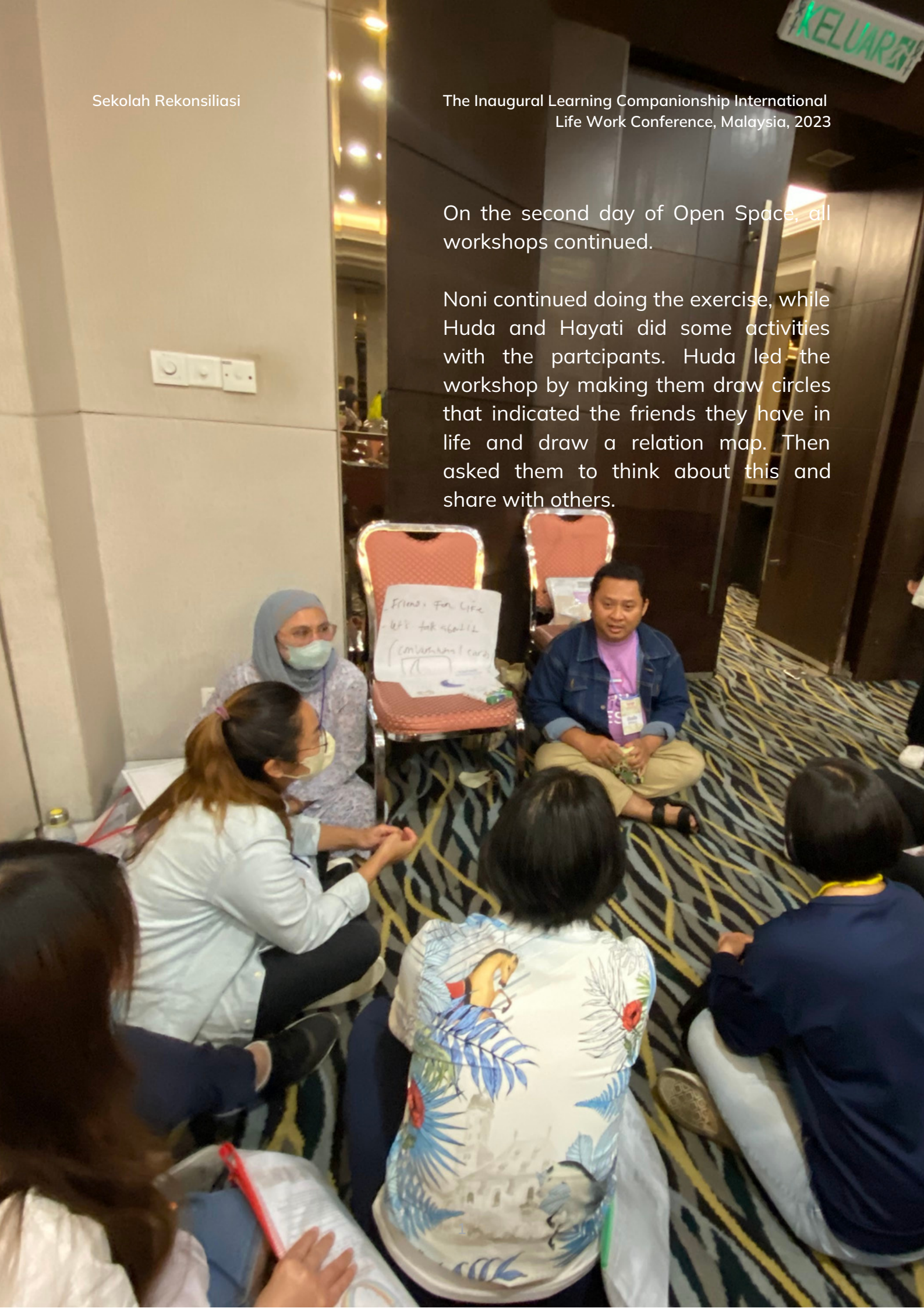
Noni is very active with gyms in Indonesia, she opened a space of "How to motivate ourselves to do exercise routinely?". This space also received more than 10 people. They were very enthusiastic about doing the exercise. Dessy opened a workshop, "Being a busy and learning Mom". She wants to gather working moms who have struggled with domestic work to share and support each other. Unfortunately nobody came, then Dessy joined the other workshop.





