

Seven Types of Empathy

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Empathy is a new word, a new human capacity and a new frontier of conscious evolution. Required and expected everywhere- empathy can be taught.

Empathy is not a technical skill but a new organ of perception for the inner life of another, forged out of a deeper knowledge of oneself. To See, Hear, and Know another human being requires the creation of new capacities of perceptive Imagination, Inspiration, and Intuition within oneself. It is an initiative requiring personal transformation.

Empathy is the only replacement for the collapsing instinctive mutual understanding of people based on the blood ties within each tribe, made necessary and possible by the rapid process of post-war individuation. Invented by Titchener in 1909, grounded philosophically by Edith Stein in 1916 and applied professionally by Rogers in 1951, empathy was predicted by Rudolf Steiner in 1894, 1904, 1910 and 1918 to be the only possible future for human civilization.

Psychophonetics is a method of personal transformation, psychotherapy and Methodical Empathy based on psychotherapeutic application of 'The Philosophy of Freedom' and 'Psychosophy'. It utilizes the resources of deep-intelligence- Body Awareness, Gesture, Visualization and Sounds- for the further cultivation of empathy as an organ of perception. This enables self-empathic giving and receiving through a deeper perception of one's own experience and meaning, while simultaneously facilitating another's self-empathy. It's a sustainable approach for those working with others.

Everyone can take a conscious personal step in cultivating empathy as a contribution towards the empathic humanity of tomorrow.

Empathy has now been with us for sixty-four years and is a cutting edge of conscious evolution. There are seven kinds of empathy so far: three delusional ones, three real ones, and one that is the turning point between the two: Methodical Empathy, based on Self Soul Perception. This new field of Empathy research is very dynamic. Every time I touch it, think of it, lecture on it, read, write or have a discussion about it – it takes a step in its development in my mind. It is alive and seminal.

Empathy quickly became a universal name for a universal set of expectations. It was incorporated into the theory of child development, neurophysiology and mental health. Most people assume that it was always

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there, like sympathy and antipathy – but it was not. Neither the word nor the phenomena of empathy were there before the Second World War. For anyone who is able to distinguish Empathy from Sympathy – it is obvious that empathy requires conscious effort. For anyone consciously attempting to bring about human understanding to overcome conflict, it is clear how hard it is to move from a commitment to one's own point of view to a perception of another. We live in the very early days of the future culture of Empathy. It is still young and growing in us all.

Yet it can be taught and it can evolve as a conscious new organ of perception, step by step, by everyone of goodwill, if a method is available for it. I offer the possibility of Methodical Empathy for that purpose. As a trainer at the cutting edge of this growing field it is my responsibility to keep observing its unfolding reality for me and for others. My latest new realisation of the deeper meaning of empathy dawned on me as I reflected on a description of a friend sharing with me her experience afresh through her intimate meeting with her friend, through his complete welcoming of her whole being which enabled her be more present in the world . She felt she was actually being born through this meeting. I found myself naming a dimension of empathy I have experienced many times as a practitioner, but also as a parent, a colleague and friend: being by my presence, my words and my actions the *Enabler* of the coming-into-being of another human being. We can empathise with the higher potential of each other and *give birth* to each other's next step of manifestation. One human being can become the gateway and the *welcoming committee* for another human being's greater reality.

A practitioner of human development and healing can become a member of the team that also includes all the supportive elements of the person they care for. This is *Enabling Empathy*. It has to be preceded by perceiving the person as she/he is in their present experience and by conceiving with the person a Wish for the next step in their development. This process is metaphorically the equivalent of the process of facilitating a normal, healthy, natural birth. But nature did not give us a ready-made empathy process. This had to be constructed consciously.

The 7 types of empathy (named so far):

A. Illusion empathy

1. Projective Empathy – a personal naïve illusion
2. Reflective Empathy – a professional naïve illusion
3. Manipulative Empathy – a professional exploitative illusion

B. Turning point

4. Self Empathy – a turning point into reality. Empathy with one's own experience. On a deeper level Self Empathy becomes Expression of one's own deeper potential.

