

EMPATHY



Lessons in Mental Health





Lessons in Mental Health

- Use this presentation as is, or view the Canva link for a fully modifiable template.
- Link: [Empathy Presentation](#)
- PDF: [Empathy Partner Worksheet](#)
- Link: [Empathy Qualities and Response](#)
- PDF: [Empathy Qualities and Response](#)
- Link: [Empathy Activity Template for Student Use](#)
- Canva is FREE for all teachers.
- You are welcome to download and use this resource for your personal and classroom needs. However, any redistribution, whether free or paid, or unauthorized publication online, is strictly prohibited.
- Visit [Lessons in Mental Health](#) for more FREE lessons and activities that support Mental Health Education.

TODAY WE WILL....

- Learn what empathy is and why it matters
- Understand the difference between empathy and sympathy
- Explore what empathy looks and sounds like
- Practice recognizing and showing empathy in real-life situations
- Create a visual response that shows the four qualities of empathy

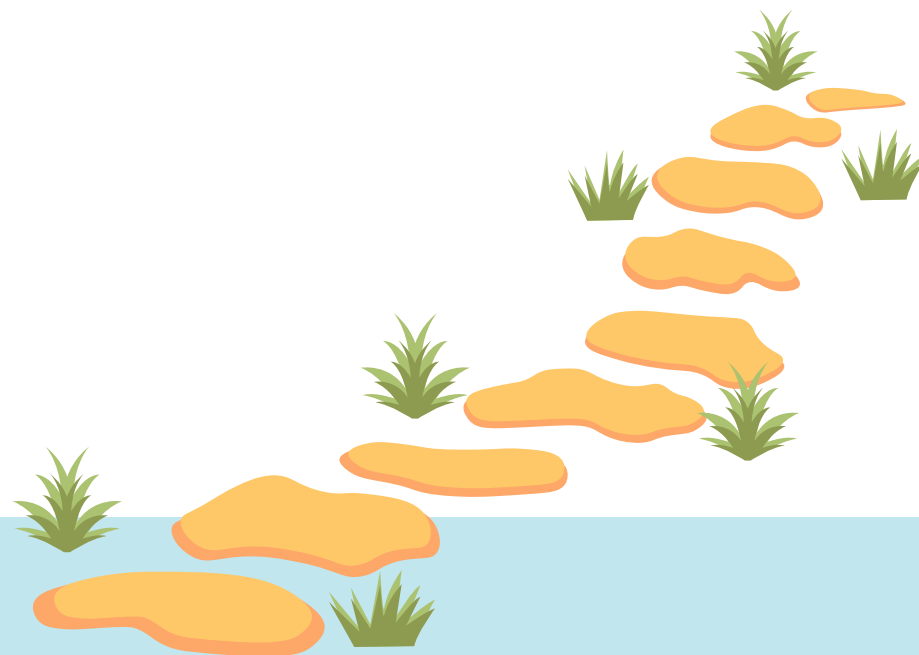
Walk A Mile In Someone Else's Shoes



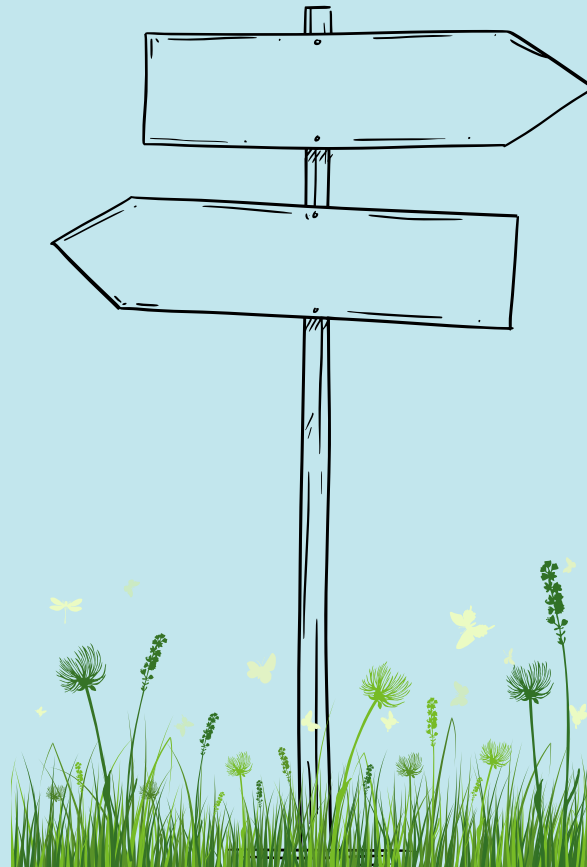
Empathy

Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another person.

It's about putting yourself in their shoes and seeing the world from their perspective.



What Is The Difference Between Empathy And Sympathy?





EMPATHY VS SYMPATHY

Empathy is often confused with sympathy. Sympathy is the feeling of pity or sorrow for someone else's misfortune.

While sympathy can be a part of empathy, it is not the same.

Empathy is about understanding and sharing another person's feelings, while sympathy is about feeling sorry for them.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EMPATHY

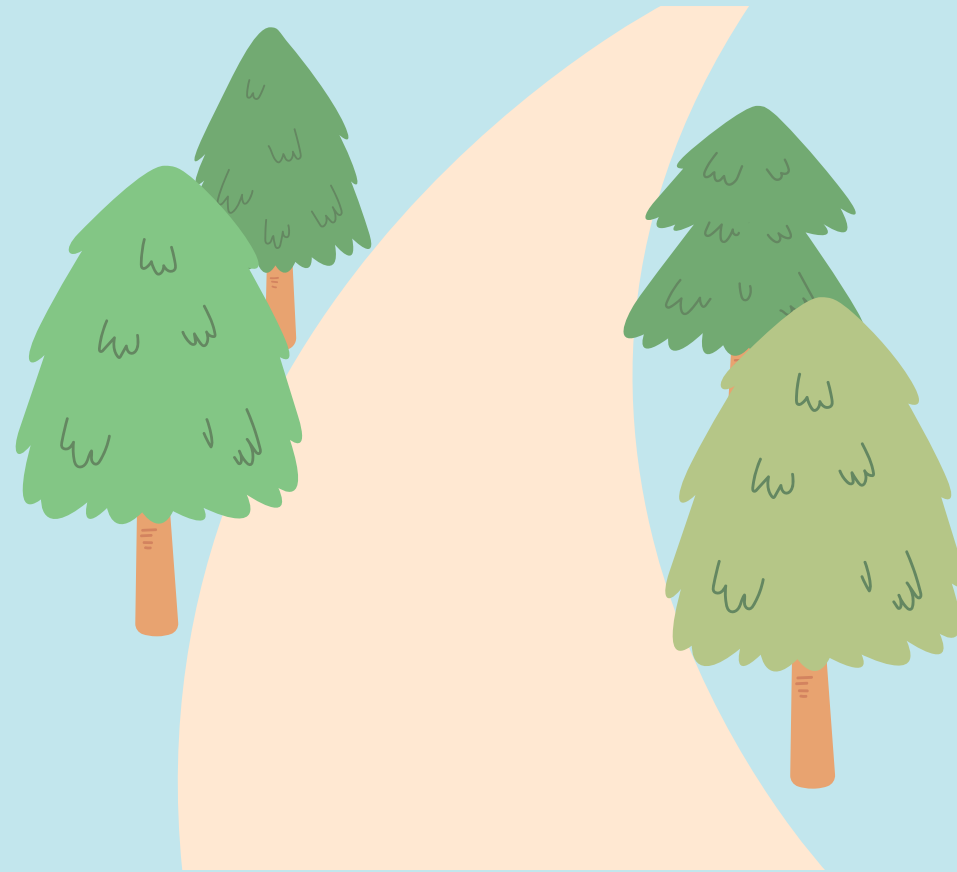
Empathy is important because it allows us to:

