

MODULE 2 • TRAINER PRESENTATION

Empathy

Listen, understand and respond with respect: empathy for work, teams and community life in a new country.

3 hours

3 units

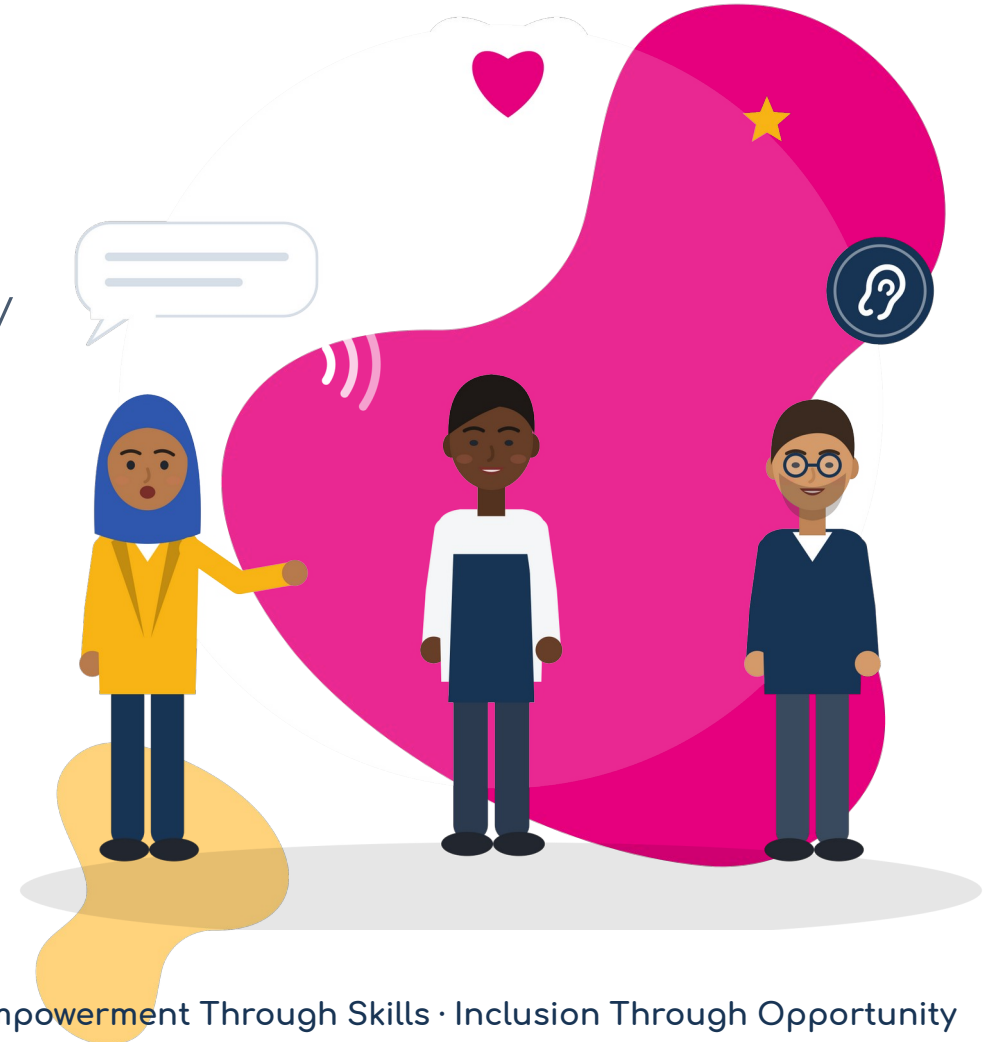
Ages 18-30

B1-B2 English

SMILE

Support Young Migrants Integration in the Labour market
in Europe

Erasmus+ KA220-YOU · 2024-1-TR01-KA220-YOU-000256357



Empowerment Through Skills · Inclusion Through Opportunity

HOW WE WORK TOGETHER

Our starting agreement



Any English is good English

We listen to ideas, not grammar. Nobody corrects your language here. Mix words from other languages if it helps.



Your story belongs to you

You never have to share your migration story. Our examples use invented characters.



Listen to understand

One voice at a time. Every question is a good question.



“Pass” is always OK

You can skip any activity or question. Take a break when you need one.

MODULE MAP

Three units, one journey: understand, explore, practise

01

Unit 1: Understanding Empathy

Opening ritual and Object Stories. 1.1 Defining empathy, 1.2 Empathy and sympathy, 1.3 Communication and teamwork.

≈ 65 min

02

Unit 2: Empathy in Diverse Settings

Mini case studies. 2.1 Empathy Onion, 2.2 Barriers to empathy, 2.3 Empathy in conflict resolution.

≈ 50 min

03

Break

Movement and grounding. Quick check on the safety thermometer.

≈ 10 min

04

Unit 3: Empathy in Practice

3.1 Active listening, 3.2 Empathy Lab, 3.3 Reflection. Closing ritual: gratitude circle.

≈ 55 min

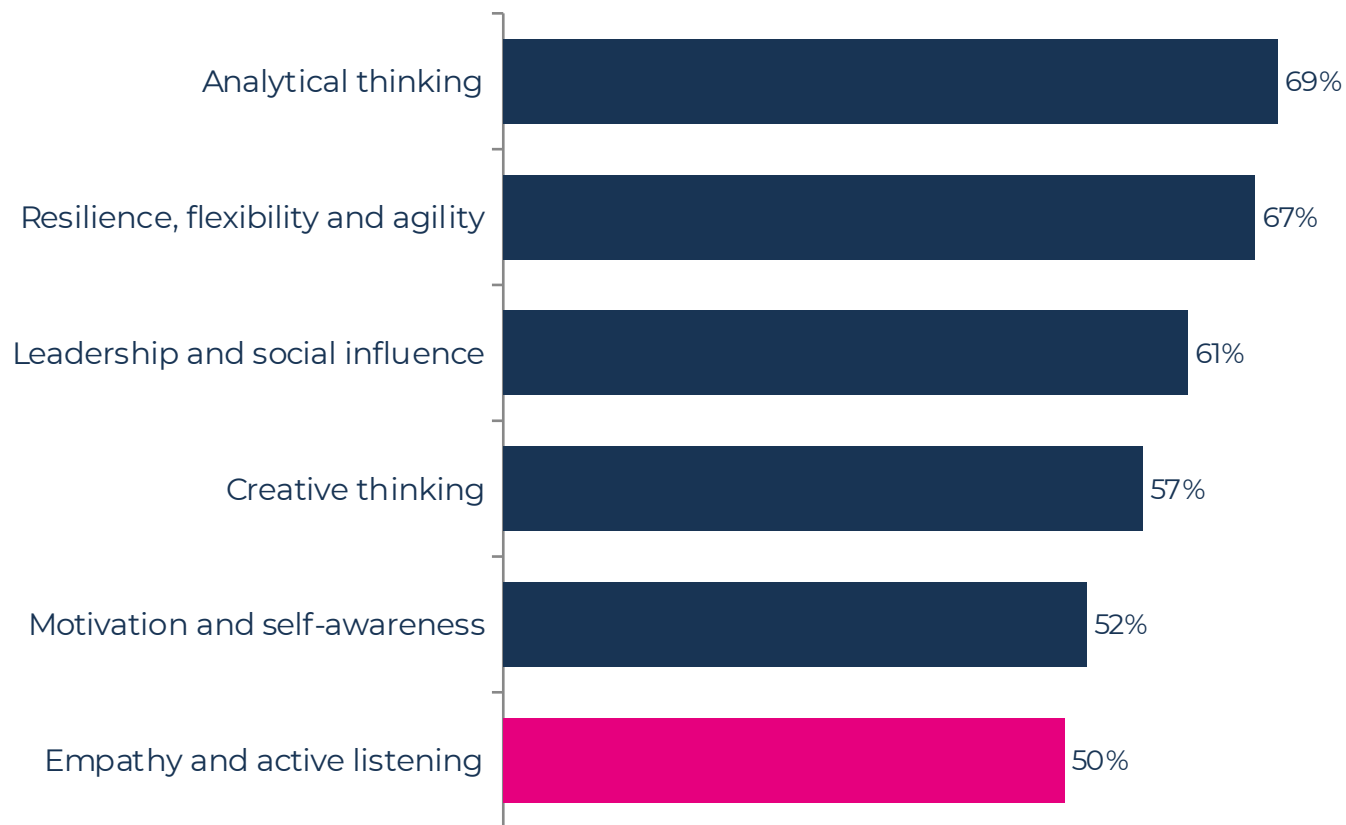
LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this module, you will be able to