C. Real Empathy

5. Perceptive Empathy – a reality. Perceiving the person from their own point of view
6. Conceptive Empathy – a deep reality. Perceiving a person from the point of view of their inherent potential.

7. Enabling Empathy – Perceiving the person from the point of view of the conditions required for the next step in their development.

Let us look at them in detail.

A. Illusions of empathy

1. **PROJECTIVE EMPATHY – a personal naïve illusion:** It can also be called - *Naïve Realism Empathy*. This, unfortunately, forms the majority of normal human communications, and a lot of it is going on in the name of love, care, passion, compassion, sympathy, commitment, being helpful and, ignorantly, it is often considered to be empathy. In the Projective position, we believe that we observe the person in front of us when really all we do is to project our own unconscious reality at them. I am stationed inside of my own subjective reality with all its unconscious and semi-conscious complexities, while looking at another human being through that personal reality like coloured sun glasses which I do not know that I am wearing, as if they were an extension of my field of vision, completely from my own point of view. I am allowing my perception of the other to be coloured by anything they remind me of, any association they coincidentally bring up in me, with all the emotions and reaction attached to these associations: past hurts, desire, frustration, attraction, repulsion, rejection, jealousy, sympathy, antipathy, fear, hope and a whole range of personal needs un-accounted for.

In this disposition, especially in regards to people who are close to us and who matter to us a great deal – we tend to hear what we want to hear, what we fear to hear, and what we assume we are hearing. To hear what is actually being said and meant is a rarity.

The only way to get out of Projective Empathy is by Self Empathy towards one's own reality. Only in truly perceiving one's own projected reality, will the projection stop, by being owned and contained by oneself. Only then can Perceptive Empathy of the other person start.

2. **REFLECTIVE EMPATHY – Empathy as a professional illusion.** It could also be termed- *Empathy from the Outside*, which practically means that it is not empathy at all. Looking objectively at a subject is like speaking Swahili to speakers of Chinese Mandarin. An observation of a subject- a human being- as if he/she were an object, misses the major point in the observed reality. Reflective Empathy is an observation of subjects as if they were objects. It is designed for the physical navigation and survival in the outer world and for natural sciences, up to a point through the established sense organs. The moment we are dealing with psychosomatic conditions, and most health conditions have a psychosomatic component to various degrees, objective-reflective empathy starts to distort even the reality of one's own body, let alone the mind of the other person. It is not the relevant mode of observation for the inner, psychological and cognitive nature of human beings. It can appear to be professional and scientific, rich in concepts and sophisticated jargon, but it an illusion as it is not a perception of who the person really is from their own point of view. It does not include the individual formation of meaning from the inside

but it constructs the meaning of experience from the outside. It is bound to be a distortion of the actual reality of human beings.

3. **MANIPULATIVE EMPATHY – Empathy as exploitation.** Personal or professional illusion. Manipulative empathy is a utilitarian form of empathy, applied not for the interest of the other from their point of view, but to the service of one's own agenda, using as much empathy as needed to manipulate the other to act according to that interest. It is the capacity to hook (or hack) into the inner system of the other deep enough to be able to use it for once purposes, but not enough to perceive the other from their point of view. It is largely in use in the advertising industry, in marketing, in politics, in family dynamics, in controlling education, in business relationship, in mind control and mass media, and in espionage on any level. It is the ability to understand how people's unconscious dynamics in order to manipulate their thinking, feeling and motivation for action. It is an illusion as it reduces the whole human being to the object that is useful for the manipulator, which is a distortion of who they really are. It misses the main point of the person's own inner reality, heart and striving spirit.

B. The turning point of empathy:

4. **SELF-EMPATHY** – The turning point into reality. Empathy with one's own experience on a deeper level as preparation for a deeper perception of another human being. It is the process of observing one's own experience and reality with perspective. That immediately brings forth the question: who am I past my experience and past my momentary reality – to be able to observe both with perspective? Where do I stand in myself for that purpose and that capacity of self-observation?

