

THE LENS OF COMPASSION

Assumptions	Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compassion is the ability to suspend judgment of ourselves and others, appreciating that each of us makes choices based on the information and skills that we have at any given time. • Compassion is a feeling of empathy for another living being. This feeling can motivate us to take action to alleviate suffering. • Compassion is our natural state. Sometimes conditions block us from feeling compassion but we can find our way back. • Compassion for another starts with compassion toward one's self. • Cultivating compassion requires us to keep our eyes and hearts open even though what we see and hear might break our hearts. • Gratitude, gentleness, and listening foster the development of compassion. • It is an act of compassion to hold a calm and grounded presence in the face of another's suffering. • If we pause and choose a response to a situation, we are more likely to feel compassionate. • We can use compassion to dismantle destructive beliefs and behaviors. • “Something that is worthwhile, wholesome and healthy exists in all of us.” (Chogyam Trungpa) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we uncover the goodness and humanity in others despite their grief, anger and exhaustion, or despite our own? • How do we support others to discover their best qualities? (And are we remembering to do so?) • How do we create space for all voices to be truly heard? Whose voices are not being heard? • How do we help others explore the consequences of their actions and learn from them? • How do we foster listening that leads to greater compassion and empathy in our communities? • How do we find the entry points to transform grief, anger and exhaustion into compassion? • Where do we see people treating each other with kindness? How can we create more spaces where people treat each other with kindness? • How can we return to a state of compassion when we notice we are being triggered? How can we help others do this? • Where are the opportunities for compassion to transform people and communities within systems of oppression?

¹ *Lens of Compassion created by OUSD SIG coaches, 2013-14. ©Elena Aguilar, www.elenaaguilar.com*