- 1 Define empathy and explain its role in interpersonal and intercultural communication, including its ethical and political dimensions.
- 2 Identify common barriers to empathy and develop strategies to overcome these barriers in various social settings, including biases rooted in colonial histories or cultural hierarchies.
- 3 Practise active listening and perspective-taking in real-life scenarios, using tools such as empathy mapping and role-play to explore layered identities and social systems.
- 4 Apply empathetic responses in workplace and community interactions in order to foster inclusion and collaboration, while remaining aware of power dynamics and avoiding a “saviour” mindset.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Half of employers call empathy a core skill



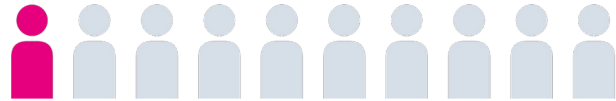
- **50% of employers** name “empathy and active listening” a core skill: 7th of 26 skills.
- **Hard to replace:** skills rooted in human interaction currently “show no substitution potential” by generative AI.
- **142 occupations** in the EU skills list (ESCO) need “listen actively”, e.g. healthcare assistant, child day care worker.

Source: World Economic Forum (2025), Future of Jobs Report 2025, Fig. 3.3 p. 35 and p. 44 · ESCO, skill “listen actively”, accessed 1 Oct 2026

WHY THIS MATTERS

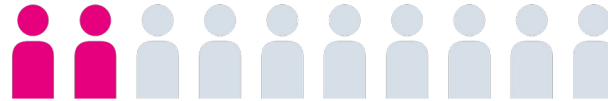
Empathy is daily work, and it can be trained

14%



of personal care workers in the EU were non-EU citizens in 2018. Immigrants made up 13% of all key workers.

18%



of care workers in Germany are not German citizens: 307,000 people in June 2024, up from 6% in 2014.

18 trials

In 18 randomised trials with 1,018 adults, empathy training worked, with a medium effect ($g = 0.63$).

Many of you already do empathic work: care, service, interpreting for family. It is a skill you can name and grow.

Source: Fasani & Mazza (2020), IZA Policy Paper 155, p. 8 · Bundesagentur für Arbeit (2025), pp. 11-12 · Teding van Berkhout & Malouff (2016), Journal of Counseling Psychology

FOR TRAINERS

How this module teaches: safe, relational, embodied



Three stages

Short inputs with stories and metaphors (bridges, mirrors), then guided practice, then personal reflection. Keep inputs short.



Trauma-informed practice

Grounding with breath, movement or sensory objects. Opt-out for intense activities. Ask before any story is shared.



Check-in and check-out

Emotion cards, a body scan or one word at the start and end. The safety thermometer gives non-verbal feedback.



Decolonial and feminist

Before each session, reflect on your positionality: “What power do I hold in this space? How can I share it?”



Embodied learning

Empathy Walks, “step into the circle if”, drawing, collage, music and gesture: empathy beyond words.



Cultural connections

Local examples such as bureaucracy in Greece. Participants bring songs, proverbs and stories. Multilingual prompts and symbols.

01

UNIT 1 · ≈ 65 min

Understanding Empathy

Empathy is cognitive, emotional and ethical, and it is not the same as sympathy.

Agreement Ritual

Object Stories

Empathy vs sympathy

Empathy Relay



Module 2 · Empathy

8

OPENING RITUAL

Agreement Ritual: how we want to be together

**TIME**
10 min**GROUP**
Whole group**MATERIALS**
Flipchart, sticky notes,
markers**GOAL**
Shared values for safety,
respect and mutual
responsibility**STEPS**

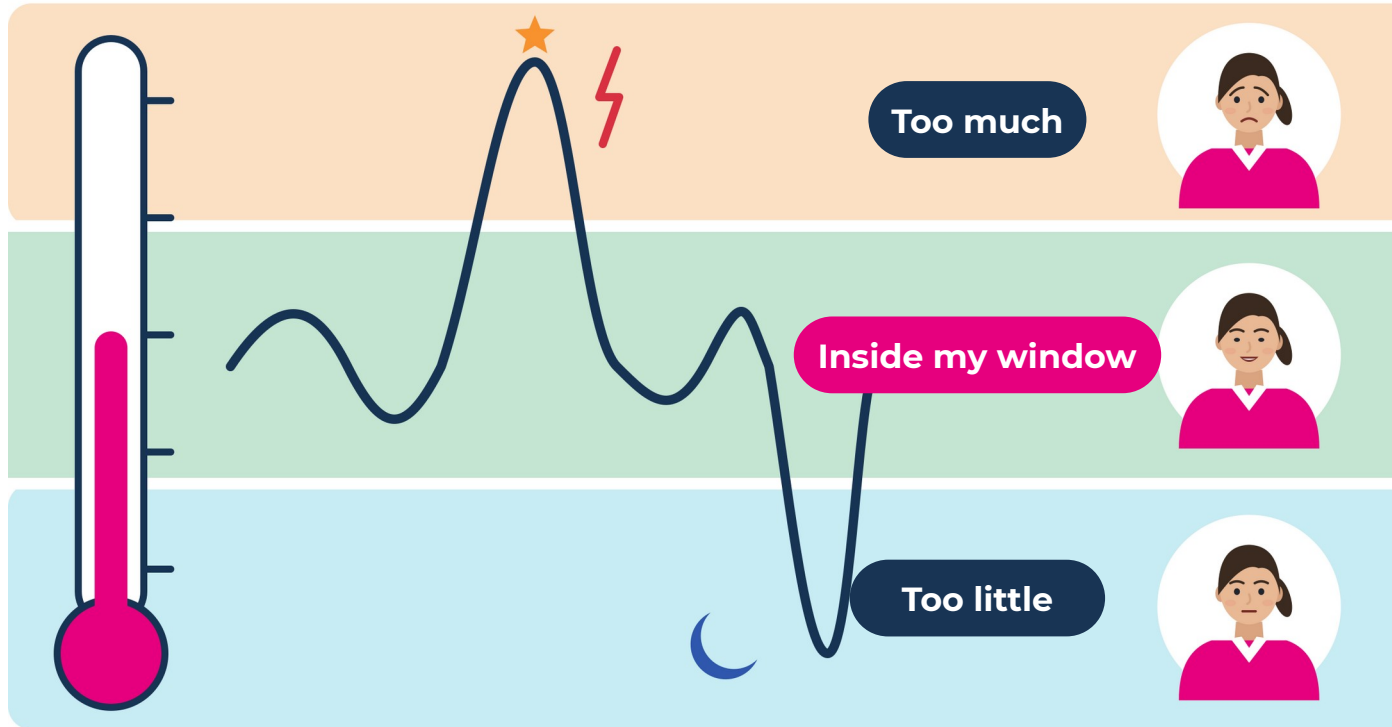
1. Read the three starters on the wall: “We listen to understand”, “We honour silence”, “We speak from lived experience”.
2. Each person writes one more agreement on a sticky note, in any language.
3. Read it aloud, or ask a neighbour to read it for you.
4. Agree on 5-7 rules. Two are always there: “You can always pass” and “What is personal stays in the room”.
5. Everyone signs the poster or adds a symbol or hand-print. It stays on the wall all day.

