

Service with Empathy: A Critical Component of Serving Guests and Employees



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Monday Breakout Session

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Service with Empathy: A Critical Component of Serving Guests and Employees

Presentation to the Florida Attractions
Association

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Dr. Judy Holcomb, ACC



A photograph of a wooden surface with several wooden letter tiles. A long wooden block holds five tiles that spell out 'GOALS' in a row. The tiles are light-colored wood with black letters and numbers. The 'G' has a '2' below it, the 'O' has a '1' below it, the 'A' has a '1' below it, the 'L' has a '1' below it, and the 'S' has a '1' below it. Other tiles are scattered around, including 'U', 'D', 'Q', 'Y', 'J', 'W', 'F', 'E', 'R', 'H', and 'A'.

Session Goals

1. Define empathy
2. Understand the importance of empathy for managers and guest service employees
3. Identify the different types of empathy and their significance
4. Practice empathy through interactive exercises

[Showing Empathy](#)

Why is Empathy Important, Especially Now?

"The ability to connect empathically with others—to feel with them, to care about their well-being, and to act with compassion—is critical to our lives, helping us to get along, work more effectively, and thrive as a society." (Suttie, 2019)





Empathy Defined

The ability to sense other people's emotions, coupled with the ability to imagine what someone else might be thinking or feeling (Greatergood.com).

- We all have a need to be understood
- Advantages
 - Positive social change
 - Transform lives

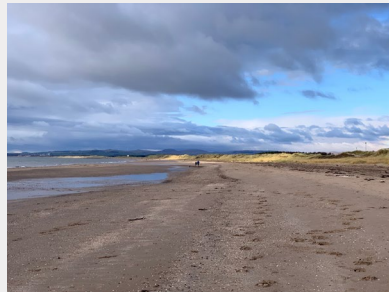
Why is Empathy Important

- From a Guest Service Perspective
 - Feel heard
 - Creates Trust and Brand Loyalty
- From a Leadership Perspective
 - Necessary for Leadership to Understand
 - Help shape employee culture
- The Bottom Line

According to research by the Harvard Business Review,

"The top 10 companies in the Global Empathy Index 2015 increased in value more than twice as much as the bottom 10 and generated 50% more earnings."

Which one of these pictures represents where you see your organization's journey in integrating empathy into guest service and leadership



Psychological Perspectives

“Empathy has no script. There is no right way or wrong way to do it. It’s simply listening, holding space, withholding judgment, emotionally connecting, and communicating that incredibly healing message of ‘You’re not alone.’”

