



StirFry Seminars & Consulting

October 2013

EMBRACING OUR DIFFERENCES

Recently, at a training I was facilitating, a young white man adamantly shared that he didn't see differences in people and thought that my talking about our differences only added to our feelings of separation. He then asked me if I hated white people because I continually brought up the issue of racism. For a moment, I was stunned, not just because of his question, but rather what was beneath his inquiry: a questioning of my motives. Ah, how familiar this all seemed. I have had this scenario played out a hundred times in almost every imaginable setting, be it at a university, corporation, government or social agency or place of worship.

I remember once a reporter asked me to speak about inclusion and I replied, "Not unless you are willing to also have me talk about exclusion." In many ways, the reporter's question was a microcosm of a much larger argument facing this country – a continual need to move on and a deep desire to always appear 'together' and as 'one'. The underlying fear is that somehow any discussion of how divided and unequal we are will only serve to divide us. It is my feeling that it is our silence and our indifference that divides us and makes our relationships unsafe. It is our continuous need to avoid the 'hard discussions' and 'staying in the process' that makes us always searching for quick solutions with once-a-year diversity trainings and celebrations.

It has been my experience of over twenty years as a diversity trainer that we are afraid to talk about our differences because we continually see it as a 'negative' experience. That somehow if were to talk about our differences we would leave wounded and even further divided. The truth be told: We are already divided. Not because of our differences, but because of our indifference to truly 'seeing and appreciating each other'. We are divided because we blindly see 'the other' through our own lens, instead of being curious about another's experiences and perspectives. Anais Nin once wrote, "We don't see things as they are, we see them as we are."

And so, what if we did see 'color'? What would that mean? Who taught us that not seeing color was what people of color wanted or needed? And if we 'didn't see color' then why are we so divided by color? Unless, of course, someone is peeking...

So here is an exercise I created, entitled **Differences Exercise**:

"When did you first notice you were 'different'? How did that affect you and how does it affect you today?"

As Virginia Wolfe once said, "We are all different. What divides us is the value we place on those differences."

Lee Mun Wah



Future of Diversity University



A Program of StirFry Seminars & Consulting, Inc.

ANNOUNCING....STIRFRY SEMINAR'S NEW MINDFUL FACILITATION CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Late Registration Available Until November 1: \$500 DISCOUNT!

This 2-year program provides an online intensive level communication and facilitation training to those wishing to develop their cultural intelligence, individual and group process skills from a Mindful Facilitation and multicultural perspective. This program will also provide participants with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively work with educational and social institutions, professional environments, and diverse communities on diversity issues and cross cultural needs and concerns. Get more information and sign up today with the downloadable Registration Form at: <http://www.stirfryseminars.com/futureofdiversity/>

Online Training Program Started October 1, 2013

UPCOMING BERKELEY TRAINING CENTER WORKSHOP

Mastering Diversity & Facilitation • Level Two Workshop

November 15-17, 2013 • Facilitated by Lee Mun Wah

Friday 2-9 pm, Saturday 8 am-6 pm, Sunday 8 am-2 pm

Quan Yin Training Center • 2311 8th Street, Berkeley, CA

FOR MORE INFORMATION, OR TO REGISTER, PLEASE VISIT WWW.STIRFRYSEMINARS.COM/BTC

ON DEMAND DIGITAL STREAMING RENTALS OF STIRFRY FILMS!!

For the first time, Stirfry is making our films available on line/on demand for students & individuals via digitally streamed video. Here, you can view films such as The Color of Fear, Last Chance for Eden and Stolen Ground from the comfort of your own home for a small rental fee; rentals provide a link to the films online, good for 24-hours of viewing. Please note StirFry Seminars' Copyright and Use Agreement prior to purchase. (If instead, you prefer to own a dvd copy of our diversity training films, you can purchase them on the Stirfry Seminars & Consulting website at www.stirfryseminars.com.)

For questions, contact us at: products@stirfryseminars.com or call 510-204-8840 x100. www.diversitytrainingfilms.com

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STIRFRY FALL SALE!

Get 25% off for a limited time off of all regularly-priced diversity training materials (including Lee Mun Wah's newest book *Let's Get Real: What People of Color Can't Say & Whites Won't Ask About Racism* as well as his book *The Art of Mindful Facilitation*) Enter coupon code **NEWS25** upon online checkout at www.stirfryseminars.com/store.

Some restrictions apply. Expires November 30 2013



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StirFry Calendar of Upcoming Events

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| November 6-10, 2013 Oakland, CA | Asian American Educators Panel Discussion; Let's Get Real About Racism Workshop; The Art of Mindful Facilitation- Creating A Multiculturally Responsive Community Intensive Institute; If These Halls Could Talk- Film Showing & Diversity Dialogue National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME) Conference • Open to the Public |
| November 15-17, 2013** Berkeley CA | Mastering Diversity Training & Facilitaiton: Level Two Open to the Public • For more Information, visit www.stirfryseminars.com/BTC |
| November 23 & 24, 2013 Vallejo, CA | A National Conversation on Race: With Special Guest LeVar Burton! Saturday: "If These Halls Could Talk: Film Showing & Diversity Dialogue" (FREE) online tickets: vallejernationalconversationonrace.eventbrite.com Sunday: "Walking Each Other Home: Cross-Cultural Facilitation Training" (Sliding Scale) online tickets: vallejowalkingeachotherhome.eventbrite.com Open to the Public |

*** Held at the Quan Yin Training Center, 2311 8th Street, Berkeley, CA*

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

Contact Us: 510.204.8840 Trainings, Films & Diversity Products, ext. 103 • www.stirfryseminars.com • www.diversitytrainingfilms.com