

November 8, 2021

## Centering Leadership in Presence – Drawing Power from What Matters in Challenging Times

I have been proudly working as the principal at Sterling Elementary for seven years. I continuously strive to become a better leader every day each year. Everyone knows that these past couple of years have been unprecedented with challenges and difficulties for all educators. For that reason, I have been seeking ways to improve my skills in managing my emotions in order to best lead my school. I have never taken a workshop with the Omega Women's Leadership Center. It was a different experience than other more traditional workshops or conferences that I have attended, however, it brought me great satisfaction, as it spoke to the needs for which I was looking.

This workshop was provided by Reverend Angel Kyodo Williams Sensei. Rev. Angel provided guidance and instruction in helping this group of women leaders to be comfortable in their positions and to draw their power for change from within and from what matters to them. Rev. Angel discussed the three centers of the body and how one can act and react from them differently. The centers of the body are the head (thinking center), heart (feeling center) and the belly/core (action center). In most situations, we come at challenging situations from the personality side of the centers, which are responses that are shaped by our life experiences. When we come at situations from our personality centers, we seek control (head), approval (heart) and safety (core). However, if we can draw from our actual centers, we can respond from a place of wisdom (head), compassion (heart) and confidence (core).

One of the exercises that we did was to listen to our bodies to determine at what point we begin to feel pressure. Once we begin to feel the pressure, we pause and feel what our bodies are feeling in that moment so that when we have a high pressure event that occurs in our lives, we know what the sensation feels like and can take pause and understand our pattern in stressful situations. Confident action comes from the core. The most important way to successfully handle challenging situations is to come back to yourself, to listen to your body and to self-interrupt so that we can respond from a place of wisdom, compassion and confidence.

I was drawn to this workshop because I believe that the best way to improve my leadership is to reflect on who I am and from where I draw my power as a leader. I want to find every way that I can to have strength for my school community during these most challenging times and at all times. Through the exercises in this workshop, I feel that, in the moment, I will be calmer and more able to address situations from a centering place.