

Figure 5.2: Examining Core Beliefs

Our life experiences shape the lenses through which we see the world. We then make assumptions about other people based on what we see through those lenses.

- What kind of student were you? (For example: Did you sit still and follow directions well? Did you chat with your friends when you were supposed to listen? Did you do your homework and turn it in? Did you avoid certain classes or activities?)
- How did you interact with your teachers? (For example, were you respectful? Did you follow their directions well? Did you rebel? Did you avoid them?)

Based on your own experiences in school, what are some beliefs you have about how students should and should not behave in school?

- How *should* students behave?
- How *should* students *not* behave?

Our core beliefs are formed from our experiences and influence how we think the world should operate. We think others share our core beliefs and that can lead us to misinterpret others' actions based on assumptions we make about their motivations.

- What are some of your own core beliefs (about yourself, school, teacher-student relationships, power dynamics between adults and adolescents, people in positions of power, and so on)? For example, do you believe that young people should respect adults unconditionally? Do you believe that students should always do what the teacher tells them to do? Do you believe that students have trust issues and teachers need to earn trust?
- How might those core beliefs influence how you feel about certain student behaviors?
- How might they influence how you react to certain student behaviors? (For example, do some behaviors cause you to judge students as “bad” or disrespectful? Do you assume some students don’t want to learn? Do you consider some students to be “good students?”)