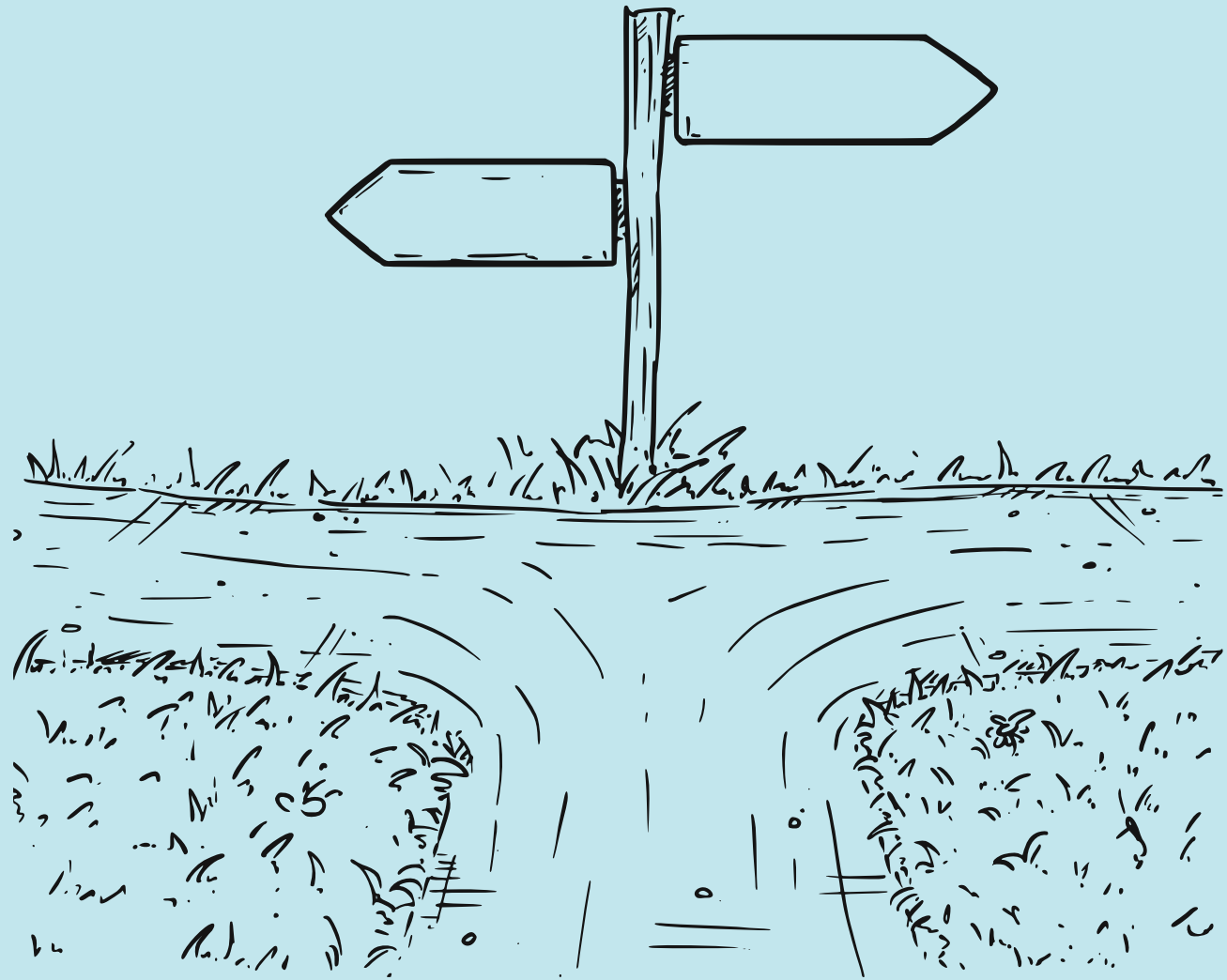
- Connect with others on a deeper level
- Build stronger relationships
- Make more informed decisions
- Reduce conflict
- Encourages inclusivity and social justice
- Promote kindness and compassion



Where Does Empathy Come From?

Is It Innate Or Learned?





