

### **What Can I Do: Critically Cultivating Virtues through Curiosity and Wonder**

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#### **Abstract**

With emerging new literacies comes the constant challenge of navigating and redefining the role of teacher and learner. It is easy, at times, somewhat seductive, to spiral into despair when faced with the simple, seemingly unattainable, yet powerful question: What can I do? Being critically hopeful is being critically literate – wondering, actively listening, and exercising respectful autonomy in the everydayness. From routines to responsibilities, from conversations to silence, from the social to the solace, from various texts to mass media, we need to consider: What resonates? What causes me angst? Why does this matter? How will I harness my angst to provoke change for the better? In other words, what can I do? Toni Morrison once described virtues as not being the “accidents of birth, but rather the things you work for: to be forthright, to be educated, to be in control... You can get them. They are available to you.” This session will explore how explicit and implicit instruction of social competencies (i.e, communication, creativity, critical thinking) are the means by which we interrogate the everydayness to further awaken a critical consciousness of hope. Participants will engage in a variety of learning experiences grounded in voice, identity, perspective and point of view that enable agency in the context of respectful, equitable learning spaces.