**DEBRIEF**

- Which rule is most important for you today? Why?

CHECK-IN · SAFETY THERMOMETER

How are you arriving today?



Up: more alarm, stress goes up. Down: less energy, shutting down.

Where are you now?

- **Too much:** heart racing, irritated or panicky. It is hard to think or to listen.
- **Inside my window:** I can think and feel at the same time. I am ready to learn.
- **Too little:** numb, tired or far away. I want to switch off.

ACTIVITY

Object Stories: a moment of being understood

 **TIME**
12 min

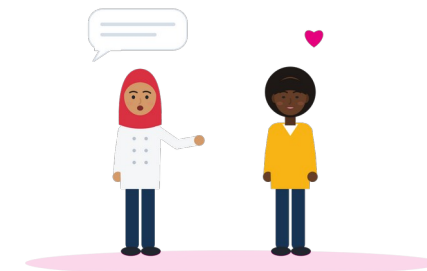
 **GROUP**
Pairs

 **MATERIALS**
Objects participants bring, or
a table of neutral objects: a
key, a cup, a scarf, a map

 **GOAL**
Remember how empathy
feels from the inside

STEPS

1. Choose an object that represents “being understood”. Bring one, or pick one from the table.
2. Think of a small, everyday story you are happy to share in a training room.
3. In pairs, share the story behind the object: 3 minutes each.
4. The listener asks one question and says one thing they noticed. No advice.
5. Swap roles.



DEBRIEF

- What did the listener do that made you feel understood?
- How did empathy feel in that moment?

ACTIVITY · 1.1 DEFINING EMPATHY

Empathy Brainstorming Wall



TIME
12 min



GROUP
Whole group



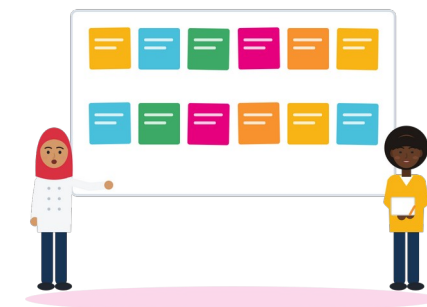
MATERIALS
Sticky notes in three colours,
or Jamboard or Miro



GOAL
Co-create a working
definition of empathy

STEPS

1. Write on sticky notes: what does empathy look like? One idea per note, any language.
2. Put all notes on the wall. Together, group similar ideas.
3. The trainer introduces the three dimensions (next slide).
4. Move the notes into three colours: thinking, feeling or responding.
5. Agree on one shared sentence that starts “For us, empathy means”.



DEBRIEF

- Which dimension do you use most often?
- Which one do you find more difficult?
- What does empathy look like at a border crossing?

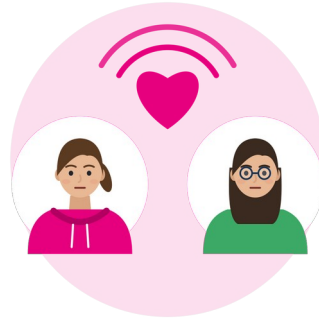
1.1 DEFINING EMPATHY AND ITS CORE COMPONENTS

Three dimensions of empathy



Cognitive: think

Perspective-taking: seeing from another person's point of view.
“The officer has 40 people waiting and rules she did not make.”



Emotional (affective): feel

Emotional resonance: an emotional echo that builds connection. Your friend is scared before an exam, and you feel it too.



Ethical: respond

Sensitivity and responsiveness to difference. You translate for a neighbour, but you ask first and let her speak for herself.

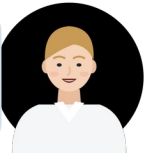
1.2 EMPATHY AND SYMPATHY: TWO CONTRASTING SCENARIOS

Same news, two answers



Dawit · scene 1 My diploma is not recognised here. Four years of study, and now it doesn't count.

Youth worker A Oh, poor you. But at least you are safe now. You should be happy with any job.



Dawit · scene 2 My diploma is not recognised here. Four years of study, and now it doesn't count.

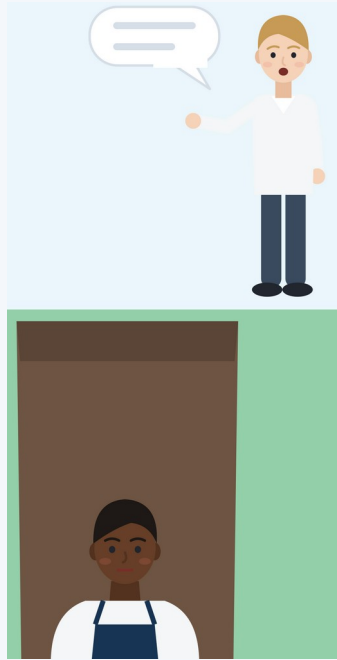
Youth worker B You studied for four years and now it doesn't count here. That must be very frustrating. What would help you most?



Invented scenario. In small groups: which answer is sympathy, which is empathy? Use the six-question checklist.

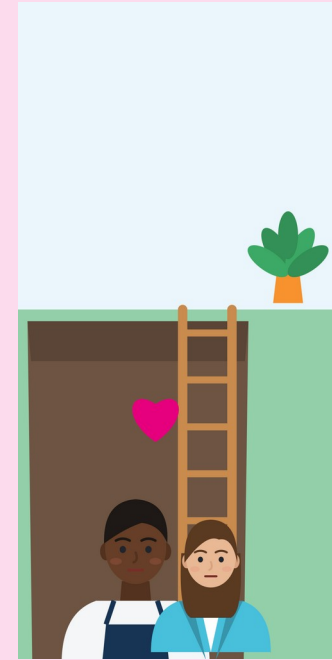
1.2 EMPATHY AND SYMPATHY: WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

Feeling sorry for, or feeling with?



Sympathy at a distance

- Looks at the problem from outside.
- Starts with “At least”.
- Judges, or jumps to quick advice.
- “You should be grateful.”



Empathy

- Tries to see it from the other person's side.
- Does not judge.
- Names the feeling: “That sounds really hard.”
- Stays with the person: “Tell me more.”

Khader's critique: sympathy can stay outside and moralise. Empathy needs depth, goes both ways and asks why the injustice happens.

1.2 REWRITE THE SYMPATHETIC RESPONSE

Rewrite it: from “at least” to “I hear you”

SYMPATHETIC ANSWER

“At least you have a job.”

“Don't worry, everyone has problems with papers.”

“You should just ignore your boss.”

“I know exactly how you feel.”



MORE EMPATHIC ANSWER

“That sounds exhausting. What is the hardest part?”