On the second day of Open Space, all workshops continued.

Noni continued doing the exercise, while Huda and Hayati did some activities with the participants. Huda led the workshop by making them draw circles that indicated the friends they have in life and draw a relation map. Then asked them to think about this and share with others.





# Living Library

Living library is a session where we become a book that can be read and be learned by others. Sharing is part of the healing process because when we are able to share our life stories, wounds, traumas and our problems, it means we have accepted reality and have the courage to recover; and to let others learn from our stories and make us more comfortable with all that happened.

From Indonesia, there was Ari who told his story that when he was a kid, he did not receive respect from his parents. So even as a kid, the need to be respected is very important because that's how we learn to respect other people. Berlin shared about being a sandwich generation and at the same time working hard to accept the situation and trying to improve relationships with her parents and siblings.

Mela talked about her relationship with her parents who were unable to accompany her when it was difficult at school but now she has to help her parents and family in every difficult situation. Pipit talked about the impact of being raised by someone else (her aunt) and the difficulty of connecting with her real parents.







# Creative Cultural Night

This evening, we did Cultural Night by performing any cultural dance, singing, etc from every country and individual. They performed songs, dance, Kungfu, dance with story creatively and beautifully.

We Indonesians performed one dance from Maumere, east part of Indonesia, and we also sang a song of Dayung Sampan with the team of AKASHA. It was symbolic of our fellowship and partnership. It was such an impressive and warm night for everyone.

After the Cultural Night, we continued selling the merchandise from Indonesia. THANKS to all friends who bought our merch. From this sale we received MYR 2,120.00 and IDR 250,000 including donation.







# Closing

On the last day, we had a “Determination and Commitment of Life”. Everybody was asked to come to the front, sat on the chairs that were provided. Then taking turns to come forward and say what we want to do after this. Friends from Indonesia spoke on this were Nenden, Etun, and Ninis. Nenden shared that she felt grateful for the loss of the baby before this conference so that she could come to this conference. She expressed that she actually lost nothing. She declared that she had the calling to be a full timer in this work.

Since 10 years ago, AKASHA has accompanied lofC ID providing training and helping the team growing so we become a strong team like today, giving its own impression and chemistry, so at this conference we express appreciation and gratitude to each other by giving souvenirs so that the relationship between lofC ID and AKASHA is getting stronger and have an impact not only for the two teams but also for the two countries of Indonesia and Malaysia. We hope that this collaboration and assistance will continue for a longer time.







After closing, some of us had a chit chat with everyone and took a lot of photographs with all participants. One of them was with friends from Shanghai, China. This was the first experience for most of the participants who are Chinese to interact with Muslims.

For them, this was an interesting and valuable experience because they can interact directly, can break down a lot of prejudices and bond with new friendships and experiences.



# Here are the testimonials and comments from Indonesian participants:

- When some of us prepared to go to this conference, the preparation itself had given us an opportunity to connect to our parents.
- For some of us, this is our first experience being abroad and attending conferences to meet and learn from other participants
- This Conference is an opportunity to to reconnect with our inner-selves from busy work while in Indonesia
- This journey also serves as a proof to our inner-child that they can love themselves better and they can do it!
- Learning Circle is an amazing place to break down the fear within and finally to find the connection as a human being. At first, it felt awkward to connect with Chinese friends, but it was blended and very heart-welcoming to Muslims and Indonesia, so some of us want to learn Mandarin after the conference.
- Connected with the core of our fears, so that we know more about what we want to do.
- Elders at lofC are very wise, powerful and in a continuous learning mode. Some of us want to have partners like elders in lofC, to both learn and grow together.
- It was never imagined that an International conference would be as relaxed as this with lofC until there was a “Let's sleep space” in the Open Space session.

Everybody went home with  
a new hope and energy to  
continue life and keen to dig  
more about themselves in  
the School of Reconciliation.

# Kudos to All!!



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