

**Adult Higher Education Alliance
Pre-conference workshops Tuesday, October 6, 2009**

**Learning Mindfulness
Surachet Vetchapitak, Learning Institute for Everyone, Thailand
Elliott Lauderdale, University of South Alabama
1:00 pm- 3:00 pm**

Many adult educators have focused their work with their students and their understanding of “learning” itself on the cognitive domain. But others, including notable Asian thinkers like Thich [Nhat Hanh](#), have reminded us of the importance of the affective dimension and of somatic and embodied learning.

The goal of this workshop will be to gain a fuller appreciation of “mindfulness” as one approach to the affective aspects of learning and to our ways of thinking about and working with self reflection, personality types, deep listening, self-distortion, movement, *qi*, and meditation. In this experiential session, we will ask ourselves the basic questions: Must we not first directly experience mindfulness before we can help our co-learners? How can it help us as teachers-mentors support our adult students and the quality of their learning and their lives? How can mindfulness enhance our students’ learning?

We will participate in a series of activities of ‘acting and self reflection’ with a brief discussion after each activity.

**Prior Learning Assessment: Not So Simple!
Morris Fiddler & Catherine Marienau
School for New Learning, DePaul University
3:30 pm-5:30 pm**

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) is a process that rests on a simple question... ‘Is what I know, or can do, worthy of credit or recognition – college, professional, or other?’ Arriving at ‘yes’ – or ‘no’ – requires, it turns out, decision after decision after decision, many of which rest on agreements regarding the meaning(s) of learning, level, knowledge, fairness, education, qualifications, relationships, and other concepts – big and small – that define the educational enterprise considerably beyond PLA per se. Perhaps this is not a simple question.

In this workshop-conversation, we will initially draw on the CAEL standards and principles for PLA– and some of the implications of the recent changes in them – and then engage with participants in grappling with these issues and examining their/our practices, existing or imagined. Participants will leave this session better equipped to frame the issues, use 'standard' language of PLA, and argue for best practices at their home institutions.