THE ORIGIN OF EMPATHY

Empathy is a complex emotion shaped by both biology and the environment.

It's a mix of inborn traits and learned behaviors that are influenced by:

- Genetics
- Brain development
- Upbringing
- Culture
- Personal experiences

Biology of Empathy

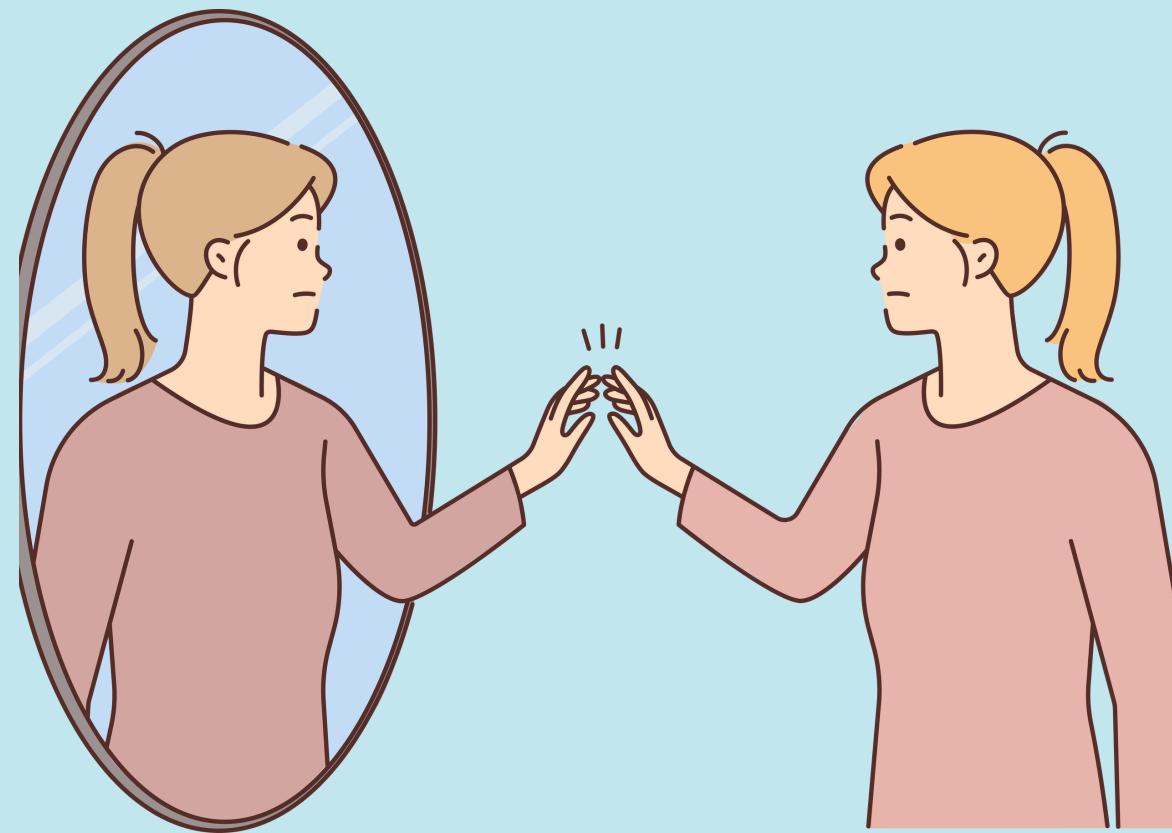


Empathy Response

Imagine you're in the school gym and see a classmate accidentally trip and stub their toe on a bench.

Even though you're not the one who got hurt, you instinctively wince or cringe in response.





MIRROR NEURONS

In our brains, there's a network of neurons called the "mirror neuron system."

These neurons light up when we see someone else doing something, almost as if we're experiencing it ourselves.

This helps us "mirror" the emotions of others, which is a basic building block of empathy.

Enviornment Of Empathy



ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

Environmental factors are key to developing empathy. As we grow up, we learn from family, friends, and society by observing how people react to different situations and express emotions.

This social learning process helps us understand and connect with others, building empathy.





