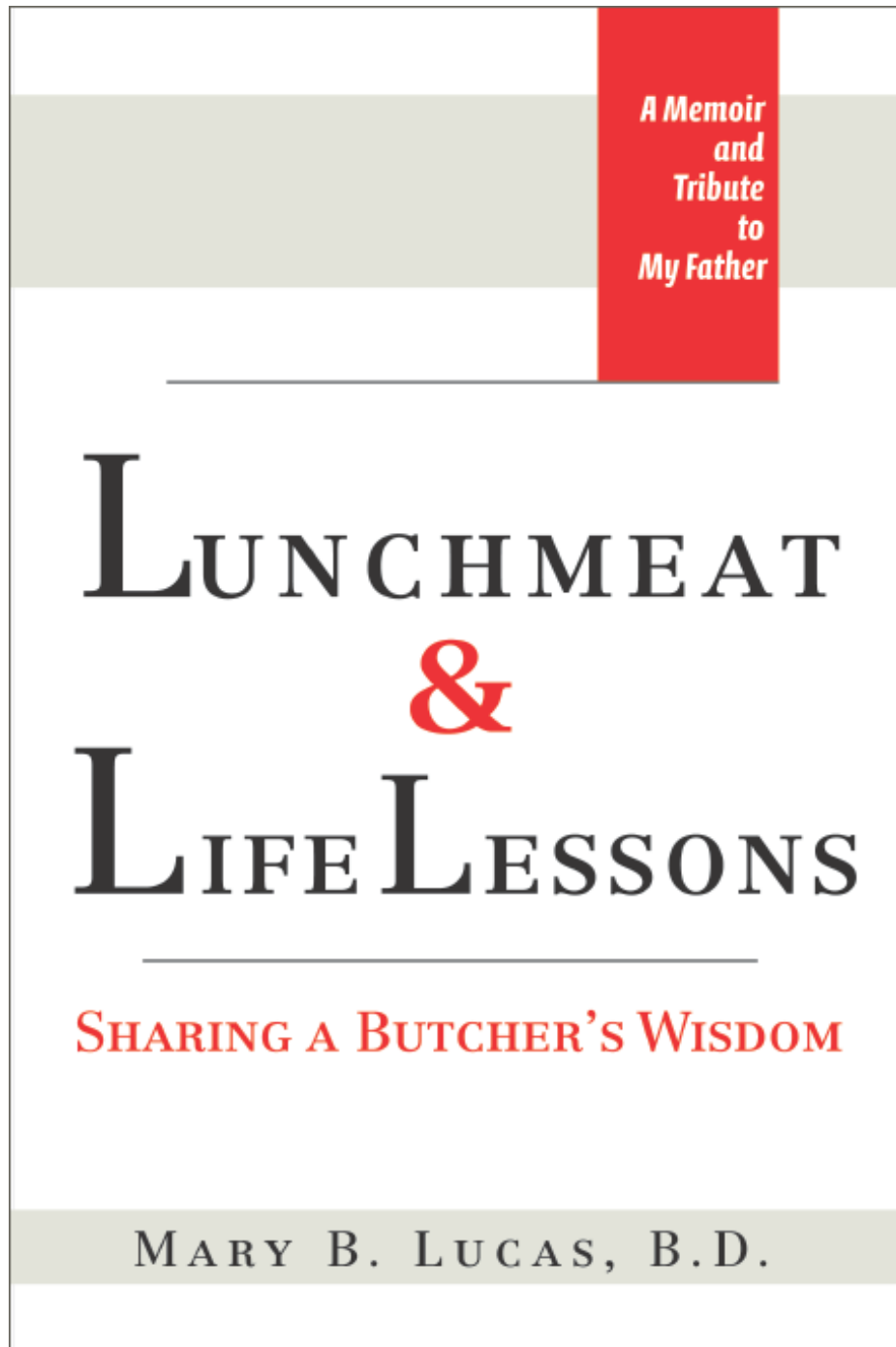


Discussion Questions Chapter by Chapter  
Lesson by Lesson



# LUNCHMEAT & LIFE LESSONS

## *SHARING A BUTCHER'S WISDOM*

### Specific Discussion Questions Chapter by Chapter and Lesson by Lesson

For each life lesson, in addition to the particular questions listed after each specific piece of Butcher Wisdom, you can ask the following general questions to get the discussion going. It's almost always best to start with one or another of these general questions:

- *Did you like this piece of wisdom? Why? Is it one of your favorites?*
- *How and where could this life lesson apply in family life and friendships?*
- *Do you know anyone who practices this life lesson? Give an example.*
- *How could you use this lesson to make your life happier or more successful? Explain.*

#### Chapter One: In the Beginning

**Butcher's Wisdom:** Show 'em what you're made of.

- In your relationships at home or work, what are the specific qualities "you're made of" that affect others in a positive way?
- What are some relationship qualities you would like to develop?

**Butcher's Wisdom:** The first hunk of meat you sell is yourself.

- This piece of wisdom is about making a good first impression. What goes into making a good impression?
- How might you use this piece of wisdom with people, like family members or fellow employees, that you have known for a long time? Isn't it too late to make a first impression on them?
- Aren't we making a "first" impression on people each time we encounter them, even those we see almost every day? Explain.

