

# **Workforce Wellbeing ECHO – Empathy & Empathetic Leadership**

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# Overview



- What is empathy?
- Empathy & empathetic leadership plus a few tips
- Empathetic leadership examples – hearing from colleagues  
→ keep these questions in mind:
  1. Are there examples of empathetic leadership that you've experienced that you wish to share (can be de-identified)?  
In particular, what was the impact as a result & how did you feel?
  2. What do you find/think the most challenging about being an empathetic leader?
- The importance of looking after you
- Questions

# What is Empathy?



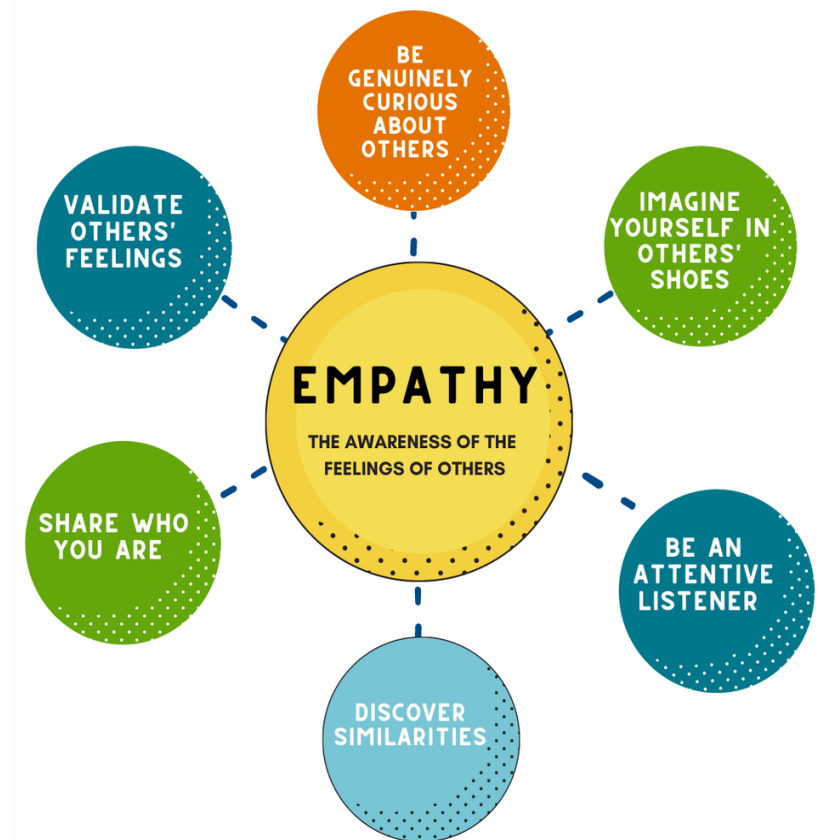
- Empathy is understanding or feeling what another person is experiencing from within their frame of reference – the capacity to place oneself in another's position
- Four qualities of empathy:
  1. Perspective taking – recognise the *other persons' perspective as their truth*
  2. *Staying out of judgement*
  3. Recognising emotion in other person/people & *communicating that*
  4. *Feeling with people*
  5. *Vulnerable choice*
- Brené Brown on Empathy vs Sympathy (video to follow)
- Empathy fuels connection / sympathy drives disconnection

Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KZBTYViDPIQ>

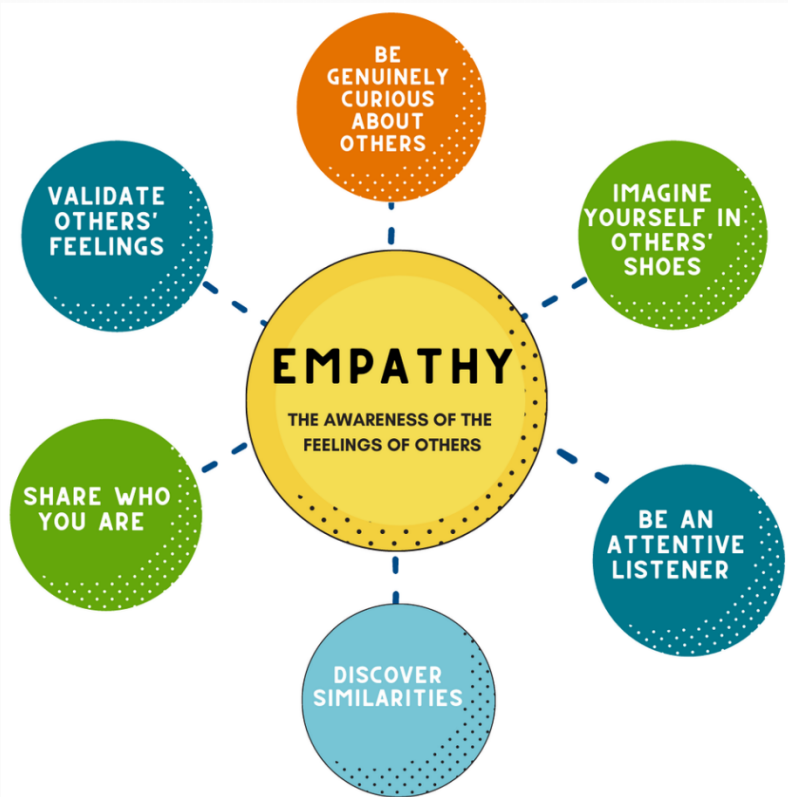


# Empathy & Empathetic Leadership Top Tips

- Suspend judgement
- Stay curious
- Commit to being 'other-focused'
- Acknowledge what you've heard
- Avoid responding in a way that seeks to problem solve or minimise what has been shared
- Practice compassion
- It's all about having the courage to walk alongside
- It may feel awkward, brave, uncomfortable etc...& this is ok
- Commit to practice and skill development



# Benefits of Empathetic Leadership



- Never a more important time to be empathetic...general & as a leader
- Leaders manage better when they:
  - Have an understanding of their team's emotional state
  - Express this understanding & support their team's handling of these emotions (group &/or 1:1)
- If you're able to demonstrate empathy, people will feel safe talking to you
- Greater connection as a team & 1:1

# Discussion

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1. Are there examples of empathetic leadership that you've experienced that you wish to share (can be de-identified)? In particular, what was the impact as a result & how did you feel?
2. What do you find/think the most challenging about being an empathetic leader?



# The Importance of Looking After You



- Self compassion – having kindness & care for yourself...is no different to compassion for others
- Set & respect boundaries
- If you know you really need a day off, take an ADO/AL day, switch your phone off
- Do something that connects you to yourself e.g. a massage, walk, other exercise or hobbies – very valuable
- Contact EAP (GV Health 1300 130 130) or your provider
- Sonder – download the app (GV Health)
- Speak with your manager about any specific needs you have
- In & out of work





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# Questions