

# Empathy & compassion

## Empathy

- It is the ability to understand and share the feelings & suffering of another. It involves seeing from another's perspective and imagining what they are experiencing.

## Compassion

- It is taking step to relieve the suffering of others. Compassion is the expression of deep empathy in the form of moral action. Compassion is empathy in action.
- Ability to understand and feel' addresses the root causes of suffering. This insight develops sensitivity and guides moral reasoning. It develops ethical competence to deal with moral complexities.
- Instead of being categorial, identify the individual experience.
- Policymaking with sensitivity and responsiveness. Gain knowledge of local realities through direct engagement
- Empathy leads to conscience development by awakening us to the humanity in others.

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- Empathy reduces prejudice and conflict by helping us understand those different from us. This fosters social cohesion and harmony.
- Bridge between intention and impact. Ushers ethical governance.
- Empathy and compassion recognizes our shared humanity - that we all experience suffering, frailty and interdependence.
- Empathy enhances emotional and social intelligence, fosters innovation and creativity.

## Quotes on Empathy and compassion

- "Life doesn't make any sense without interdependence. We need each other, and the sooner we learn that, it is better for us all." -Erik Erikson
- One's life has value so long as one attributes value to the life of others - Simone de Beauvoir
- We must live like different cells of an organism, where health of one affects the health of others. - Plato
- Service to man as service to God - Swami Vivekananda

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- "Those who have not found the heaven below, will fail of it above" - Emily Dickenson
- "Best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." Mahatma Gandhi
- Till I loved, I never lived - Emily Dickenson
- One should work so that one can live with oneself without regret. This gives a measure of tranquility and even courage. - P. N. Haksar

## Example of Empathy & compassion

- Ashoka's remorse after Kalinga war showed compassion. He erected hospitals for people and animals, promoted tolerance. Compassion springs from insight into shared humanity.
- Akbar's "Din-i-Ilahi" embraced pluralism and kindness towards subjects of all faiths. He expanded charity and promoted equity. Compassion sees through other's eyes.
- IAS Inayat Khan adopted two kids of Pulwama Martyr.
- IAS Ira Singhal recruited one transgender in her office.

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- IGNOU announced that it will waive fee for transgender.
- Kochi metro gave job to transgender.
- Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam denied using glass pieces on compound walls of DRDO for security purpose because birds could be hurt.
- Armstrong Pame - People's Road.
- Uganda, a poor country, holds high number of refugees.
- Abdul Sattar Edhi - a Pakistani philanthropist and humanitarian devoted his life to helping the poor and marginalized, and his compassion and dedication to his work earned him the nickname "Pakistan's Angel of Mercy."
- Oskar Schindler saved over 1,000 Jews during the Holocaust by employing them in his factories.

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## Principles of Empathy and compassion

- **Utilitarianism**
  - Maximizing overall well-being. Empathy and compassion increase happiness and reduce suffering for all, so they are morally right under utilitarianism.
- **Confucianism**
  - Emphasizes the importance of ren, or benevolence, which includes the ability to feel empathy for others.
- **Virtue ethics**
  - Developing good character traits like kindness, empathy and compassion. Virtue ethicists consider these traits integral to moral excellence and humanity's highest potential.
- **Care ethics**
  - Moral priority is on maintaining relationships and compassionate care. Empathy is essential to understand others' needs and provide care. Compassion motivates caregiving.

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- **Engaged Buddhism**
  - Sees compassion as a key virtue along with wisdom and meditation. Works to remedy social and political injustices, expand human rights and promote peace.
- **Altruism**
  - Altruism is a moral principle centered on selfless concern for the well-being of others. It promotes empathy and compassion as fundamental virtues, encouraging individuals to prioritize the needs and interests of others above their own.

## Quotes on Empathy and Compassion

- We must live like different cells of an organism, where health of one affects the health of others. - Plato
- "The good of an individual is contained in the good of all."
- "Compassion is the root of all dharma" - Bhagwat Gita
- "Those who have not found the heaven below, will fail of it above" - Emily Dickenson
- "Compassion is the ultimate expression of your highest self." - Russell Simmons