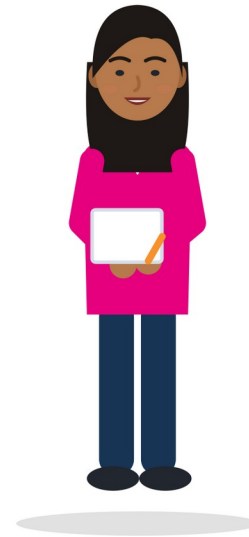
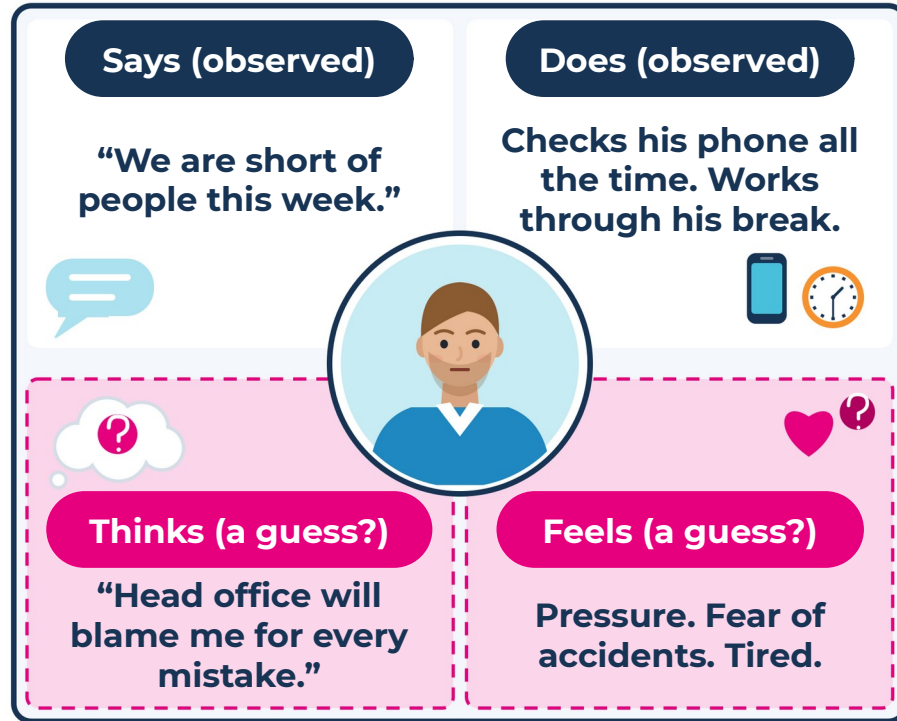
“Waiting for papers is really stressful. What do you need first?”

“It sounds like you felt ignored. Do you want to talk, or do you want ideas?”

“I can't fully know what this is like for you, but I want to understand.”

1.2 EMPATHY MAP WORKSHEET

Empathy Map: observe first, then guess



Then talk

- **Start with the goal:** what does this person need? (Finish the week without accidents.)
- **Add:** what does the person see and hear?
- **Then choose your words:** “I know this week is very busy. Can we talk for two minutes about my shifts?”

Invented example: Leyla maps her shift manager before she asks about her shifts.

Source: Gray (2017), Updated empathy map canvas, XPLANE (Gamestorming toolkit) · example invented

ACTIVITY · 1.3 EMPATHY IN COMMUNICATION AND TEAMWORK

Empathy Relay: listen, paraphrase, validate

 **TIME**
10 min

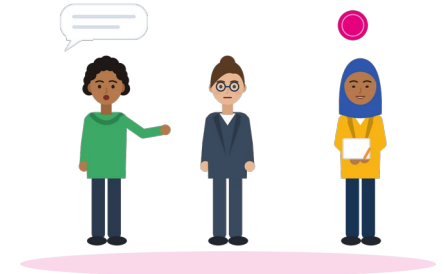
 **GROUP**
Pairs

 **MATERIALS**
Timer, phrase cards ("So, if I understand you correctly", "It sounds like")

 **GOAL**
Listen without interrupting and show the other person they were understood

STEPS

1. Person A talks for 2 minutes about a small, current challenge: finding a room, a difficult shift, a hard course.
2. Person B listens in silence. No questions, no advice.
3. B paraphrases in their own words: "So, if I understand you correctly, the main problem is the rent."
4. B names the feeling carefully: "It sounds like you feel worried. Am I right?"
5. A says what B got right. Then swap roles.

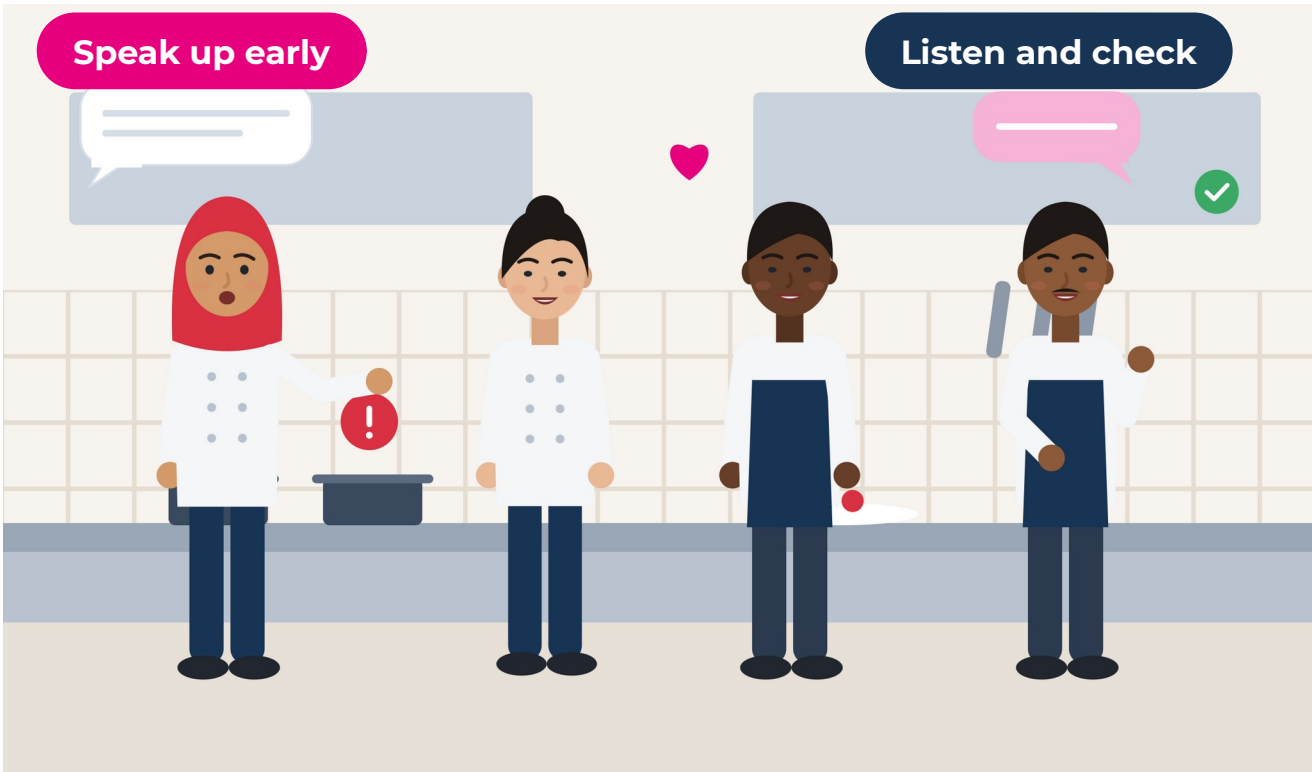


DEBRIEF

- What felt easy, and what felt difficult?
- What made it safe for you to share?
- What made you hesitate?

1.3 THE ROLE OF EMPATHY IN COMMUNICATION AND TEAMWORK

At work, trust comes before teamwork



Watch: *The Power of Empathy* (Brené Brown, RSA Short, about 3 minutes, subtitles on). Which answer felt close, which felt distant?