Brene Brown

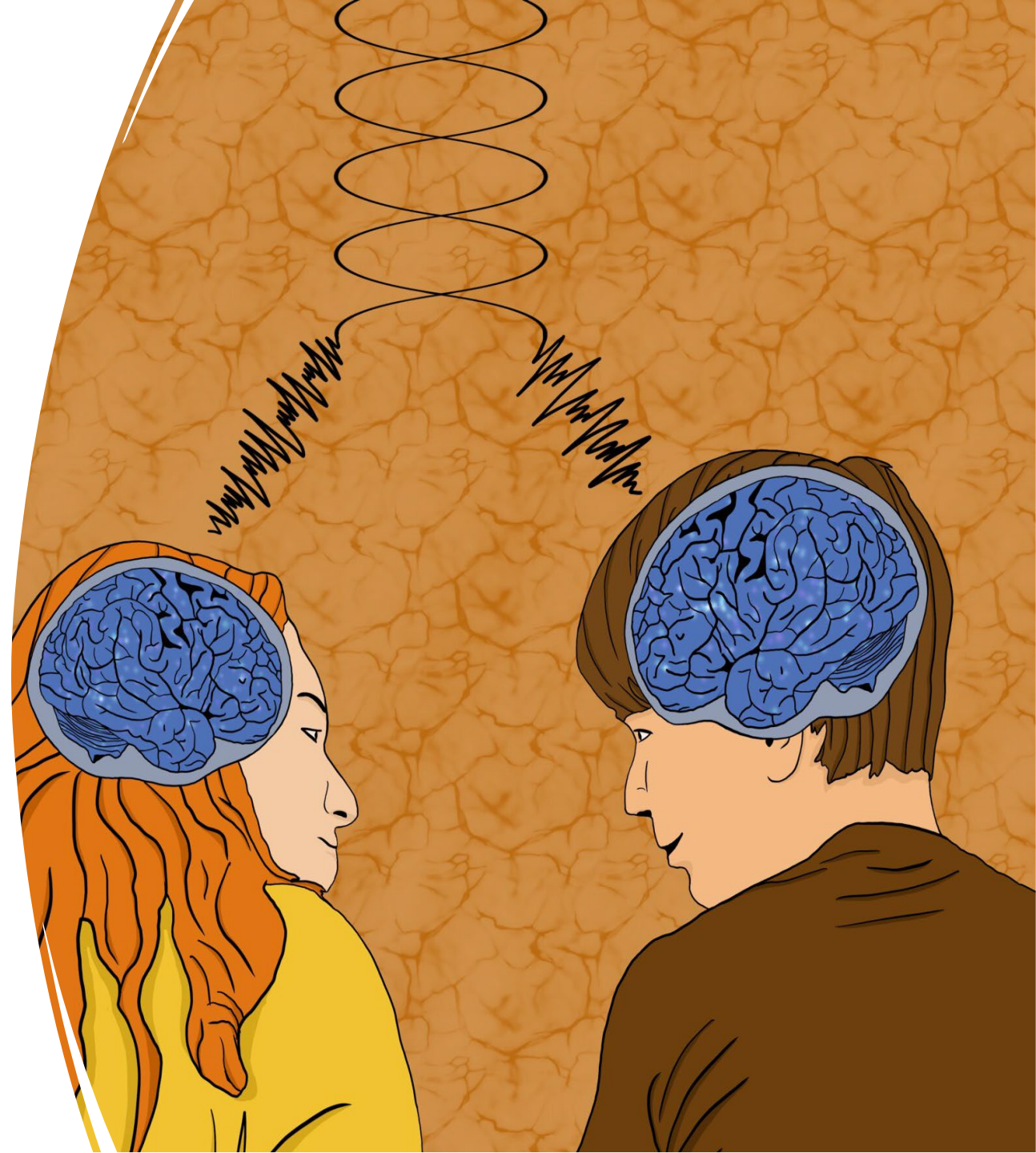
Two types of Empathy

- Affective
- Cognitive



Affective Empathy

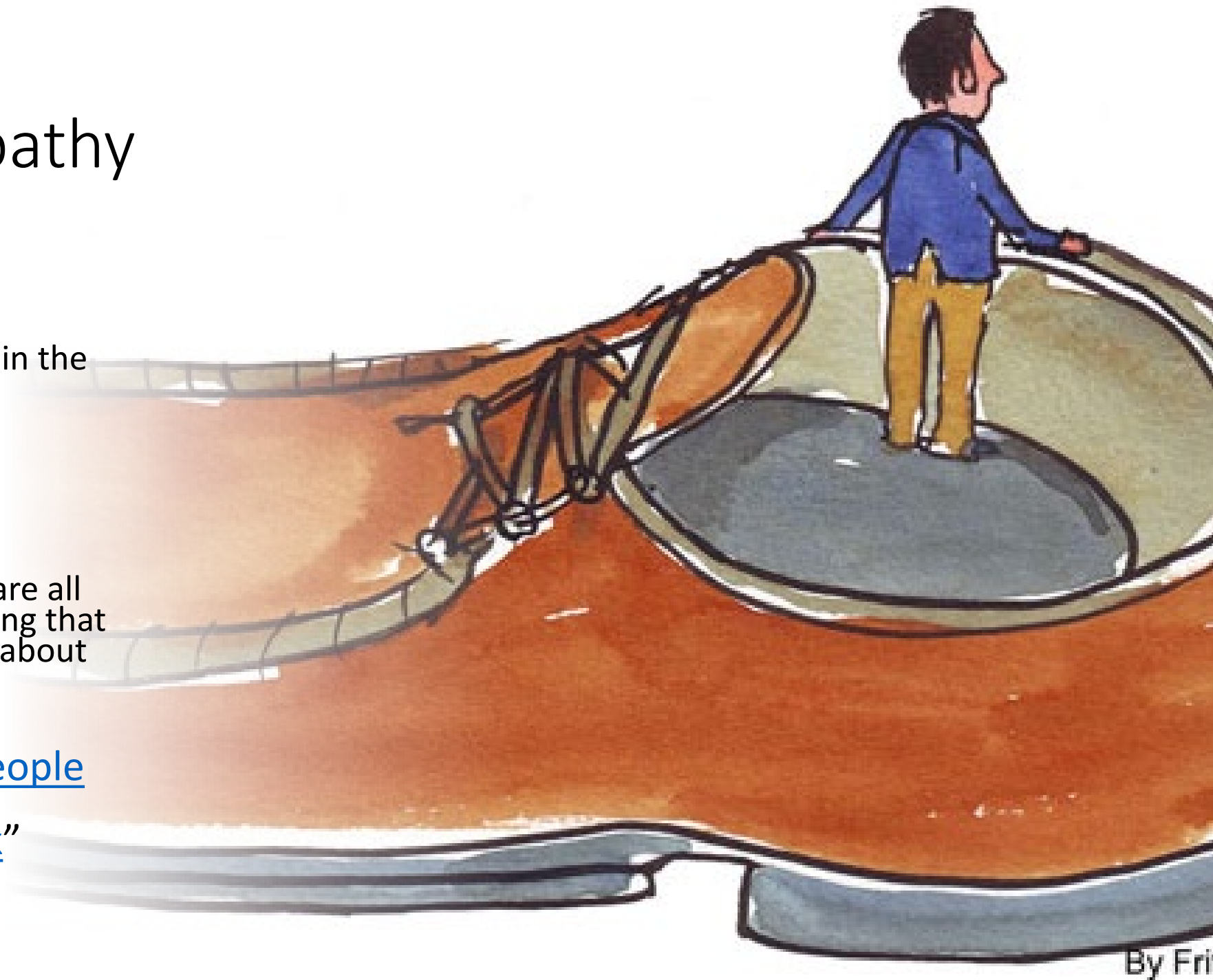
- Shared emotional response (affective empathy)
 - Sharing someone's emotions
 - [Affective Empathy Example](#)
- Psychologists feel that we are primed for empathy by the strong attachments(relationships) we develop within the first 2 years of life and is nurtured throughout our lives



