

## Opening Thoughts: Northern Conference Board Meeting 10/06/23

Have you ever thought about when we meet someone on the street or answer the telephone, we often say hello and ask, “How are you? or How are you doing?” The usual response we get back, no matter what, is something like “Fine thank you” or a simple “OK”. We don’t really expect a lengthy answer. The reason behind the greeting comes from a need or desire to be friendly, rather than showing caring for the individual we are greeting or responding to. Our interaction or lack of one probably depends on how we are feeling at that time ourselves, rather than out of empathy or compassion.

As we start the second half of the biennium together, I wanted to reflect on two different, but similar words that are used in our relationships with others. These words are empathy and compassion. Empathy is listening to someone express their thoughts and feelings and attempting to understand how they feel. Compassion is also listening to someone’s thoughts and feelings, but also going another step further wanting to take action with a desire to help.

Being empathic is important as we need to listen to those who are around us and who we work with. I have often heard the comment made, “I feel your pain” when someone is relating a problem to a friend. The question is does that person listening do anything to help with the problem? Listening in its self does not always illicit an effective response. Unfortunately, empathy does not always lead to being caring towards all of those we come in contact with. Sometimes we are more sympathetic, unconsciously, to people we can easily relate to. Sometimes it is harder to connect with others whose experiences are different from our own and for us to show compassion to them.

Compassion takes empathy to a higher level when you relate to someone’s situation and you want to help them. You are willing to step in and give them the help they need.

When we started our teaching careers and were becoming educators, we hoped to provide a caring compassionate atmosphere in our classrooms. We would praise the children for being caring towards one another and when

they offered to help us. We hoped that by modeling this positive behavior it would help them later in life become compassionate adults.

Now today, as leaders, we continue realize the importance of being both empathic and compassionate towards our AΔK sisters, as well as those who we meet that may become new members of our organization. Practicing these import actions, empathy and compassion, can help us in realizing and understanding the differences in backgrounds, cultures and needs of our members. This understanding is important as continue to “Step into the Future” in enabling the growth of Alpha Delta Kappa with many diverse, new, women educators.

We need to remember:

“By Responding with Empathy and Compassion the Healing Results Affect Us All”. Brene Brown

Reconvening Thought 10-07-2023

Once again we come together this afternoon after a wonderful morning at the Basque Cultural Center. It was fun to enjoy the program and see so many of our old friends and meet new ones. As we get back to work this afternoon let us remember the quote I gave yesterday,

“By Responding with Empathy and Compassion the Healing Results Affect Us All”. Brene Brown

Closing Thought 10-08-2023

We have come together once again this weekend working hard on the business of Alpha Delta Kappa. We have had fun connecting with our Northern Sisters both at the conference and at dinner. We have enjoyed their hospitality and realized the importance of our sisterhood in Alpha Delta Kappa. We are indeed “Stepping Into The Future” with our President Rosena and making California Alpha Delta Kappa a stronger organization.