WHAT DOES EMPATHY LOOK AND SOUND LIKE?

Take a moment with a partner to
brainstorm empathetic behaviors.

What does empathy look and sound like?

We will discuss as a class.

Empathy Looks Like

1

Nonverbal Cues:

Matching facial expressions and body language to the other person's emotions.

2

Active Listening:

Giving someone your full attention, making eye contact, and leaning in when they speak.

3

Offering Comfort:

Putting a hand on someone's shoulder during a stressful time. Small gestures can communicate care.

Empathy Sounds Like

1

Validating Feelings:

Phrases like "That sounds really tough" or "I understand why you're upset" acknowledge their emotions without judgment.

2

Supportive Words:

Offering encouragement or expressing concern. Saying "I'm here for you" or "Is there anything I can do to help?" shows you care.

3

Reflecting Back:

Repeating or summarizing what someone has said shows you've been listening and helps them feel understood.

Brene Brown

Brene Brown on Empathy.

Rarely can a response make something better.

What makes something better is connection.



Brene Brown's Key Points of Empathy



Empathy VS Sympathy

**Empathy
Fuels
?**

**Sympathy
Drives
?**

Empathy VS Sympathy

**Empathy
Fuels
Connection**

**Sympathy
Drives
Disconnection**

Four Qualities Of Empathy

1

**Perspective
Taking**

2

**Staying Out Of
Judgement**

3

**Recognizing
Emotion in Other
People**

4

**Communicating
your
understanding
of the emotion**



**Empathy Is
Feeling With
People**

Empathy Response

**An Empathic
Response
Rarely Starts
With....**

?

Empathy Response

**An Empathic
Response
Rarely Starts
With....**

At Least

Empathy Response

In the face of very difficult conversations we try to make things better.

A empathetic response doesn't have to have a solution and can sound like:

“I don't even know what to say, I'm just so glad you told me.”

Empathy

**Rarely can a
response
make
something
better.**

**What Makes
Something
Better?**



Connection

Empathy Response #1

A student says, "I'm so nervous about presenting in front of the class tomorrow."

1

Perspective Taking

"Speaking in front of others can feel scary, especially when it's something important to you."

2

Staying Out Of Judgement

"Feeling nervous doesn't mean you're not capable—it shows you care."

3

Recognizing Emotion in Other People

"I can tell you're feeling a lot of anxiety about this."

4

Communicating your understanding of the emotion

"It's totally normal to feel this way, and you're not alone."

Empathy Response #2

A student says, "My friends left me out of their weekend plans, and it really hurt."

1

**Perspective
Taking**

"It sounds like you feel left out and hurt because they didn't include you."

2

**Staying Out Of
Judgement**

"That's a tough situation, and it's okay to feel upset about it."

3

**Recognizing
Emotion in Other
People**

"You're feeling excluded, which is really painful."

4

**Communicating
your understanding
of the emotion**

Feeling left out by friends can make you question your place, but it doesn't mean you're any less valuable."

Empathy Partner Activity



PARTNER ACTIVITY

This activity will help you practice recognizing empathy in different situations.

Using the provided worksheet read each scenario and decide whether the response shows empathy, lack of empathy, or just sympathy.

For the last two questions, create your own empathetic responses.



Turn In Your Physical Worksheets



Individual Activity





INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY

In the face of very difficult conversations, we try to make things better.

An empathetic response doesn't have to have a solution.

In this activity you will highlight the 4 qualities of empathy and using Canva illustrate an “empathetic response”.

Four Qualities of Empathy

Empathy is an important skill, especially during tough conversations. The key qualities of empathy include:

1. Seeing things from their side (perspective-taking)
2. Not jumping to conclusions (staying out of judgment)
3. Noticing their feelings (recognizing emotions)
4. Showing you understand (communicating understanding)

Empathetic Response

Step 1

- Using Canva, illustrate and label the 4 qualities of Empathy.

