

EMPATHY

What is it?

Empathy is having the ability to recognize and understand the emotions and experiences of others, even when different from your own.

Key Principle #1

Set aside your own viewpoint, experiences, and opinions and look at things from the other person's perspective.

- Experience differences among people
- Be curious about others
- Routinely ask others for their perspectives and feelings
- Spend time in someone else's shoes

Key Principle #2

Validate the other person's perspective. Acknowledging someone's beliefs, perspective, and/or experience does not mean you have to agree, it just means you acknowledge and accept their experience.

- "That makes sense."
- "I can see that."
- "Of course you feel that way."

Key Principle #3

Learn to recognize your own feelings and examine your beliefs. It is easy to get caught up in an event without evaluating our feelings and beliefs about it; however, this can lead us to react based on our biases.

- Learn what each emotion "feels like"
- Assess your feelings often
- Interact with people who are different from you – take note of your reactions

Key Principle #4

Listen.

- **Listen with your ears:** What is the message? What does the tone imply?
- **Listen with your eyes:** What does the person's body language convey?
- **Listen with your gut:** What is the underlying message? What is the person not saying?
- **Listen with your heart:** What does the person feel?