



*Hi!*  
**Society**

By **MONET LU**

# Life lessons from my mother

**W**HENEVER MOTHER'S DAY comes along, I get very sentimental just remembering *nanay*. I lost her over five years ago. I still feel the void in my heart of not having her around anymore.



## Lessons from the...

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the shadow of a mighty oak; or of how much light a plant needs to burst with flowers, of the impeccable timing and the cycle of the seasons that are in God's perfect divine order like a well rehearsed dance or a Beethoven symphony; of why you must resist moving a plant from a place where it is growing so well to another place simply to satisfy a whim or a feng shui decorating principle; when and where to prune, of knowing when to water by sticking a finger in the soil or noting the droop of the leaves; or the merits of clay pots and plastic pots; of when to re-pot or top dress; even how to propagate. The most important lesson perhaps is learning when to leave well enough alone and letting go; of accepting death as part of life. I make it a point to take pictures when the flowers are in full bloom, knowing that no matter how pretty they are, their beauty is fleeting. I am left with beautiful images and pleasant memories.

The irony of it all is that the more I know, the more I realize how little I know. I guess that is the paradox of all lifelong learning. I now appreciate more clearly the delicate balance on which our planet depends

for it to sustain life — of how vastly critical it is for everyone to do their part to ensure that life continues. One can see life's longing for itself in the perennial grass that grows. There is great wisdom in gardening. If you dig in the garden long enough, you will find an infinite variety of the parallel laws that govern all life with unsurpassed clarity. Gardening has taught me a zen-like passive skill of enjoying quiet solitude, of observing what works and what won't, of doing what needs to get done with very little struggle and ultimately, of accepting and of simply letting go when all I have done is all I can do.

Oftentimes in the past, my next-door neighbor has told me that I have grown my garden well. I wanted to tell her that she was partly right. The truth is, the garden grew me more than I grew it.

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It's true—life as you knew it is never the same once your mother is gone. That's how I feel, especially during Mother's Day.

I make it a point to honor her memory by reflecting on the things that she has taught me.

They say you eventually become your parents over time. I can sense some of my *nanay* in me especially when I am with my *pamangkins* and *apos*.

When they seek my advice, I find myself talking to them the way my mother talked to me when I was their age.

I'm gratified to know I have retained the lessons that she tried so hard to instill in me.

Nanay was fond of reciting quotations or *mga kasabihan*. Of course at that time, I really didn't fully understand what she really meant.

What I remember most were her wisdom about gratitude and work ethic.

One of *nanay's* favorites was: *Ang hindi lumingon sa pinanggalingan ay hindi makakarating*

*sa paroroonan*. In English this translates to: He who does not look back at where he came from will not reach his destination.

She often emphasized the need for us to remain humble and never forget the people who helped us along the way. When I opened my very first salon, she was there to remind me that I should always offer thanks to those who made my dream possible, especially my sisters who paid for my tuition so I can study styling and design.

Nanay also challenged me to be more mindful and conscientious about work and money. She would always say to me: *Para kang kalabasa, gapang ng gapang naiwan naman ang bunga*. Loosely translated, I think she meant that I often worked myself to the ground but I never saw the fruits of my labor.

Nanay's constant prodding helped me to take more responsibility in my fiscal affairs. Thanks to her, I'm still learning.

What I've generally learned

## 'Boses' screening resonates...

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focused mostly on the lives of people who have been marginalized.

"*Boses* is about the power of art to transform lives. This is my luckiest, of all the ones that I have done. Financially, I was able to gather funds. I was also able to get the boy. I was about to give up. I told myself, if I don't find a young boy who can act well and play the violin as well, forget it. It's going to look so fake. And I found him," Ellen shared.

By him, the director meant Julian Duque, the real-life child prodigy who is the central character of the film. Duque effectively portrayed the role of Onyok, a mute, battered boy who had a hidden talent despite the fact that he has no acting experience prior to the film.

Born to a family of musicians, Julian's father is a guitar teacher at a special educational school for gifted children, and many of his cousins and uncles are also in the field of music.

Julian trained at Casa San Miguel in San Antonio, Zambales, a place for the children of fisher folks, farmers, mango pickers and other rural inhabitants of nearby towns to discover their varying talents and skills in music and the visual arts.

The family of Coke Bolipata, who also plays a crucial role in the film, established Casa San Miguel in 1993.

"He [Bolipata] contributed a lot to the script. He knows the life of an artist so the angst was there. And he was the one who recommended the boy," Ellen shared.

Ongkeko-Marfil doesn't veer away from the traditional way of storytelling, which made the film much simple. She took the story of a battered child and combined it with classical music, a combination that is rarely seen onscreen.

"I am not so much into experimentation. I am focused on the

material but I am also focused on reaching the audience and making my film accessible," she explained.

Veteran thespians like Ricky Davao and Cherry Pie Picache shared their talent by essaying roles that ably supported the characters of the non-actors — Bolipata, who played Picache's reclusive brother Ariel and Duque, who played the role of abused child Onyok with such intensity.

The film established that Onyok's character is unable to speak due to a physical trauma that damaged his larynx so he barely spoke a word in the entire film. What his character could not express in words, he relayed through his eyes and his music. Duque's effective portrayal

from the quotes *nanay* used to say is that there are some lessons we don't understand until we are ready to digest what they really mean for our self-improvement.

