

StirFry Seminars & Consulting

June 2011

On The Road Again

During one of my workshops in the Midwest, a white woman in a wheel chair, by the name of Francis, raised her hand and shared how she was leaving this city because of being raped by a Palestinian man she had gone out on a date with. The audience was stunned, as well myself. With tears in her eyes she recounted how traumatized she felt afterwards at the sight of any middle eastern men she encountered in her neighborhood and at parks. I had



mixed reactions to her story: compassion and sadness. Compassion that she had been raped, and sadness that this particular experience now colored how she saw all Middle Eastern men.

Trying to feel my way through her story and also where to go next, I picked up something about the way she was sitting in her wheel chair that seemed unnatural or uncomfortable for her. And so, out of curiosity, I asked her, "Was your being in this wheel chair congenital or something that happened to you later in your life?" Surprised at what I had surmised, she replied, "No. I got into this wheel chair about two years ago because my ex-husband was physically abusive and one day he threw me against the wall and fractured my spine." There was a huge gasp in the audience.... almost like wanting to know what happened and then not wanting to know too much.

As I stood there listening, I was surprised at how detached she was in the telling of her story, but sensed it might be a way to protect herself from the enormity of what had happened and how it changed her life. And so, I asked her what was the ethnicity of her ex-husband and she replied, with some surprise to my question, that he was white. I think somewhere inside of me, I already knew that. You see, her story reminded me of something that an elderly African American man once said to a white man he was having a conflict with. "Why is it," he said, "that you want me to see you as an individual, but you keep referring to me as a group?" And so, I said to her, "So, you must hate all white men, too." She looked at me as if a veil had been lifted and she was facing herself for the first time. "That 's a good point. Why didn't I?" And then, like all good miracles that happen when the truth is revealed, a couple stood up and came down the stairs and stood next to her. They said to Francis that they were Palestinian and wanted her to know that they were angered and sad about what had happened her. They also wanted her to come to their home for dinner so that she could open her heart and come to understand that not all Palestinians are alike. They told her that Palestinians are kind, trustworthy and loving. Francis cried in their arms, as they too, couldn't stop sobbing.

Mother Teresa was right, "We have no peace, because we have forgotten that we belong to each other." Perhaps, on this day, because of what was shared and transpired, we all were reminded once again - we are not alone, we all belong to each other.

Cross-Cultural Facilitation Techniques

5-day Intensive for Diversity Trainers

Facilitated by Lee Mun Wah

Our most popular intensive! 2 dates to choose from!

June 22-26, 2011 or July 27-31, 2011

Weds-Sat: 9am-5pm • Sunday: 9am-2pm

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Facilitating a group with many cross-cultural perspectives and experiences requires a keen understanding and knowledge of how cultural differences can impact group dynamics, relationships and their sense of safety.

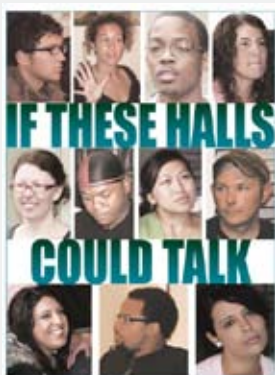
In this unique training, Lee Mun Wah will guide each participant through a series of exercises and mindful techniques that will enhance their understanding of the impact of culture on relationships, conflictual cultural situations, as well as how to develop a deeper and more authentic sense of community and openness within diverse groups.

For More Information: 510.204.8840 ext. 101 or www.stirfryseminars.com/BTC

! Special Products Sale !

30% off all regular priced diversity films/products now through June 30, 2011

Enter Coupon Code **SALE30** upon online checkout at www.stirfryseminars.com/store



Lee Mun Wah explores issues of race on American campuses with eleven students from all over the country in his explosive new film, *If These Halls Could Talk*. To view a short preview of the film, get more information or pre-order your copy, visit, www.stirfryseminars.com/store.

If you are interested in hosting Stirfry Seminars to preview the new film, *If These Halls Could Talk*, and have a diversity dialogue please contact Melissa Sweeney (melissa@stirfryseminars.com) today. We are also looking for groups to host premieres of the film upon its Fall 2011 release.

Release date: November 2011

Attention East Bay, California, Readers! We are looking for an ADA-accessible training space that Stirfry Seminars could utilize on an as-needed basis for our diversity trainings that have participants with special needs. If you know of a space that would be available over the weekend, let us know! We are hoping to offer an exchange—seats in our trainings for use of the space. Contact Melissa for more information (melissa@stirfryseminars.com).

A new book by Lee Mun Wah



For more information and to pre-order your copy, visit www.stirfryseminars.com/store

Release date:
Summer 2011

For StirFry's Calendar of Upcoming Events, please visit www.stirfryseminars.com/events

Contact Us: 510.204.8840 Trainings, Films & Diversity Products, ext. 101 www.stirfryseminars.com