

Creating an Empathy Picture

Empathy helps us understand the feelings of another person. It requires us to walk in someone else's shoes, which takes imagination (Shapiro, 2020).

The following exercise encourages us to use that imagination to build a picture of someone else's situation.

The *Creating an Empathy Picture* worksheet includes five steps and can be made appropriate to any age group and used in individual or group sessions.

Ask the person or group to:

1. Cut out a picture from a newspaper or magazine with an individual in a scene (for example, a person at a bus stop, leaving a shop, or boarding a plane).
2. Stick the picture on a larger sheet of paper.
3. Ask questions about the person and their life and imagine possible answers:
 - Who is this person? Give them a name, a family (or none), a job, and even finances.
 - What decision do they *need* to make, or what do they *need* to do?
 - What is impacting their decision (either within or outside the picture)?
 - What might they say?
 - What are others telling them to do (friends, colleagues, partner)?
 - What do we imagine they will do?
4. Write down the answers in the space left around the picture.
5. The situation can be entirely the product of the person's imagination as they look at the picture or drawn from their circumstances.

References

- Shapiro, S. L. (2020). *Rewire your mind: Discover the science + practice of mindfulness*. London: Aster.

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