#### Chapter 2. Create a Lasting Impression

**Butcher's Wisdom:** Remember the comeback sauce.

- Comeback sauce works well with business customers. But how does it apply in relating to family members or fellow employees? Give examples.
- Is it possible to go overboard with comeback sauce?
- Is it possible for this idea, when improperly used, to backfire? What might be an example of the improper or excessive use of comeback sauce?

# LUNCHMEAT & LIFE LESSONS

## *SHARING A BUTCHER'S WISDOM*

### Chapter 3. Stay Focused

**Butcher's Wisdom:** Get out your blinders and put them on.

- What is the difference between this piece of wisdom and the saying "Mind your own business"?
- Are there times and situations when it might be better to take your blinders off in order to see what is going on around you? If so, give examples.

### Chapter 4. Make Something Happen

**Butcher's Wisdom:** Don't be a waver—do be a doer.

- How does this piece of wisdom about attention-getting contrast with the saying "The squeaky wheel gets the oil"?
- What would it mean to be a "waver" in your home or workplace?
- How does this idea relate to the saying "If you want something done, ask a busy person"?

**Butcher's Wisdom:** Be on time all the time.

- What is the unspoken message given by the person who is on time all the time?
- Suppose your physician saw you at the exact time of your scheduled appointment. Then, when you were in the middle of a discussion about your health, the doctor said, "Sorry, I have to leave you now and see my next patient. I don't want to be late for that patient"?
- Do you think being late has become the normal and accepted way in our culture? Why or why not?

**Butcher's Wisdom:** Be a person who makes something happen.

- In introducing this piece of wisdom, the butcher said, "There are three kinds of people: those who want something to happen, those who make something happen, and those who wonder what the hell happened." (page 29) Give examples of all three. (Humor is welcomed.)
- Have you ever decided which of the three kinds of people you are? Or are you sometimes all three? Explain.

### Chapter 5. Bring Out the Best

**Butcher's Wisdom:** If you don't like someone, then they don't like you.

- Where is the wisdom in this idea? What is the insight you are supposed to get? What is the lesson you're supposed to learn?
- Is "not liking" somehow contagious?
- How can a person tell that you don't like them, when you don't actually say so?

# LUNCHMEAT & LIFE LESSONS

## *SHARING A BUTCHER'S WISDOM*

**Butcher's Wisdom:** You've gotta find the like.

- Does this piece of wisdom apply to family members you might not like?
- How do you find something to like in an offensive person?
- Some people are married to an abuser spouse. Wouldn't the better message to such a person be, "You've gotta find a way out"? Doesn't this wisdom have its limits?

### Chapter 6. Admit Your Mistakes

**Butcher's Wisdom:** Raise your hand, put it down and get back to playing the game.

- This wisdom is about admitting your mistakes and getting on with it. How might it apply among family members in a household?
- Why is admitting your mistake better than denying it, making excuses or blaming someone else? After all, denying, excusing and blaming are what most everyone does.
- Why is the phrase "put it down" included in this wisdom statement?

### Chapter 7. Enjoy the Ride

**Butcher's Wisdom:** Learn something from every person you meet.

- Almost everything you have learned in life you have learned from someone else. So, what is new in this piece of butcher wisdom?
- Think of someone about whom you immediately want to respond, "I have never learned anything from that person." Then, think of at least two lessons you learned from him or her. Explain.

**Butcher's Wisdom:** It's not the pursuit of happiness but the happiness of pursuit that inspires.

- What if someone said, "It is precisely the *pursuit* of happiness that inspires people." Isn't that someone saying exactly the same thing as the butcher's piece of wisdom? If you disagree, explain.
- Where in family life or in friendships can people experience "the happiness of pursuit"? Isn't it a most unlikely place to experience this, since what is there to "pursue" in family life or in friendships?

**Butcher's Wisdom:** Stay busy. Idle time is the devil's workshop.

- The butcher suggests that, when you're idle, you are tempted to pity yourself and start whining. What other undesirable states of mind can happen when you are idle?
- What can happen if the "devil" takes over? What are some personal qualities that can get lost when you don't "keep the devil away"?

## **LUNCHMEAT & LIFE LESSONS**

### ***SHARING A BUTCHER'S WISDOM***

**Butcher's Wisdom:** Don't ask like it's your due—take every chance to say thank you.

- The first part of this piece of wisdom is about making requests tactfully. How would more use of this wisdom help family relations work more smoothly?
- How would your life be different if you treated everything that came your way as a gift to be thankful for?
- Why is saying thanks so powerful in relationships?

**Butcher's Wisdom:** When you're all wrapped up in yourself you make a damn small package.

- This piece of wisdom is especially appropriate when things are going well and you want to take most of the credit for the success. Where else in life might it apply? In the workplace? At home?
- What is the difference between embracing this piece of wisdom and building healthy self-esteem?