Source: Van Bommel (2021), Catalyst, survey of about 900 US employees (correlational) · Royal Society of Arts (2013), Brené Brown on empathy [video]

- **Safe to speak:** people report a mistake or a problem early when they expect to be heard.
- **Intercultural teams:** a different style is not a bad intention. Ask before you judge.
- **Handovers and feedback:** summarise and check. “So the main point is the new machine, right?”
- **Empathic leaders:** employees with highly empathic senior leaders more often said they were engaged (76% vs 32%) and innovative (61% vs 13%).

02

UNIT 2 · ≈ 50 min

Empathy in Diverse Settings

Layered identities, bias, stress and history: what blocks empathy, and how to communicate ethically across difference.

Mini case studies

Empathy Onion

Gallery Walk

Pause and Rewind



ACTIVITY · UNIT 2

Mini case studies: what blocks empathy here?



TIME
8 min



GROUP
Groups of 3-4



MATERIALS
Case cards: short,
anonymised stories (invented
cases are marked)



GOAL
Find empathy blockers and
unmet needs

STEPS

1. Each group reads one case card. An example is on the next slide.
2. Who feels what? Name at least two people in the story.
3. Which blocker do you see: bias, miscommunication or stress?
4. Which need is not met: safety, respect, information, belonging or choice?
5. Propose one empathic response, from any person in the story. Share it in one minute.



DEBRIEF

- Which needs were overlooked most often?
- Which response would really change the situation?

ILLUSTRATIVE SCENARIO

No number, no job. No job, no number.

**Ibrahim, 22**

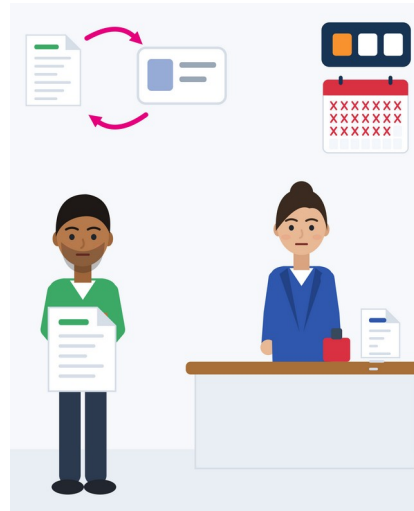
Recognised as a refugee last month, Athens

Bureaucracy

Greece

Job offer

Ibrahim has a job offer. The employer needs his social security number (AMKA). The officer says: "I can only activate it with proof of employment." The employer cannot hire him without the number. He must leave the camp within 30 days, and the interpreter service has stopped. The officer has 40 people waiting.



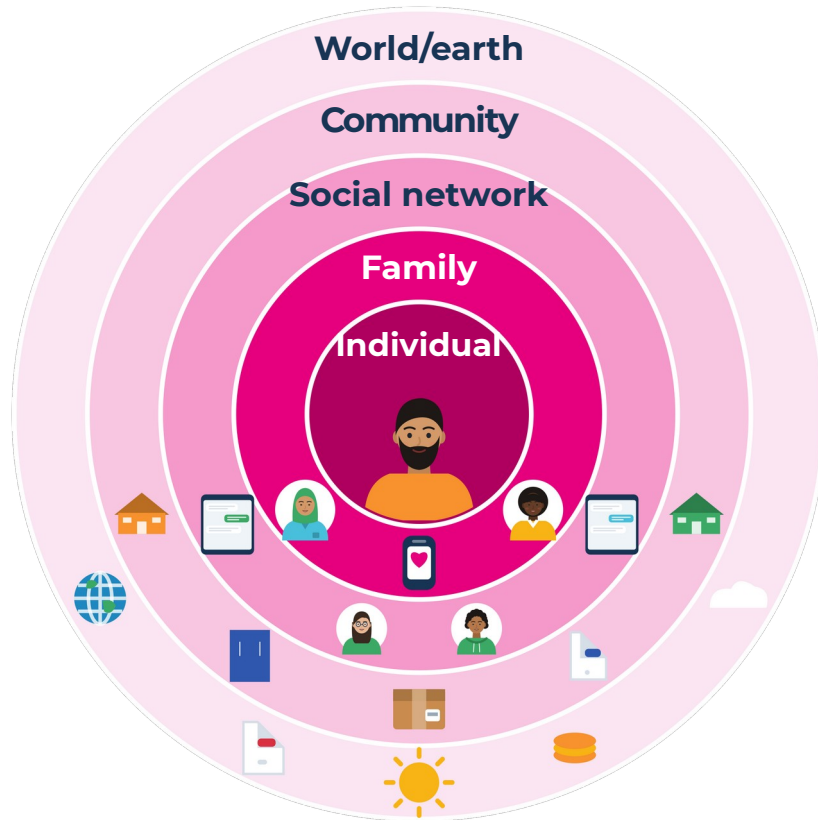
DISCUSS

1. What does each person feel: Ibrahim, the officer, the employer?
2. Which needs are not met?
3. Is the problem a person, or the system?
4. What would a fair, empathic response look like from each of them?

Grounded in: since Dec 2023 the AMKA needs proof of employment; support ends 30 days after recognition; camp interpretation stopped in July 2025 (AIDA Greece 2025 Update).

2.1 CULTURAL SENSITIVITY AND PERSPECTIVE-TAKING

The Empathy Onion: the circles that shape us



From the inside out

- **Individual:** my body, feelings, languages, beliefs and story.
- **Family:** the people who raised me, or who are like family to me, here and far away.
- **Social network:** friends, classmates, colleagues, online groups.
- **Community:** neighbourhood, cultural or religious groups, school, workplace, local offices.
- **World/earth:** laws, history, the economy, news, climate, war and peace.

Source: SMILE curriculum, Unit 2.1 (KEAN) · related model: Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1994)

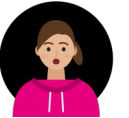
2.1 A DIALOGUE BETWEEN TWO LAYERS

My community self speaks to my individual self



Community self In our community, we don't talk about feelings with strangers.

Individual self But I want my supervisor to know why I am so tired this month.



Community self People will think you are weak.

Individual self Maybe. But staying silent makes me feel alone at work.



Community self Then choose your words, and choose who you tell.



Invented example. Your turn: draw your onion, then write 4-6 lines between two of your layers. Any language. Share only what you want.

ACTIVITY · 2.2 BARRIERS TO EMPATHY

Gallery Walk: empathy blockers

 **TIME**
14 min

 **GROUP**
Small groups, then the whole room

 **MATERIALS**
Slido or Mentimeter (or paper slips in a box), 4-5 posters, sticky notes

 **GOAL**
Turn blockers into ideas for empathic action

STEPS

1. In small groups, brainstorm “empathy blockers” you have experienced or witnessed, blocked by you or by someone else.
2. Send them anonymously by Slido or Mentimeter, or on paper slips.
3. The trainer sorts them onto posters: bias, stress, miscommunication, power and history, too much empathy.
4. Walk around the posters. Add sticky notes: “What would empathy look like here?” “Which needs are being overlooked?”
5. Short input on blockers and empathy excesses (next two slides).



DEBRIEF

- How can we move from projection to presence?
- What does ethical empathy look like in unequal power dynamics?

2.2 BIAS, STRESS, MISCOMMUNICATION AND COLONIAL LEGACIES

Four empathy blockers, and what they look like



Bias

Empathy flows easily to “us”. Same CV in Germany: 18.8% got a call-back with a German name, 4.2% with a Turkish name and a headscarf.



Stress

Under pressure we leave our “window of tolerance” and stop listening. A stressed colleague is often overloaded, not cold.



Miscommunication

“Hard to understand” is partly in the ear of the listener: candidates with a strong accent were rated less hireable, with equally good arguments.