Over five years after her death, Nanay continues to teach me lessons from the words of wisdom she left behind.

I'm glad I can be here to repeat these words to my nieces, nephews and grandchildren so they can get piece of motherly advice from their great lola Catalina Lu.

This Mother's Day, I hope children all over the world give due credit to their mothers who have sacrificed a lot for their benefit.

Mothers have an incredible job. Theirs is a 24-7 duty with no day off or sick days. They make sure we are fed, clothed, and comfortable. They nurture us into loving and caring human beings. All they want in exchange is for us to be

happy. Mothers, you are the real heroes! You deserve a medal even if you never ask for it. *Kayo talaga ang ilaw ng tahanan. Mabuhay ang ating mga nanay!*

Let's show our mothers how much we appreciate them not just on Mother's Day but everyday.

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The author is a Marikina-born, award-winning celebrity beauty stylist with his own chain of salons across Southern California and Las Vegas, Nevada. Ultimately, Monet is known as an all-around artiste who produces sold-out fashion and awards shows, as well as unforgettable marketing campaigns. Monet is also the founder of the revolutionary all-natural beauty products available at [www.skinbymonet.com](http://www.skinbymonet.com). He supports many humanitarian efforts to include projects in his native Marikina, The Bantay Bata Foundation, and many more. To contact Monet, please visit [www.monetsalon.com](http://www.monetsalon.com) for more information.



Ricky Davao sings the classic song "Manila" with the board members of the Assumption Alumnae Association Abroad.

of Onyok earned him a Breakthrough Actor award from the recently concluded 6th Golden Screen Awards, handed out by the Entertainment Press Society (Enpress). *Boses* also brought home a lion's share of the awards: Best Film-Drama, Best Director, Best Original Screenplay, Best Editing, Best Musical Score.

**Not bad for an indie film.** "*Boses* is a blessing. There

were other materials that I submitted to Cinemalya last year. This was the one which got the blessing of the universe. I am an advocacy filmmaker. I really believe in my messages. I believe in the power of art to be a tool in education," Ellen said.

Indeed, *Boses* has come a long way. The film has earned sought-after endorsements from

film review boards, garnered critical acclaim from film critics and received popular praise from moviegoers and the film is now the advocacy film for UNICEF Manila's "Children Against Violence" campaign. Internationally, it screened at the Louis Vuitton Film Festival in Hawaii and at the Women's Film Festival in Los Angeles. ■

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## LBC offers new service – Instant Peso Padala

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*"The IPP is an innovative product that will deliver value and convenience to both the recipients and senders of LBC's money remittance service in the U.S.," says Hugo Bonilla, president and CEO of LBC USA.*

**LBC**  
HARI NG PADALA!

**S**OUTH SAN FRANCISCO – As an innovator and leading provider of "padala" services for Filipinos in the US, LBC Mundial Corporation (LBC USA) brings its money remittance services to an even higher level by introducing a new form of delivery to the Philippines.

Responding to the growing needs of Filipinos in the US who send money to the Philippines, LBC USA launched its new Instant Peso Padala (IPP). Starting May 1, 2009, LBC branches in the US that offer money remittance services have also started offering the IPP.

Like its name implies, the IPP service allows recipients in the Philippines to immediately pick-up the money sent from the US from any LBC branch in the Philippines.

"The IPP is an innovative product that will deliver value and convenience to both the recipients and senders of LBC's money remittance service in the US," says Hugo Bonilla, president and CEO of LBC USA.

He further notes that the IPP "will allow Filipinos in the US to immediately respond to the financial needs of their loved ones in the Philippines, particularly in cases of emergencies."

By eliminating the waiting time for money remittance, LBC USA has given Filipinos in the US a better way of meeting the financial needs of their loved ones back home.

"The IPP service is LBC's response to the changing and growing needs of Filipinos for money remittance services. Through the IPP, we hope to help them help their families and loved ones back home better and faster," adds Mr. Bonilla.

The IPP service is initially

available in Metro Manila branches of LBC but will soon be offered in all 750 LBC branches located all over the Philippines. Money remitted through the IPP service is limited only to P10,000.00 per transaction.

Prior to the introduction of IPP, money sent by Filipinos in the US through LBC can be delivered using four methods – LBC's ATM Bilis Padala service, home delivery, branch pick-up and bank-to-bank deposit.

LBC's ATM Bilis Padala service is the fastest money remittance service offered by the company – with the money available for withdrawal from any ATM in the Philippines after only 15 seconds.

While many LBC customers still prefer the traditional home delivery service and branch pick-up or the convenience of the ATM Bilis Padala service, LBC has also learned that many customers want the flexibility of sending money anytime.

With the IPP, both senders and recipients can enjoy the safety offered by the branch pick-up and home delivery services and at the same time the convenience of immediate availability of the funds.

In addition to the benefits of IPP, customers using the new service can also avail of the new lowered pricing that LBC has implemented starting May 2009.

For as low as \$3 for every transaction, customers can avail of the value and benefits of sending money to their loved ones in the Philippines through IPP.

For more details on the new IPP service, please call LBC USA at 1-800-3385424 or visit [www.teamlbc.com](http://www.teamlbc.com) for the location of LBC USA's 60 branches in the US.

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