

A Season of Remembering



As I'm about to turn seventy-six on October 25th, so many thoughts come to me about life and what it's all about. As was shared in one of my favorite films, *Letters to Juliet*: "There are two words *what* and *if*. Separately, they have different meanings, but put together, what if...they represent a longing of the heart...sometimes of regret about a time or moment that we wish we could have back." Perhaps the sages were right: Live each day as if it were a lifetime.

Recently, because my life story, *River of Jade*, is about to be published, I've had the opportunity to take a closer look at the wholeness of my life, unfiltered with all its tears and joys. Sometimes, when you're in the midst of life, especially when you're younger, perspective is not as important because you're so busy living and loving. But, as I've grown older, looking back seems so much more habitual now because of the possibility of my dying someday...maybe even today. And so, I see so much more and I feel more deeply about everything around me: little children laughing and playing, a smile from a perfect stranger, the way someone holds another's hand, or the soft watercolor-like feeling of another miraculous evening sunset along the Berkeley Marina.

If I were to be asked what I've learned about life at age 76...it would be these thoughts:

After my mother's murder in 1985 I thought my life was over. It was as if all that was innocent and that carried hope had died inside of me. And for the next three years I came so close to wanting to end my life so I could be with her. The pain was excruciating beyond anything that medicine could heal or what any therapist could ever help me to overcome. I was haunted by the idea that I should have saved her, protected her, even given my life for hers.

Every day for almost three years I felt so alone and empty, filled with inconsolable grief. I think that we each are faced with the loss of those we love and some of us...no, *all* of us are never the same again. I wanted things to go back to the way they were...before that *moment*. And even now, I refer to my life as what came *before* and what came *after* her passing. I am writing this because life is not easy. It would have been so seductive to have lived the rest of my life frozen in that moment, circling inside my anger; lost in the dark abyss of my sorrow.

In looking back, there wasn't any one thing that helped me come out of my despair. Life isn't that accommodating. And what I have come to understand is that there aren't always immediate answers for everything that happens to us, no matter how much we want to know why. So much of life is a seemingly random accumulation of experiences that by themselves don't make much sense, but as the years go by, seem to come together...molding us into who we finally become. My mother's death led me onto a path I would never have dreamed of taking. One that touched the lives of thousands. How could I have known?

I guess life is like that...

I am reminded of a young, beautifully tender singer, Nightbird, who was dying of stage four cancer, who shared at the end of her short life: *Sometimes you can't wait for things to get better before you decide to be happy again.*

And so, on this eve of my 76th year of my birth, I would like ask of you all to hold each person you love and each person you have been taught to hate and fear with the same embrace. And if you cannot, to explore why.

Someone once asked me what sustained me all these many years traveling around this country working on one of the most difficult issues – racism. I think I would have to say:

*It was a dream that someday we could all be free to be who we are
and to be valued for who we are.*

Lee Mun Wah

Upcoming Weekend StirFry Workshop

MINDFUL FACILITATION INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

Saturday and Sunday, October 15-16, 2022

8am - 12 noon

\$440 for both days(price includes required materials/shipping)

Facilitated by Lee Mun Wah

This workshop is one of StirFry Seminars' most popular follow-up trainings from Part 1 because participants get the chance to practice with an assortment of culturally sensitive role plays and filmed vignettes, as well as a myriad of confrontational scenarios that will hone advanced-level intervention and facilitation skill sets. Participants will also be making use of advanced-level group interventions that will enhance group processing and observational techniques.

Participants will learn:

- To Notice Intent & Impact
- Advanced Interventions for Individual/Group Interactions
- How to De-escalate Cultural Conflict Within Seconds
- 21 Ways to Stop a Diversity Conversation
- How to Transform Anger into Compassion
- Ways to Develop Curiosity & Understanding
- How to Create a Culturally Competent Community
- Ways to Develop Empathy & Trust

"In 2021 I attended your weekend Advanced Mindful Facilitation course. One of my cherished takeaways is learning to work with people's identifiers. For example, shortly following the workshop I spoke with my mother, and we discussed a stressful situation that she once experienced. I asked my mom, "What was that experience like for you?" She shared a response. Then I asked, "As a Black person, I wonder what that experience was like for you?" And she shared different responses related to race. Then I followed with, "As a woman, I wonder what that experience was like for you?" I listened intently as she shared aspects of her experience as a woman. Noticing, asking, and remembering people's identifiers has been useful and transformational in my daily interactions. I find that it creates openings and permissions to talk more deeply, and it creates opportunities for healing and connection."

—Eric Amani Lackie

More Mindful Facilitation Training Opportunities

MINDFUL FACILITATION ADVANCED LEVEL

**Saturday and Sunday, November 5 & 6, 2022
8am – 12 noon (PST)**

\$440 for both days (price includes required materials/shipping)

Facilitated by Lee Mun Wah

More Info & Registration at stirfryonline.com

LAST MINDFUL FACILITATION MASTERY SERIES SESSION OF 2022

Saturday, November 12, 2022

8:30 am - 12:30 pm (PST)

This Mindful Facilitation Mastery Series is an online training series that takes place on Saturdays throughout 2022. Each session will be using filmed vignettes and role plays to enhance your mindful facilitation skill sets. Each training will feature issues such as: What to Do When a Discriminatory Incident Occurs, How to Create Community, How to Have Courageous Conversations in the Classroom and Workplace, How to Facilitate Conflicts, and the Intersection of Mindful Facilitation and Group Process.

Full StirFry 2023 Workshop Schedule Coming Soon!

We offer exciting options for everyone, no matter what your experience level.

Check out **StirFry Online** for workshop dates and details for all levels.

Our event schedule can be found at stirfryseminars.com/events