

Empathy As a Mental Health Soother

What Is Empathy?

- Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of others by taking their perspectives and interpreting cues about their feelings
- It involves envisioning life through others' eyes and experiencing emotions together, unlike sympathy which is only concern
- High empathy is associated with stronger relationships, well-being, and self-regulation as it strengthens bonds

Three Dimensions of Empathy

- Cognitive empathy is understanding others' emotional states
- Emotional empathy involves instinctively mirroring others' emotions
- Compassionate empathy goes beyond understanding and sharing emotions to include motivation to help others



The Power of Empathy in Reducing Stress & Supporting Mental Health

- Finding meaning and nurturing positive relationships through empathy can us help manage stress
- Empathy stimulates the brain to release oxytocin, a neurochemical that can help counteract the damaging physical effects of stress on the body
- At work, it helps us build skills to handle challenges, improve communication and connections with colleagues
- It also alleviates loneliness and isolation through emotional support, which aids the mental health healing process

Characteristics of Empathetic People: Emotional Sensitivity

- They are highly attuned to emotions and energies of others and can feel what others are feeling deeply
- They are intuitive and can sense honesty/dishonesty in others
- They are vulnerable and comfortable sharing their own feelings



Characteristics of Empathetic People: Social Attunement

- They prefer solitary activities like nature and have a hard time in crowds due to sensory overload
- They are curious about strangers and like to connect with people
- They are fully present with others and give them their undivided attention
- They tune into nonverbal communication and ask open questions to understand emotions

Characteristics of Empathetic People: Empathetic Care & Communication

- They show care, compassion, and desire to help others
- They set boundaries to avoid burnout while providing support
- They listen without interrupting and judgment
- They communicate with reflection, affirmation, and encouragement



Characteristics of Empathetic People: Perspective-taking & Self-awareness

- They ask questions to gain perspectives
- They approach others with an open mindset
- They seek to understand different perspectives by imagining how others might feel
- They need solo time to recharge after social interactions



How to Practice Empathy?

- Show interest in others and listen without interrupting or judging what they say
- Put yourself in others' shoes, imagining their thoughts and feelings to understand different perspectives
- Engage in acts of kindness toward others
- Recognize the diversity and individuality of others
- Engage with people of various backgrounds and be open to learn from their experiences
- Develop self-awareness by reflecting on your own biases and prejudices



**THANK
YOU!**

