



# EMPATHY TALKS:101

## What is empathy?

→ Empathy: the ability to understand and share the feelings of another  
(Oxford Dictionary)

Without empathy relationships do not thrive. If you cannot understand and share the feelings that your partner is experiencing, it's going to be very challenging to connect emotionally with them.

Remember that your, and their, emotional experience is absolutely valid, always.

Validating and feeling empathy for their emotional experience does not mean that you both agree on WHAT HAPPENED, but you do agree that what happened means something for each of you, even if that feeling is not shared.

If there is one thing that you can start doing RIGHT NOW to strengthen and/or heal your relationship is express empathy.

Empathy nurtures your relationship.

Empathy lets your partner know that they can count on you.

Empathy lets you know that you can count on your partner.

Expressing empathy will soften discussions and make challenging situations easier to deal with.



# EMPATHY TALKS:101 WORKSHEET

1. What comes to mind when you hear: empathy?

A large, empty rectangular box with a light beige background, intended for the user to write their response to question 1.

2. What comes to mind when you think about empathy in your relationship?

A large, empty rectangular box with a light beige background, intended for the user to write their response to question 2.

3. Write down any examples that come to mind of how you expressed empathy to your partner in a time of need [when your partner needed emotional support, care and/or comfort]:

A large, empty rectangular box with a light beige background, intended for the user to write their response to question 3.



# EMPATHY TALKS:101 WORKSHEET

4. Write down any examples of when you felt your partner showed and/or expressed empathy towards you in a time of emotional need:

[Blank area for writing answer to question 4]

5. What is your biggest worry, challenge, or fear when you think about showing empathy towards your partner during a discussion?

[Blank area for writing answer to question 5]

6. Did you learn anything during earlier relationships (with parents, siblings, friends, and/or previous partners) about what empathy means?

[Blank area for writing answer to question 6]