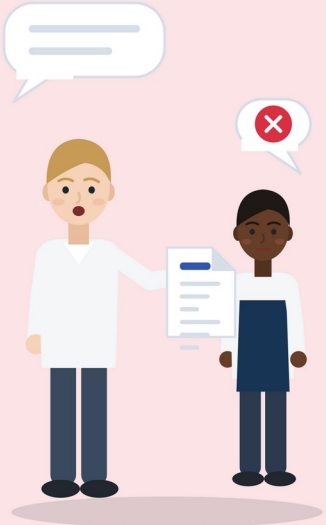
Colonial legacies

Old hierarchies still shape who is seen as competent. Research describes a stereotype of “the generic immigrant” as incompetent and untrustworthy.

2.2 EMPATHY EXCESSES AND SAVIOUR MINDSETS

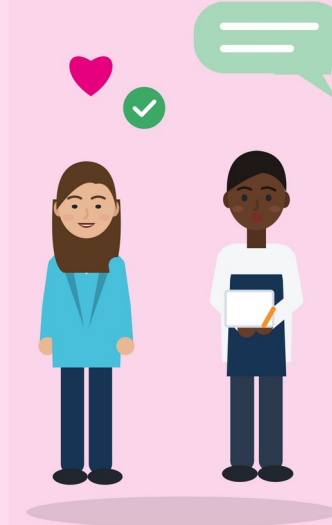
Too much, or the wrong kind: when empathy goes wrong

When empathy goes wrong



- Over-identification: “I know exactly how you feel.” I stop listening.
- Empathic distress: I sink into your pain and want to escape.
- Strong feelings for some people, none for others.
- Saviour mindset: I decide for you, speak for you and need your thanks.

Ethical empathy



- “I can't fully know, but I want to understand.”
- Compassion: I feel for you and stay steady.
- “What would you like to happen? It's your decision.”
- I share power and help you need me less.

WHO: “Don't take away the person's strength and sense of being able to care for themselves.”

Source: Khader (2018) · Singer & Klimecki (2014), *Current Biology*, pp. R875, R878 · WHO, War Trauma Foundation & World Vision International (2011), *Psychological First Aid*, p. 15

ILLUSTRATIVE SCENARIO

Too slow, in front of everyone

**Ahmed, 21**

Packer in a logistics centre near Milan, peak season

Logistics

Italy

Team conflict

Pre-Christmas peak. Supervisor Paola is short of staff, and head office calls her every hour. In front of the team she shouts at Ahmed: “Too slow! Again!” Yesterday he was trained on a different machine. He feels humiliated and confused, and says nothing. Two colleagues look away.



PAUSE AND REWIND

1. Pause: what is said, and what is felt, by Paola and by Ahmed?
2. Where is the power in this scene?
3. Rewind: what could Ahmed say later, in private?
4. Rewind: how could Paola repair it?

Grounded in: under pressure people leave their window of tolerance (Siegel, 1999); empathic distress leads to withdrawal (Singer & Klimecki, 2014).

2.3 REFRAMING: A TOOL FOR THE REWIND

Four steps to turn blame into a request



Listening version: what did you see, feel and need? What would you like?

Ahmed, after the rush

- **Observe, without judging:** “This morning you said I was too slow, in front of the team.”
- **Feel:** “I felt embarrassed and confused.”
- **Need:** “I need to understand the new machine.”
- **Request:** “Could someone show me the new machine for five minutes?”

Source: Rosenberg (2015), *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life* (3rd ed.): observations, feelings, needs, requests

ACTIVITY · 2.3 EMPATHY IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND COLLABORATION

Pause and Rewind role-play

 **TIME**
14 min

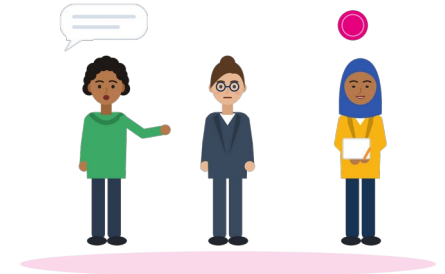
 **GROUP**
Three actors, the others observe

 **MATERIALS**
Scenario cards (workplace, housing, community), a chair for the “hot seat”

 **GOAL**
Practise de-escalating tension with empathy

STEPS

1. Three volunteers play a 2-minute scene from a card.
2. Any observer can call “Pause!” and say what they noticed: a feeling, a power move, a missed need.
3. The observer suggests a more empathic line, using reframing and active listening.
4. “Rewind”: the actors replay from that moment with the new line. Maximum 2-3 rewinds.
5. De-roling: actors say their real name and one way they differ from their character.



DEBRIEF

- What was said, and what was felt?
- Where was empathy present, and where was it missing?
- How did reframing and active listening change the outcome?

03

UNIT 3 · ≈ 55 min

Empathy in Practice

Active listening, role-play and reflection: connect empathy to your own journey and career goals.

Listen-Summarise-Reflect

Empathy Lab

Listening witness

Gratitude Circle



ACTIVITY · 3.1 ACTIVE LISTENING TECHNIQUES

Listen-Summarise-Reflect



TIME
12 min



GROUP
Pairs, then whole group



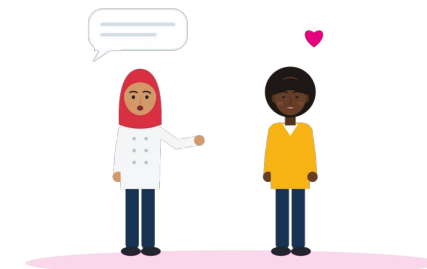
MATERIALS
Timer, Active Listening checklist



GOAL
Hear the facts and the feeling, and show it

STEPS

1. Warm-up: "What does it feel like to be truly heard?" One word each.
2. Person A talks for 2 minutes about a personal, everyday experience. B listens without interrupting.
3. B summarises the facts: "So, the bus was late and you missed the start."
4. B reflects the emotional tone: "It sounds like you felt stressed." A says if it fits.
5. Swap roles. Then fill in the Active Listening checklist (next slide).



DEBRIEF

- What is the difference between hearing and listening?
- When did you feel connection, and when discomfort?
- Which listening habit would you like to strengthen?

SELF-CHECK

Active Listening checklist

	Not yet	Sometimes	Often
I use open body language that fits the person and the situation.	☐	☐	☐
I let the person finish without interrupting.	☐	☐	☐
I summarise the facts in my own words.	☐	☐	☐
I reflect the feeling: "It sounds like you felt worried."	☐	☐	☐
I ask at least one clarifying question.	☐	☐	☐
I avoid judging. I give advice only when someone asks for it.	☐	☐	☐
I stay with their story and do not change the topic to my own.	☐	☐	☐

USEFUL PHRASES · 3.1

Phrases for listening, checking and naming feelings

Showing you are listening

“Take your time. I’m listening.”

“Go on, I’m following you.”

“Mm-hm. And then what happened?”

Checking you understood

“So, if I understand you correctly, the shift changed again?”

“Let me check: you mean the form is wrong, right?”

“In other words, the main problem is the rent.”

Naming feelings carefully

“It sounds like you felt ignored.”

“I imagine that was really hard. Am I right?”

“I’m not sure I understand how you feel. Can you tell me more?”