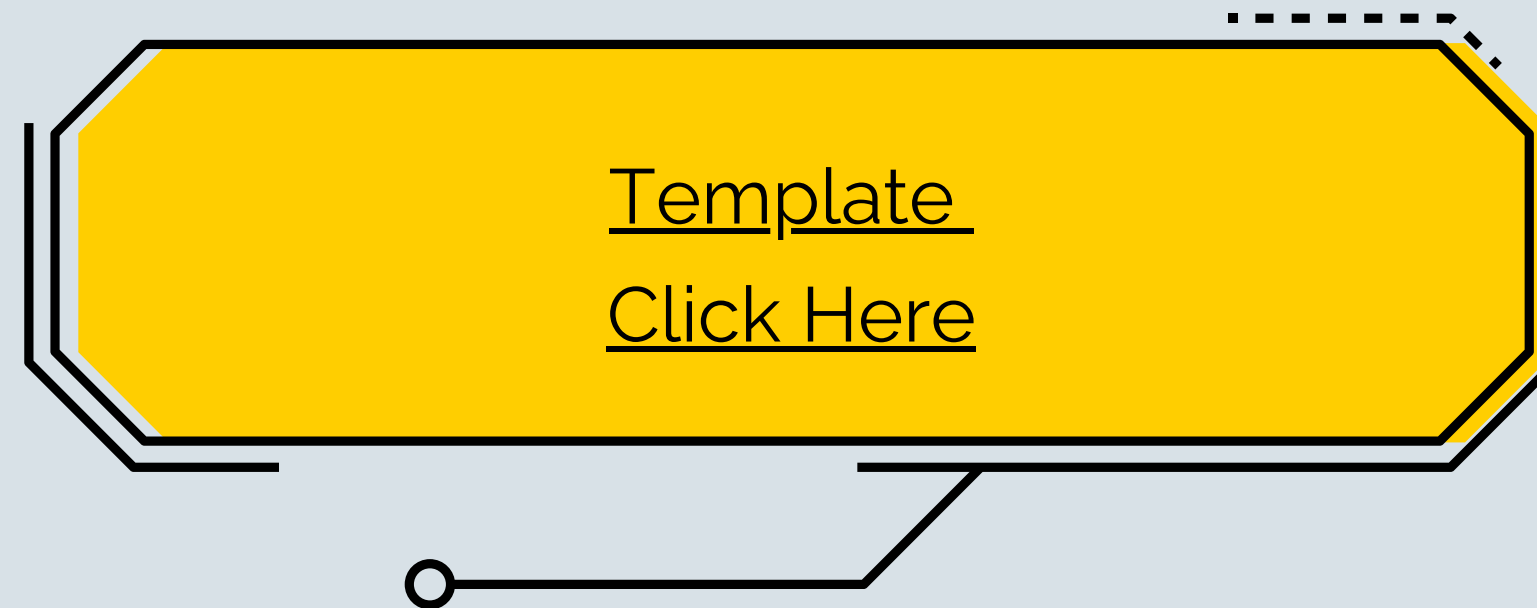
Step 2

- Craft an empathetic response: Think of a difficult situation and write a response using the 4 qualities of empathy. (e.g., "That sounds really tough. I can see why you're upset. Thanks for sharing.")
- Use graphics, pictures, or icons to illustrate your response.

Template (Optional)

Click on the icon link below

Scroll down to access and edit the template





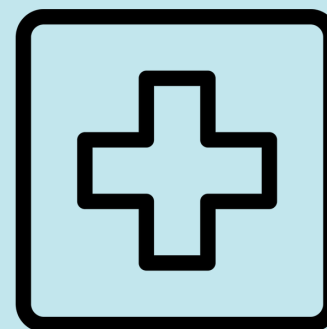
TURNING IN YOUR ACTIVITY

- Create your activity using Canva.
- Include both the 4 key characteristics of empathy plus an empathetic response.
- Download as a PDF Standard and upload online to: Empathy Qualities and Response.

LEAD WITH COMPASSION, EDUCATE WITH PURPOSE.

Until our next lesson

Visit [Lessons in Mental Health](#) for more FREE lessons and activities that support Mental Health Education.



Lessons in Mental Health