

Empathy

Empathy is the ability to be attentive, to understand, and to appreciate the feelings of others...it is being able to “emotionally connect” with other people. Being able to 'step back', and achieve a detachment from our own emotions, is essential for effective, constructive relationships. Establishing trust is about listening and understanding the other person - not necessarily about agreement. Remain curious, all behavior makes sense, actions and behaviors are motivated by needs.

Empathizing with another person opens the door to deep understanding and connection. In this process we shift our attention from giving advice, fixing and strategizing to feelings and needs.

Cultivating the Skill of Empathy

Compassion and judgment cannot co-exist

Empty

Mind: of thoughts, judgments, enemy images, blame & wrongness

Presence: into the present moment with the intention to connect

Attention: attention on feeling and needs

Towards

Hearing: with your eyes, ears, heart & full being

You: the person in front of you

What Empathy Is Not – The Empathy Blockers

- 1) Intellectual understanding of the situation.
- 2) Sympathizing or commiserating.
- 3) Giving advice or trying to fix.
- 4) Explaining.
- 5) Correcting.
- 6) Consoling
- 7) Telling a story or “one upping”.
- 8) Shutting down feelings.
- 9) Educating or evaluating.
- 10) Interrogating.