

StirFry Seminars

What Stands Between Us



Many viewers have written to us wondering what to do after seeing one of our films. The most common question is how they will be able to handle all of the various feelings that come up and what kinds of questions would be most effective in having a healthy and authentic dialogue. For a long time, many presenters simply opened it up for a general discussion, only to find participants becoming more polarized and angry at each other.

For that reason, Lee Mun Wah and a group of other StirFry diversity trainers, created The Film Guides, a comprehensive set of questions corresponding to specific scenes from both of our best selling films, *The Color of Fear - Part One* and *Last Chance for Eden - Part One*. The questions were created to stimulate personal reflections as well as looking at larger societal questions and perspectives. For example, in *The Color of Fear - Part One*, we provide 40 specific scenes from the film. Each of the scenes is no more than a minute or so, highlighting a specific cultural concept or issue being brought up. We did this because so many viewers took certain scenes out of context and missed the cultural issues trying to be presented. A professor in Vermont cited 183 cultural concepts introduced in *The Color of Fear*.

We strongly encourage folks to view each scene more than once, because viewers often hear only what they want to hear or see only what they want to see. It was our hope that when viewers hear not only what was said, but what caused the emotional outburst and how it was received, they will begin to notice the intent and impact of each person's communication. After seeing a specific scene, we then provide a series of questions for that particular scene as well as instructions on how to facilitate a personal and meaningful group discussion. We strongly recommend that you take our Film Discussion Classes and our Mindful Facilitation Trainings in one of our many National Training Centers throughout the country. These trainings will provide you with countless exercises to present before showing our films and afterwards, as well as techniques on how to mindfully facilitate a group discussion where everyone leaves feeling heard and validated.

For example, there is a scene in *The Color of Fear* where Victor Lewis becomes very angry at how David Christensen keeps invalidating his statements.. In our Film Guides, we show that particular scene in context and provide the following questions that can be downloaded.

Victor said that when he hears a white person say, "why can't we all just treat each other as human beings", it means "why can't we just all pretend to be white people." Do you agree? Why or why not?

"When we give up who we are to become Americans, we know that we're dying from it," said Victor. "You're dying from it too, but you don't know it necessarily. Get ethnic. . . ." What do you think Victor means? How does this relate to you personally?

Have you ever felt culturally invisible? How did that happen? What part did you play in that and what part did society play?



As you can see, the questions were created to stimulate self-reflection and the sharing of personal stories. At the end of each scene are also a set of homework assignments that will bring their experience into larger context. Numerous folks have written to us that these questions in the Film Guides have sparked incredible discussions lasting for weeks and brought students closer together in ways they had never imagined possible.

So, what are you waiting for? Together we can engage in the type of conversations we have always dreamed about but didn't know where to begin..

April Worldwide Celebrations

Palm Sunday (Protestant, Roman Catholic), Passover (Jewish), National Tartan Day (Scottish-American), Vesak - Buddha's Birthday (Buddhist), Sinhala and Tamil New Year (Sri Lanka), Baisakhi or Vaisakhi (Sikh), Yom Hashoah/ Holocaust Memorial Day (Jewish), Earth Day (Everyone), St. George's Day (English), Beltane (Celtic)