ACTIVITY · 3.2 ROLE-PLAY AND REAL-LIFE SCENARIOS

Empathy Lab: rotate through the stations

 **TIME**
18 min

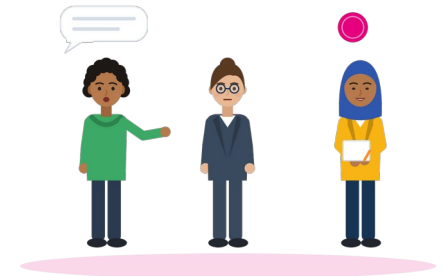
 **GROUP**
Groups of 3-4, rotating

 **MATERIALS**
Scenario cards with emotional and power cues, sticky notes or Jamboard, paper and pens

 **GOAL**
Practise empathic responses in different, complex situations

STEPS

1. Groups start at different stations. Each role card has an emotional cue and a power cue.
2. Play the scene for 2-3 minutes. One person observes.
3. Write on the station wall: “What did I feel? What did the other person need?”
4. At the silent station, respond only with gestures, faces or drawings.
5. At the repair station, write a short message to someone you misunderstood.
6. Rotate every 4-5 minutes when the trainer gives the signal.



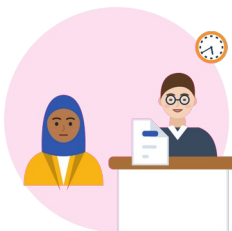
DEBRIEF

- Which station was hardest, and why?
- Where did power change the conversation?
- What would you take into a real job interview?

3.2 EMPATHY LAB STATIONS (INVENTED SCENARIO CARDS)

Six stations, six situations

Job interview (NL)



Nour is asked about a gap in her CV. Interviewer: tired, high power. Nour: ashamed, needs the job. Details on the next slide.

Peer conflict (IT)



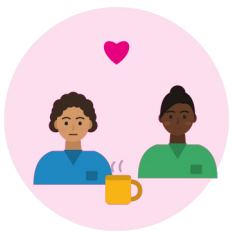
Malik and Chiara must cook an exam dish together. "You're always late!" Chiara does not know that Malik works night shifts.

Community meeting (EL)



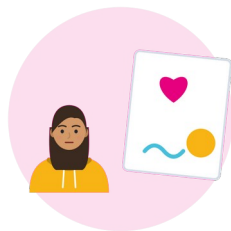
A shop owner fears a new youth centre for local and refugee youth. Farid, a volunteer, listens first, then tells a short story.

A colleague's loss (DE)



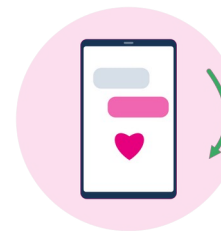
In a care home, Tarek hears that his uncle has died far away. Rahel stays near, allows silence and offers practical help.

Silent station



A trainee has not spoken for two sessions. Using only gestures or drawings: how could the group invite her without pressure?

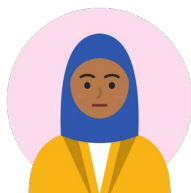
Repair message



Write a short text or voice message to someone you misunderstood. The person can be real or invented.

ILLUSTRATIVE SCENARIO

A gap in the CV

**Nour, 24**

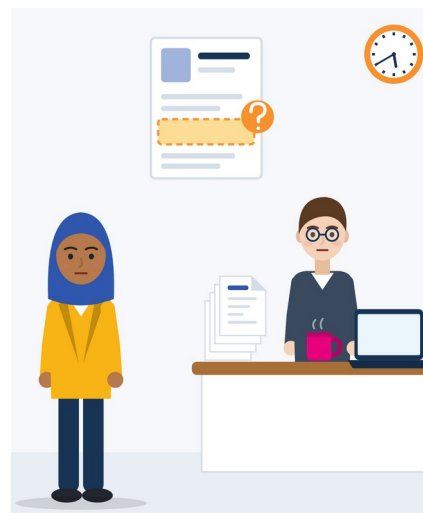
Applying for a warehouse team-leader job, Rotterdam

Job interview

Netherlands

Power

The interviewer has done 12 interviews today and worries about reliability. He asks: "There is a gap of three years in your CV. What happened?" Nour freezes. Those years were the asylum procedure and life in a camp. She needs this job, but does not want to tell her whole story to a stranger.



DISCUSS

1. Play it twice: first a cold interviewer, then an empathic one. What changes?
2. What could the interviewer say to make it safe?
3. How can Nour answer briefly and turn the gap into skills?

Grounded in: with identical CVs, applicants of Turkish origin (23-25) got fewer positive call-backs in the Netherlands: 40% vs 55% (Thijssen et al., 2021).

USEFUL PHRASES · 3.2

Phrases for repair, accents, tension and interviews

When accent or language gets in the way

“Sorry, could you say that again a bit more slowly?”

“English is not my first language, so I may ask you to repeat.
Thanks for your patience.”

Repairing a misunderstanding

“I think I misunderstood you yesterday. I'm sorry about that.”

“Can we start again? I'd like to understand your point of view.”

Calming a tense moment

“I can see this is really frustrating for you.”

“There is a lot of pressure today. What is the most urgent thing for you?”

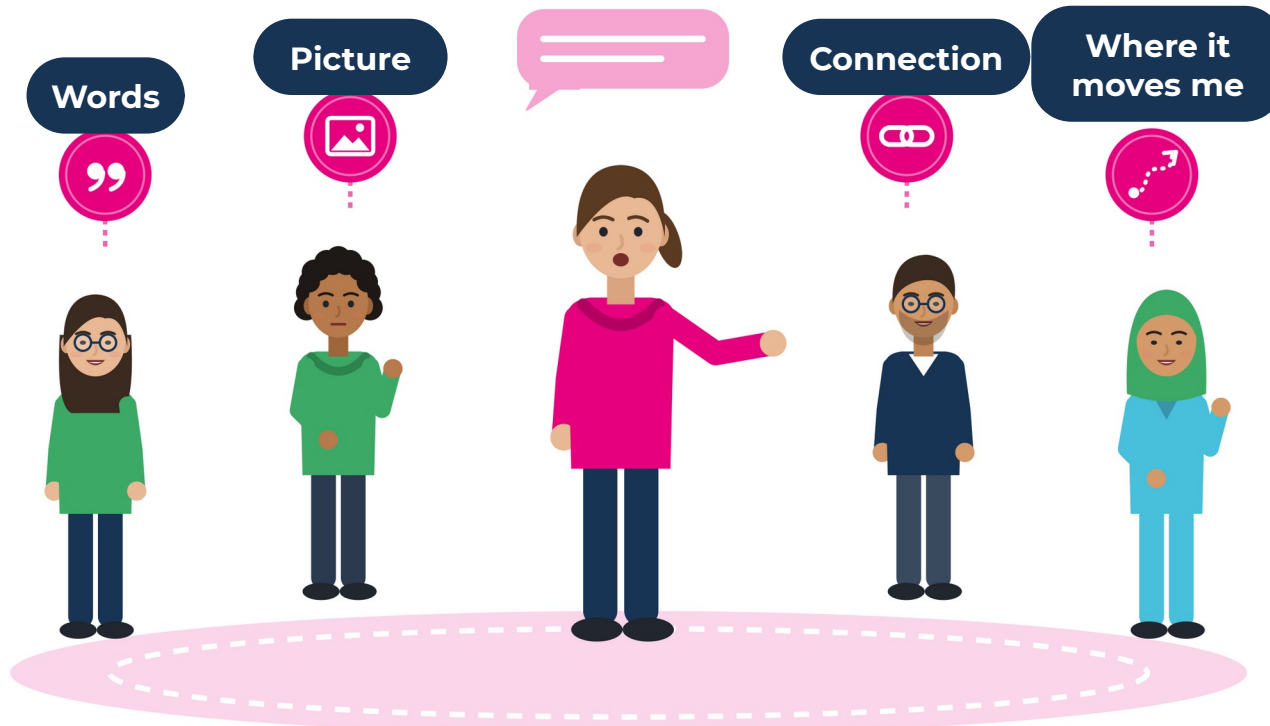
Talking about empathy in an interview

“When there is a conflict in a team, I first try to understand what each person needs.”

