

LOUNG UNG | SPEAKING DESCRIPTIONS

...CONNECTING PEOPLE AND IDEAS TO CREATE CHANGE....



“Peace is not a wish. Peace is not something you want, dream of, and wait for others to deliver it. Peace is an action. Many, many actions.” ~ Loung Ung

LOUNG UNG is a bestselling author, public speaker, activist and co-screenplay writer of *First They Killed My Father*, the critically acclaimed 2017 Netflix Original Movie directed by Angelina Jolie, based on her memoir, now streaming on Netflix.

RESILIENCE: Keys to Bouncing Back Faster and Stronger

(Themes: Resilience, Overcoming Adversities, Leadership)

Since its emergence, reporters and public officials have been comparing the global outbreak of coronavirus to fighting a war. A Khmer Rouge Genocide survivor, Loung Ung knows all too well that we will need to be strategic, united, and most of all, resilient to survive this war. Thankfully, being ‘resilient’ isn’t something one is born with but a set of skills one can build, cultivate, and learn. In her talk, Loung shares the keys to her ‘resilience’, and how it has helped her move from surviving to thriving.

ORDINARY CITIZENS, EXTRAORDINARY LEADERS: Creating Change Through Activism and Volunteerism.

(Themes: Activism, Volunteerism, Leadership)

Peace is not a wish. Peace is not something you want, dream of, and wait for others to deliver it. Peace is an action. Many, many actions. Whether in one’s heart, community, or world, peace requires our daily actions. With over three decades of experience as a student activist, a professional agent of change working on campaigns to end violence against women, landmines, and child soldiers, Loung explores how we can all lead in our daily lives to make a difference in our world.

THE POWER OF NARRATIVES: How Rewriting Your Story Will Change Your Life

(Themes: Writing, Creativity, Journaling, Health)

As a child, driven by her inability to speak the words to describe her pain, Loung recorded her thoughts onto the pages of her journals. Many years later, those pages would become her memoir, *First They Killed My Father*. And through the writing of it, she also came to understand the healing power of writing her story, and of rewriting her narrative from victim to survivor, from scared child to an advocate for peace. In this talk, Loung shares the tools on how you too can rewrite your narrative.

THE ART OF MEMOIR WRITING: 7 Tools To Bring Your Memoir To Life

(Themes: Writing, Creativity, Art, Health)

Having turned her life into three books, Loung Ung knows a thing or two about writing memoirs. In this workshop, Loung shares the seven creative writing tools that will help to bring your words to life; your scenes vivid, and your story memorable and moving.

NEVER SILENT; An Eye Witness Account of the Khmer Rouge Genocide

(Themes: Cambodia, Genocide, Trauma, Children in War, Refugees)

From 1975 to 1979, 1.7 to 2 million Cambodians, a quarter of the country's population, died under the Khmer Rouge regime. One of seven children of a high-ranking governmental official, Loung Ung was only five when the soldiers stormed into her city, forcing Loung's family to flee and, eventually, to disperse. Orphaned, separated from her siblings, Loung was trained as a child soldier in a work camp for orphans where she was taught to hurt and hate. Harrowing, yet hopeful, Loung's powerful story is an unforgettable account of a family shaken and shattered, yet miraculously sustained by courage and love in the face of unspeakable brutality. From an innocent girl to an angry child soldier to a bewildered refugee in America, Loung Ung shows that your past does not have to predetermine your future. Through her work, writing and activism, Loung shares how she was able to reclaim her voice, redeem herself, and to stand against injustices.

FIRST THEY KILLED MY FATHER: A Netflix Original Movie Discussion + Q&A

In 2015, humanitarian-actor-director Angelina Jolie called Loung Ung with a proposal to turn her book into a film. This begins Loung's three-year journey of learning to write a screenplay (she co-wrote the screenplay for the movie with Angelina), and making a big budget movie in Cambodia with Khmer actors and 20,000 extras. Using film clips and her personal photos, Loung takes the audience through her sometimes-traumatic and other times hilarious four-months stay in Cambodia to bring her words to the screen.

LUCKY CHILD: A Refugee's Story of Transformation

(Themes: Refugees, Trauma, Activism, Volunteerism)

At the age of eight, Loung Ung was an orphan living on the streets, eating out of garbage cans, hating the world, and wondering why the world hated her. At ten, Loung, 'the lucky child' was selected by her adult brother, Meng, and his wife, Eang, to emigrate to America as refugees and start their second life. To do this, they had to leave behind Loung's beloved sister and two brothers, who she would not see again for fifteen years. Loung's refugee story is one of overcoming trauma, dislocation, racism, cultural and language barriers to build a successful new life in America. In a world where leaders are often people with well-known names, Loung's personal heroes are the ordinary people who do extraordinary things on a daily basis. Their act of kindness and generosity restored her faith in compassion, kindness, and humanity.