HOWTO EMPATHY

A primer on how I taught myself to be more empathetic.

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THIS IS A TOUCHY FEELY WOO WOO TALK.
“I can’t even imagine.”
6 Understanding Strategies

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<tr>
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Normal people have an incredible lack of empathy.

—Temple Grandin
DEFINE: EMPATHY

The ability to understand and share the feelings of another.
When you show deep empathy toward others, their defensive energy goes down, and positive energy replaces it. That’s when you can get more creative in solving problems.

—Stephen Covey
DEFINE: SYMPATHY

The feelings of pity and sorrow for someone else's misfortune.
WHY?
Entrepreneurs may be brutally honest, but fostering relationships with partners and building enduring communities requires empathy, self-sacrifice and a willingness to help others without expecting anything in return.

— BEN PARR
Developers may be brutally honest, but fostering relationships with partners and building enduring communities requires empathy, self-sacrifice and a willingness to help others without expecting anything in return.

— Ben Parr & Me
THINK DIFFERENT
THINK DIFFERENT
THINK DELIBERATE
“How can I help [this/you/me] to be more awesome?”
Why do you build software?
And why do you do that?
MY "WHY"

to understand and transform obstacles
to achieve a state of flow.
PRACTICING EMPATHY
Empathy is a tool for building people into groups, for allowing us to function as more than self-obsessed individuals.

— Neil Gaiman
LEVEL 1.
CARING JUST ENOUGH

Difficulty — Beginner.
REWARDS

• Improves team cohesion.

• Improves capacity for diversity of thought.

RISKS

• Requires a time investment.
COLLECT STORIES.

Learn about people by asking them questions.
STFU AND LISTEN.

Listen until there is no more story.
Then respond.
REFER BACK.

Follow-up on a previous story to get the next instalment.
Compartmentalisation is way overrated.

—MOLLY RINGWALD
LEVEL 2.
THINKING STRATEGIES

Difficulty — Intermediate.
Rewards

• Improves your ability to “manipulate” situations into successful outcomes.

Risks

• Requires a time investment.
UNCOVER MOTIVATORS.
Unpack why a person behaves the way they do.
WWXD?
THINKING STRATEGIES

Creativity
- challenge
- envision
- brainstorm
- reframe
- flash of insight
- flow

Understanding
- scan
- structure
- empathise
- express
- clarify
- tune-in

Decision-Making
- crux
- validate
- experience
- conclude
- trust your heart
- values-driven
COMMON PHRASES FOR A CREATIVE THINKER

• “Can we try …”

• “I know we’re done, but what about …”

• “OMG! I just had this great idea …”

• “Have you thought about doing it like this instead …”
ANALYTICAL THINKING

scan  
structure  
tune-in  
empathise  
express  
clarify
COMMON PHRASES FOR AN ANALYTICAL THINKER

• “So what you’re saying is ...”

• “Just to clarify ...”

• “Can you tell me how ...”

• “Is this related to ...”

• “So I made this spreadsheet ...”

• “That must feel horrible!”
crux
validate
experience
conclude
gut instinct
values-driven

DECISION THINKING
COMMON PHRASES FOR A DECISION THINKER

• “I’m ready to move on to ...”

• “We’ve already made a decision ...”

• “I don’t know why I think this, but ...”

• “Last time we tried this ...”

• “So I think the real problem is ...”

• “My gut tells me ...”
STRUCTURE INTERACTIONS FOR DESIRED OUTCOMES
The biggest mistake is believing that there is just one right way to listen, to talk, to have a connection or a relationship.

DEBORAH TANNEN
LEVEL 3. IMAGINATION

Difficulty — Advanced
REWARDS

• Improves your ability to “manipulate” situations into successful outcomes.

RISKS

• Requires a greater time investment.

• Can be overwhelming to highly sensitive people.

• Can make you doubt your own value / self-worth.
USE YOUR IMAGINATION.

Complain from the other perspective.
D2: YELLOW - Your UNDERSTANDING Style

- **Dimension**
- **2 Understanding Mindsets**
  - Analytical Thinking: High Preference, Average
  - Compassion: High Preference, Low Preference

- **6 Understanding Strategies**
  - Analytical Thinking: High Preference, Average, Low Preference
  - Compassion: High Preference, Average, Low Preference
6 Understanding Strategies

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The 4 Dimensions of Total Intelligence: A Portfolio of Essential Skills

3 Dimensions

- Creativity
  - Creative Thinking
  - Creative Intuition

- Understanding
  - Analytical Thinking
  - Compassion

- Decision-Making
  - Critical Thinking
  - Beliefs Based
  - Gut Intuition

7 Mindsets

- Creative Thinking
- Creative Intuition
- Analytical Thinking
- Compassion
- Critical Thinking
- Beliefs Based
- Gut Intuition

18 Success Strategies

- Creativity:
  1. Brainstorm Ideas
  2. Challenge Ideas
  3. Reframe Problems
  4. Envision Possibilities

- Understanding:
  1. Get Into The Flow
  2. Flash of Insight
  3. Scan The Situation
  4. Structure Information
  5. Clarify Understanding
  6. Tune-in To Feelings
  7. Empathize With Others
  8. Express Feelings

- Decision-Making:
  1. Get to the Crux
  2. Conclude
  3. Validate the Conclusion
  4. Rely on Experience
  5. Values Driven Decision-Making
  6. Heart Decision-Making
I think we all have empathy. We may not have enough courage to display it.

—MAYA ANGELOU
PRACTICING EMPATHY

• Level 1: Care just enough to learn more about a person’s life.

• Level 2: Use thinking strategies to structure interactions.

• Level 3: Use your imagination to complain from the other’s perspective.
Empathy for Self.
EMPATHY FOR OTHERS.