

The left side of the page features a decorative design consisting of several vertical stripes in shades of light brown and beige. Overlaid on these stripes are several solid orange circles of varying sizes, arranged in a vertical line that descends from the top left towards the bottom left.

THE GUIDE TO PRACTICING EMPATHY – AND CREATING A JUICY RELATIONSHIP!

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WHY DO WE NEED TO PRACTICE EMPATHY?

People are suffering inside...

- Because they don't feel seen or heard
- They don't feel understood

- Most relationships fail because of lack of understanding between two people

Emotional connection has to be nurtured over time
– and it's done through deep listening

Plus – emotional connection is blissful! There's no better feeling than being understood



WHEN DOES SOMEONE FEEL UNDERSTOOD?

- They understand their own feelings and needs
- You are able to articulate their feelings and needs



KEYS TO PRACTICE DEEP LISTENING

- Create some space/time. You can create a soft time boundary as well (e.g. 10 minutes, an hour)
- Ground yourself. First offer yourself deep empathy (how am I feeling; what am I needing?)
- Then, practice deep listening by creating mental, emotional space



WHILE LISTENING...

- Clearing: Clear all thoughts – including those of filters/judgments. Imagine that this a new ‘new moment’
- Focus: Bring all your focus to the other person. Be completely present, and allow you body to also feel what they are feeling (however, make sure you are grounded enough that you’re not ‘absorbing’ their energy. You may shut your eyes if it helps – or look into a person’s left eye
- Be open: Be open to anything that arises. Remember, just because a person says something, doesn’t mean that they mean it! They may just be processing something



STEPS

- Ask how they are doing. What are they feeling? What happened?
- Listen without interrupting
- Reflect: If there is a pause, or if the person is ‘rambling’, you may interrupt kindly, and reflect what they were saying. “So, let me understand, you experienced...”
 - Don’t interpret/change what they said – just be a mirror.
Recap their story
- Ask about feelings/needs: “So, are you feeling...” allow them space to share how they feel/felt. If they don’t have the vocabulary – offer it to them. You may also ask about needs “So what is it that you need? Clarity? Support”
 - These are just leading questions – allow the person to speak without interrupting or analyzing
- End with – “thank you for sharing.”



WHAT IS NOT EMPATHY

Comparing, “Yeah, I had a big issue with my boss today too.” ...“Oh you think your boss is bad? My boss is *terrible*.”

Advising, “I’ve got an idea. Why don’t you analyze what your boss’ feelings and needs are?”

Educating, “This type of situation usually comes up when the boss and the employee fall into a pattern of not communicating effectively.”

Discounting, “This is typical in our capitalist society wherever there’s a boss and employees.” ... “Just relax, you’ll be fine.”

Fixing, “What I’d like to do is coach you on how to handle your boss...”

Intellectualizing, “How did it start? Tell me exactly what happened.”

Suggesting Information Gathering, “You know, there’s a website that specializes in Workplace Dynamics. Check it out!”

