

StirFry Seminars & Consulting

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HOW WE HAVE FAILED OUR WHITE STUDENTS (PART 2)

As has happened in classrooms all across this country, when racism is brought up, often white students become defensive, adversarial and in many cases, in denial that racism even exists. Faculties of color and even white instructors have often talked about being accused of 'reverse racism' and creating 'divisiveness' for even bringing up the issue of race or racism. I would like to propose that rather than labeling these white students as racist, that we look at how as educators and society as a whole have been a part of the problem. Here are some of my thoughts on how I believe we have failed our white students:

We only talk about inclusion and not exclusion

As a society we are constantly talking about inclusion—that we are “one people” and “one nation”. We have been trained and rewarded not to talk about exclusion—what divides us and how our schools, neighborhoods, workplaces and government play a part in that daily exclusion. So, when white students are faced with the discussion of slavery and the institution of white privilege and racism, their first reaction is that this is ‘dividing us’ or a ‘thing of the past’. Many white students become defensive and adversarial, as they have been taught to see themselves as having earned their privileges as individuals and not because of their skin color or as the result of a white-dominated society. Someone once said, “When the truth becomes too hard to bear, we make up another.” The work here is to help our white students see that even though they didn’t actually create these inequities of privilege, they benefit from them everyday and so will their children, simply by virtue of the color of their skin, their gender, their religion, their sexuality and their class status. As Virginia Wolf once wrote, “We are all different. It is the value we place on those differences that divides and separates us.”

White students have not been taught how to emotionally connect or to be aware when they are disconnected

Many white students are often not taught how to emotionally connect or to notice when they are disconnected from their feelings in moments of grief, anger or hurt. As a consequence they often do not understand the relevance in their own lives of empathy, self-reflection, and taking responsibility. They haven’t learned how to authentically apologize, to notice the intent and impact of their communications, or to be curious about how they have been dipped into their ‘whiteness’ by society, their families and teachers. This lack of knowledge keeps them from fully participating in diversity conversations and relationships because they have often been taught to be defensive, in denial or adversarial when confronted with what is missing in their relationships, especially with those who are different from themselves. Will Amado Syldor-Severino has labeled this the ‘privilege of numbness’: the ability to objectify and detach from the emotional trauma of racism by simply going ‘emotionally numb’ or by saying, “I don’t know.”

This is a four part series on how we have failed our white students and our students of color. Included in each article will be suggestions on how to create a culturally responsive classroom.



Looking for ways to begin diversity conversations in your classrooms and workplaces? Join our mailing list today to receive free handouts.

<http://www.stirfryseminars.com/resources/handouts.php>





Future of Diversity University

A Program of StirFry Seminars & Consulting, Inc.



MINDFUL FACILITATION CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

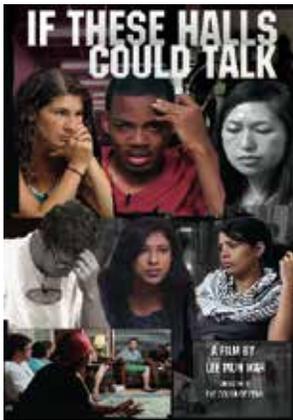
Our Next Class Begins October 1, 2014

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/>

Contact Ellen Muhammad for More Information: ellen@stirfryseminars.com

STIRFRY DIVERSITY TRAINING MATERIALS SALE!



Get **25% off**, for a limited time, on all regularly-priced diversity training materials (including Lee Mun Wah's newest film *If These Halls Could Talk*)! Enter coupon code **NEWS25** upon online checkout at www.stirfryseminars.com/store.
** Some restrictions apply.*
Expires April 1, 2014

ON DEMAND DIGITAL STREAMING RENTALS OF STIRFRY FILMS!!

For the first time, Stirfry is making our films available online/ 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

StirFry Calendar of Upcoming Events

March 5, 2014 Savannah, GA	Creating A Culturally Responsive School Community National Youth at Risk Conference • Open to the Public
March 13 & 14, 2014 Las Cruces, NM	If These Halls Could Talk: Film Showing & Diversity Dialogue and Diversity Conversations in the Classroom Workshop Some Events Open to the Public
March 22, 2014 New York, NY	Race & Identity: Cultural Competency for Educators for the Advanced Leadership Institute Not Open to the Public
March 28-29, 2014 Honolulu, Hawaii	The World is All Around Us: Creating a Culturally Responsive Multicultural Community and Let's Have a Real Discussion about Race and Racism: Your Life, Your Work, and Your Soul American Psychological Association (APA) Conference • Open to the Public
April 4, 2014 Anaheim, CA	Creating a Culturally Responsive School Community California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE) Conference • Open to the Public
April 7, 2014 Oxnard, CA	An Unfinished Conversation Not 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

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