

CARING FOR OTHERS



Both Care and Empathy are needed to sustain a relationship.



Caring is defined as feeling and exhibiting concern and empathy for others.

Empathy can be defined as the ability to understand how others are feeling and how to respond appropriately to their situation.

We Can Enhance Our Empathy

by consciously imagining what it might be like to navigate the feelings and situations of another person's life. We can ask ourselves:

- What would it be like for me to manage that person's experiences?
- What could that feel like for that person?
- Is there a time in my life where I may have felt something similar?

Empathy is a Valuable Tool for Maintaining Healthy Relationships

- Empathy bridges the divide between individuals with different backgrounds, feelings and perspectives.
- Empathy is essential to building and maintaining relationships.
- Without empathy, we focus only on our perspectives, disregarding the feelings of others, which leads to misunderstandings and conflict.
- Empathy fosters self-awareness and social-awareness.

Using a Social Justice Lens Can Enhance our Empathic Connection to Others

Social justice is about equality. To be socially just, every individual in society must be treated in a fair and reasonable way. However, our world promotes numerous social injustices that strongly affect individuals in our society.

- Some common examples of social injustice include: systemic racial discrimination, discrimination due to gender and sexual orientation, immigration, unfair labor practices, lack of access to resources, income disparity, etc.

TIPS FOR BEGINNING TO ADDRESS SOCIAL INJUSTICE

- Examine the historical and current context of the issues from perspectives of power, racial disparities, civil rights movement, criminal justice system, stereotypes, conflicts, and ambiguity
- Examine your worldview, cultural values, biases, ambiguity, and privilege
- When you see injustice happening don't just let it happen, speak up
- Commit to having conversations about injustice and acknowledging that doing so may require us to face uncomfortable realities
- Speaking out may not change the perspectives of other people, but it is a way that you can serve as an ally for people who are marginalized by injustice

Remember, looking out for other people requires us to look out for our own well-being first, so we are healthy enough and have enough energy available to offer help when others are in need.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What does it take to be more empathetic?
- How can I expand my empathetic potential?
- How do I take care of myself while taking care of others?