“At home, I often helped people who didn't speak the language. I learned to listen carefully.”

3.3 STORYTELLING CIRCLE

The listening witness: four ways to respond



No advice, no applause, no judgement. The teller chooses a moment of feeling seen or not seen, and can always pass.

The witnesses ask themselves

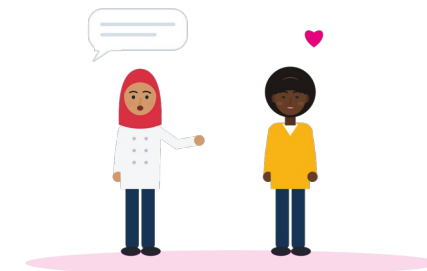
- **Words:** which words or phrases caught my attention?
- **Picture:** what image came to mind? What seems important to the teller?
- **Connection:** why did it connect with something in my own life?
- **Where it moves me:** where has this story taken me? What will I think about?

ACTIVITY · 3.3 REFLECTION AND PERSONAL APPLICATION

Journaling and the Migration Map

**TIME**
10 min**GROUP**
Individual, optional pairs**MATERIALS**
Journals, large paper,
coloured pens**GOAL**
Connect personal experience
to wider social systems**STEPS**

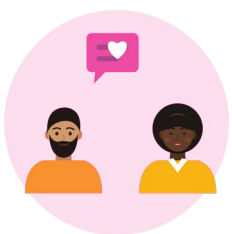
1. Journal in private: What made empathy possible? What did you need? What did you learn about yourself as a giver or receiver of empathy?
2. Draw a Migration Map: the imagined journey of an invented character. Map your own journey only if you choose to.
3. Mark moments: a heart for empathy, a circle for isolation, a question mark for misunderstanding.
4. Add a star where someone used a skill. Which onion layer helped or blocked?
5. In pairs, show one moment if you want. "Pass" is fine.

**DEBRIEF**

- Which moments of empathy came from people, and which from systems?
- Which skill on the map could you name in a job interview?

DOCUMENTED PROGRAMMES

Lived experience plus training: empathy as a job



Refugees as peer helpers (NL)

Syrian refugees trained for 8 days delivered 5 support sessions. Depression and anxiety fell more than in the control group (randomised trial, 206 people).



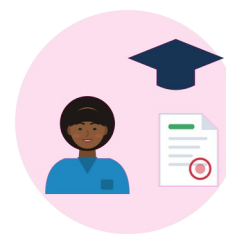
Migration background as an asset (TR)

Facilitators with a migration background ran a 5-session WHO stress course for 642 Syrian refugees. After 6 months, 21.7% had a new mental disorder, against 40.7% of the control group.



Interpreters from the community (EL)

METAdrasi trains interpreters, mainly refugees and migrants. It reports more than 1,000 certified interpreters in 61 languages since 2010.



Intercultural mediators (IT)

In Emilia-Romagna, intercultural mediator is a regional qualification: 300-500 hours of training, 20-45% of it as an internship.

Source: de Graaff et al. (2023), *BMJ Mental Health* · Acarturk et al. (2022), *World Psychiatry* · METAdrasi website, self-reported · Verrept (2019), *WHO Europe HEN report 64*, p. 17

ACTIVITY · 3.3 CLOSING THE UNIT

Our Empathy Manifesto



TIME
5 min



GROUP
Whole group



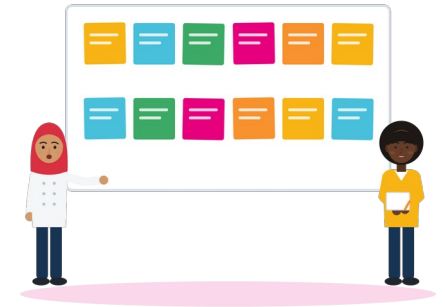
MATERIALS
Large paper for a mural, or a digital collage (Miro); colours, symbols



GOAL
Turn what we learned into shared commitments

STEPS

1. Each person adds a phrase, a colour or a symbol that stands for empathy, inclusion and ethical care.
2. Use a starter if it helps: “At work, empathy means”, “We will not”, “When someone is new, we”.
3. Any language is welcome. Symbols and drawings count as much as words.
4. Arrange the contributions together and read the manifesto aloud.
5. With everyone's consent, photograph it for the SMILE learning platform.



DEBRIEF

- Which line will you take to work or school tomorrow?

BE FAIR TO YOURSELF

Skills open doors, but they are not the whole story

What this skill can change



- Listen so that people feel safe to speak up early.
- See the person, and the system behind the problem.
- Calm conflicts and repair misunderstandings.
- Name empathy as a skill in interviews and on your CV.

What it cannot fix alone



- Identical CV, different name: 55 of 100 got a positive answer with a Dutch name, 40 of 100 with a Turkish name.
- Recognition of diplomas, residence permits and the right to work depend on laws and offices, not on you.
- Discrimination is not your fault. It can be reported to an equality body, a union or an NGO.

Train your skills AND know your rights. Both are part of a fair start.

Source: Thijssen et al., 2021, JEMS (correspondence test, NL, applicants aged 23-25)

WHERE TO GET HELP

Official help points in the SMILE countries

	Country	Jobs and training	Diplomas and recognition	Unfair or unsafe work
	Türkiye	İŞKUR (iskur.gov.tr), Public Education Centres	YÖK denklik, MEB e-Denklik	Ministry of Labour (csgb.gov.tr), YİMER 157 helpline
	Greece	DYPA (dypa.gov.gr)	DOATAP (doatap.gr)	Labour Inspectorate, phone 1555
	Italy	Centri per l'Impiego, SIISL	CIMEA (free for protection holders)	Ispettorato Nazionale del Lavoro
	Germany	Agentur für Arbeit, Jobcenter, Jugendmigrationsdienste (12-27)	Anerkennung in Deutschland, IQ Netzwerk	Faire Integration (free, multilingual)
	Netherlands	UWV, werk.nl, your municipality	IDW (idw.nl)	Nederlandse Arbeidsinspectie, Juridisch Loket

Save the number or website of one help point in your phone today.

Source: Official websites, checked 1 October 2026 (SMILE research note, labour market)

REFLECTION

One listening habit, one step

Which listening habit will I strengthen this week?

Who will I listen to first?

Where will I practise it: at work, in class or at home?

What will I say to show I understood?



Take the one-page Follow-up Toolkit home: active listening, the Empathy Onion, reflection questions.

CLOSING RITUAL

Gratitude Circle



TIME
5 min



GROUP
Whole group, in a circle



MATERIALS
Safety thermometer poster,
Follow-up Toolkit handouts,
support contacts



GOAL
Close with recognition and
emotional resonance

STEPS

1. Stand or sit in a circle.
2. Each person names one empathic moment they witnessed today. You do not have to name the person.
3. The trainer names one too. "Pass" is fine.
4. Check-out: one word, or a point on the safety thermometer.
5. Hand out the Follow-up Toolkit and the support contacts.





KEY MESSAGES

Listen first. Understand. Then respond with respect.

Empathy has three parts: think, feel, respond. It is not pity, not rescue and not always agreeing. It can be trained, it is a named work skill, and it goes both ways: you give it, and you have the right to receive it at work.



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Thank you

Questions, ideas, stories: the floor is yours.

KEEP LEARNING

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MODULE

2 • Empathy

PROJECT

SMILE • Erasmus+ KA220-YOU

PROJECT NO.

2024-1-TR01-KA220-YOU-000256357



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SKILLS = Opportunity

Empowerment Through Skills · Inclusion Through Opportunity