**Butcher's Wisdom:** Nobody can make you happy but yourself.

- Is this statement universally true? Why or why not?
- The butcher makes a distinction between the momentary happiness another's love or gratitude can bring, and the "permanent attitude" he calls "happiness." (page 57) How would you describe this "permanent attitude"? What are the elements that make it up?

#### **Chapter 8. Look for Happiness Within**

**Butcher's Wisdom:** The happiest people are the ones who are inspired and enjoying the ride they are on while they are on it.

- We have often been told that rich and powerful people are the happiest. We assume that they are happy because they are rich and powerful. Is that not true?
- Wouldn't we all be "inspired and enjoying the ride we are on" much more, if we were rich and powerful?
- Do you know any financially poor people or those in poor health who are inspired and enjoying the ride they are on?
- Why does the butcher add the phrase "while they are on it"?

# LUNCHMEAT & LIFE LESSONS

## *SHARING A BUTCHER'S WISDOM*

### Chapter 9. Celebrate Life

**Butcher's Wisdom:** Celebrate every chance you get.

- Isn't "celebrating" really expensive, especially if you celebrate every chance you get? Are there inexpensive ways to celebrate? Explain.
- What are some things in your life or your family's life that you could be celebrating, but haven't been up till now?

**Butcher's Wisdom:** Send yourself flowers.

- What could men do for themselves that would have the same effect as "receiving flowers" typically has on women?
- Isn't it sort of phony to send flowers to yourself? Why or why not?

### Chapter 10. Put Bad Things in Perspective

**Butcher's Wisdom:** Look for the good to balance the bad.

- In this piece of wisdom, you are asked not to turn life into a balance sheet, where you are always evaluating everything that happens to you as good or bad. If that's not what this life lesson is telling you, what is it telling you?
- How different is this bit of butcher's wisdom different from saying, "Don't be a glass-half-empty person, be a glass-half-full person"?

**Butcher's Wisdom:** They're still paying you, aren't they?

- What is the point the butcher is trying to make with this bit of wisdom?
- How would you rewrite this life lesson, if you were talking to a person who just lost his or her job? (Would the butcher say, "You're still healthy, aren't you?")
- How would you rewrite this life lesson, if you are talking to a person who is very sick or physically handicapped? (Would the butcher say, "You're still breathing, aren't you?")

# LUNCHMEAT & LIFE LESSONS

## *SHARING A BUTCHER'S WISDOM*

### Chapter 11. Meet the Challenge

**Butcher's Wisdom:** Deal with it—meet the challenge.

- This life lesson is aimed at people in a negative situation at work from which there is no escape. Could it also apply to people who are having a hard time dealing with a negative situation among family members?
- Are there times when in a negative situation, the best way of dealing with it is to leave?

**Butcher's Wisdom:** Don't take life too seriously—you are never going to get out of it alive anyway.

- This statement sounds more like a sarcastic comment on life than a piece of wisdom. Do you agree or disagree? Explain.
- Life is meant to be taken seriously, but not "too seriously," says the butcher. What's the difference between seriously and too seriously?

**Butcher's Wisdom:** Some things are just "Over the L."

- This bit of wisdom may also be about those times when the behavior of others, especially those who have seniority over you, seems seriously detrimental to the success of things at work or at home. The butcher says, "Even then, you can *choose* what you want to think about." Do you know anyone who in such circumstances would be able to think about anything but the detrimental behavior?
- What strength of character would be needed to be able to choose to think of something else when your entire world seems to be "under water"? (page 83)

**Butcher's Wisdom:** Good luck? Bad luck? Who knows?

- Do you have any personal experience of having something you at first considered to be bad luck turn into good luck? Share the story.
- Are you currently in what you might consider a bad luck situation? How could you begin looking for the good luck in it?
- Is this life lesson any different from the adage "Look for the silver lining"? Explain.

# LUNCHMEAT & LIFE LESSONS

## *SHARING A BUTCHER'S WISDOM*

### Chapter 12. Prepare Yourself

**Butcher's Wisdom:** Don't let go of one limb until you have a firm hold on another.

- This advice comes as no surprise to those who are in a job they don't like, but don't yet have a new job. How could you apply this lesson to family life or friendship? What would it mean to "have a firm hold on another [limb]"? Give an example.
- People who live in the city are not likely to be familiar with kids swinging from branch to branch on a big tree. Can you suggest a better image or metaphor for city folks than swinging on a tree?

**Butcher's Wisdom:** The best endings are the ones you are prepared for.

- The butcher here seems to be talking about being well prepared for death. Does his advice about being prepared apply to any other event than your death?
- Some happy endings are ones that come as a total surprise—endings you are totally unprepared for. Why wouldn't "Be open to surprise endings" serve just as well as a piece of wisdom? Explain.

**Butcher's Wisdom:** Inspire yourself.

- How is this bit of butcher wisdom different from "You've got to lift yourself by your own bootstraps"?
- The butcher himself spent a lifetime inspiring others. Are you surprised his life lesson here was not "Inspire others"?
- In any case, what do you think the butcher means by the word "inspire"?

### Epilogue

**Butcher's Wisdom:** To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die.

- Name at least two or three deceased people who are still alive in your heart. Talk about them.
- How does a person get to live in the hearts of others? Explain.