**FINDING COMMON GROUND THROUGH COMPASSION**

Compassion is the desire to address the needs of another grounded in care for their well-being. On the most basic level, this skill requires three things: noticing another’s needs, experiencing empathic concern for them, and feeling empowered to act skillfully and meaningfully. True compassion should not increase one’s own suffering, but instead should build confidence, hope and energy. Extended compassion recognizes the universality of human of human value and seeks to meet the needs of others out of a genuine sense of concern for their well-being regardless of their relationship to ourselves.

(From Compassionate Integrity Training; Center for Compassion, Integrity, and Secular Ethics, Life University, Marietta, Georgia)

Can you describe a moment in your life that best exemplifies compassion for you, and/or a moment when you wished you had greater compassion?

When have you been most aware of universal compassion and love, and when have you felt most distant from that compassion and love?

Do you think every spiritual path needs to reflect this virtue? Why?

If possible, can you name which component of compassion you would like to strengthen; i.e., noticing another’s needs, experiencing empathic concern, or feeling empowered to act?

Is there something you could do to increase your level of compassion, and if so, what?

Ken Larson – [khlarsonsd@gmail.com](mailto:khlarsonsd@gmail.com)