

The Importance of Empathy: A Two Way Street

694 Synthesis Presentation

What is Empathy?

- The ability to relate to and better understand others.
- Walk a mile in their shoes!
- Reading body language and social cues!

Types of Empathy

- Affective Empathy: Feeling our own emotions based on other emotions.
- Cognitive Empathy: Ability to understand and interpret the emotions of others.
- Some have more difficulty with it than others: Autism, Asperger's, ADHD.

My personal history

- Grew up with Asperger's Syndrome
- Was difficult to understand others and pick up on social cues.
- Severe temper issues
- Often criticized for my “black and white” thinking
- Epiphany at age 15
- Began striving to develop empathy to better understand my peers
- Began learning to control my temper better.

Personal History Pt 2

- High school era saw great growth
- Began to socialize more and make friends
- In college, worked alongside others with disabilities
- Got into arguments with room mates over my lack of social cues.
- Began to realize my empathy was low
- Due to disability?
- Began working to improve my empathy.
- Empathy became my focus in the CCT Program.

Empathy and Sympathy

- Empathy: Our ability to understand.
- Sympathy: Our ability to feel.
- Both related, but both are different.
- They compliment each other!
- Important differences!

Why Empathy is important

- Empathy helps us understand each other.
- Empathy can help us relate to others, even if they have differing beliefs.
- A little kindness and understanding goes a long way!
- Build a better future!

My past work: Self-Help Group

- Action Research Project.
- Organize a self-help group focusing on stress.
- Have planned exercises and talking sessions to help air out and reduce stress.
- Community building!
- Help people feel like they belong!

My Past Work: Asperger's Syndrome Lesson Plan

- Special Education Lesson Plan tailored towards Asperger's Syndrome students.
- Based on my own experiences with Asperger's and observations made in local special ed course.
- Help Asperger's Students feel like they belong and are being listened to.
- Help teachers get a better understanding of Asperger's.
- Help differentiate between Asperger's and Autism.

Where to go from here?

- Continue to expand on my empathy studies and growth.
- Refine and formulate both my group proposal and lesson plan proposal.
- Find other ways to help foster empathy in others.
- Help create a better, more inclusive and supportive society!