Cognitive Empathy

- Perspective taking (cognitive empathy)
 - Imagining/putting yourself in the situation of another or in someone else's shoes
- Not easy
- The key is....
 - to remember that we are all going through something that we may not be talking about

[“You only Understand People if you Feel Them Within Yourself...John Steinbeck”](#)



Introducing Empathy Into Work Culture

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Listen | Listen-don't just hear |
| Acknowledge Feelings | Acknowledge guest/employee's feelings and opinions |
| Personalize | Personalize the experience |
| Help | Help, don't just sell/manage |
| Clear | Be concise and clear |
| Express Empathy | Use statements that express empathy |



Empathy Statements

Creating deep connections with guests/employees is important

- Putting yourself in their shoes (cognitive empathy) can
 - Help anticipate their needs
 - Help you be proactive in the services you offer
 - Using Tools and Training, i.e. Empathy Mapping

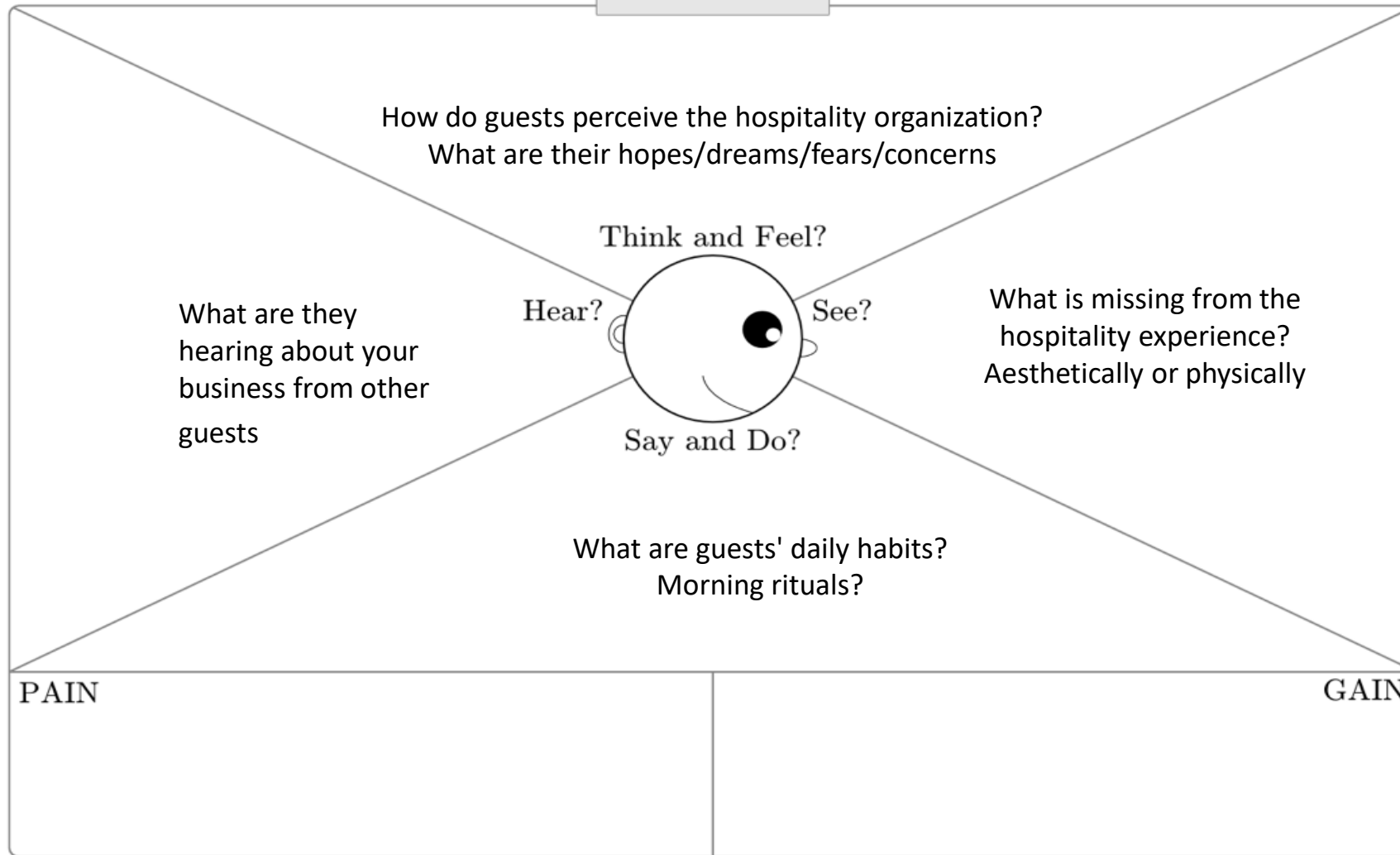
Source: (Cade, 2015)

Business Model - The Empathy Map

Author: _____

Date: _____

Iteration: _____



Listening Skills

Hear What People Are Really Saying



How
well do
you
listen?

Start Here

Active listening is a technique that enables you to fully concentrate on what others are saying, and to understand their **complete message**.

It can make you more effective at work, increase your ability to influence and negotiate, and prevent misunderstandings.

1

Here's how to do it:

Pay Attention

Look at the speaker, be aware of their body language, and ignore distractions.



I'm all ears!



Show That You're Listening

Nod, smile and say "yes" or "uh-huh" from time to time, to **encourage the speaker to continue**.

2



Make sure that you **really hear** what the other person is saying. **Stay focused**, and avoid falling back into old habits.

Becoming an **active listener** can increase your **productivity**, improve your **relationships**, and help you to avoid conflict.



Respond Appropriately

Be **open**, **honest** and **respectful** of the speaker's opinion – even if you don't agree with it. If you understand one another's positions, you can work toward a shared goal.

5

4

Defer Judgment

Allow the speaker to **finish their point** **before** you offer a counter argument. It's a discussion, not a race!



So, what you're saying is...



Do you mean that...?



3

Provide Feedback

Reflect the speaker's words back to them, and **ask questions** to check that you **understand correctly**.

To learn more about Listening Skills, read the article at www.mindtools.com/listen

Benefits of Being Empathetic

- Empathetic people tend to...
 - Be more generous and concerned with others' welfare
 - Have happier relationships
 - Have a greater personal well-being.
 - Have improved leadership abilities and facilitate effective communication.
 - Cultivate cultural curiosity
 - Be Emotionally Intelligent
 - Have greater academic and career success



Practicing Empathy

Empathy Assignment

Habit 1: Cultivate curiosity about strangers

Habit 2: Challenge prejudices and discover commonalities

Habit 3: Try another person's life

Habit 4: Listen hard—and open up

Habit 5: Inspire mass action and social change

Habit 6: Develop an ambitious imagination

Empathy Action Plan

Name_____

Accountability Partner's _____

Signature_____

[illegible]

**How would integrating more
empathy into your
organization support your
organization's Mission?**



Questions?

Thank you!



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