Self-empathy requires a conscious method. Methodical Empathy is one such method. Self-Empathy is a point of departure from the twofold approach to human beings into the threefold approach. If the human being comprises only a body and a soul (psyche), then self empathy is not possible at all. Experience cannot observe itself, the intellect cannot see the intellect, emotion cannot see itself, and desires and hurts cannot see themselves. If I have no other place to stand inside me which is potentially independent of my experience – then I cannot observe my experience, for any kind of observation requires perspective. But if, on the other hand, my approach to the human being is a threefold one, namely: body, soul and individual spirit, designated as 'I' – then there is a place for me to stand from which to observe my own subjective experience objectively. 'I' can observe my own experience because 'I' am not my experience. I have experience, and can choose to identify with it or not. 'I' can choose to observe my experience. Everyone can potentially do this.

It is in the very act of self observation that a new step in the development of the new organ of Perceptive Empathy is being born. The same organs of perception with which I can See, Hear and

Know myself are the organs of perception with which I can See, Hear and Know another human being from their own point of view. It takes one to know one!

Self-Empathy is regarded in the educational process of Methodical Empathy as the developmental process of creating the three new organs of perception which, combined, are the three fundamental competencies of Methodical Empathy: Imaginative Perception - See me; Inspirative Perception – Hear Me; Intuitive Perception - Know Me.

C. Real Empathy

- 5. PERCEPTIVE EMPATHY – A reality.** Perceiving the person from their own point of view. Now Real empathy with another human being can start. Bridging the gap between observing a human being from outside to observing a human being from their own point of view can now start to take place. Reality starts to change for both sides. New reality is being constructed for both sides of Empathic Perspective. A *Common Picture* is being created as the basis for the next step of whatever these two people will do together from now on.

Into that new Common Picture, new self knowledge can safely enter. Fear exists on the threshold of any step in self knowledge. The very presence of another human being who observes me from my own point of view without judgment can help to overcome that fear, making a new step in self knowledge evolve. Based on new self knowledge, new will becomes available for action and change. Perceptive Empathy creates a moment of community around the present conditions. In that community, however momentary, a new level of safety becomes possible. Into that new safety a new dimension of oneself can enter, which was but a potential before.

Perceptive Empathy is a new organ of perception created anew in every new meeting. That organ of perception can only evolve through a new process of Self Empathy at every step. The constant transition of Self Empathy into Perceptive Empathy of others is what I mean by Methodical Empathy.

- 6. CONCEPTIVE EMPATHY – Empathy with the unborn potential of another human being.**

Empathising with the yet unborn healing-developmental potential of the other person.

Empathy can do more than perceiving the present state of human experience: it can reach into the person's higher potential which is yet unborn and helping it to become a reality, just like a midwife does in the middle of the birthing process. When people feel truly seen by another human being they become warmer and more present to themselves. They can reach up to that which has never been experienced by them before, higher, stronger, deeper dimensions of their humanity. That process can be encouraged and accelerated with a form of empathy that can enable a higher conception of oneself.

On the basis of Self-Empathy and the achievement of Perceptive Empathy, in which the person felt Seen, Heard and Known to another human being, the courage and the creativity to conceive

oneself on another level, completely free of present self image, history, habits, into a dimension of oneself that has never been experienced before. That is 'Conceptive Empathy'.

Conceptive Empathy carries the danger of the practitioner becoming too close to the client, over-guiding, over-advising, over pre-empting what the next step of the client's potential is supposed to be. With the best intention and the highest ethical standards of freedom in the world that danger is still there.

Therefore, in the basic procedure of Psychophonetics/ Methodical Empathy session there is a requirement for client to formulate their own, authentic self-articulated Wish as the overall direction and purpose of the session. On the basis of the freely formulated Wish – Conceptive Empathy is completely safe.

7. ENABLING EMPATHY – a deeper reality. Perceiving the person from the point of view of the conditions required for their development.

Enabling Empathy is the conscious creation of the surrounding conditions required for a living being to grow into the next stage of their development. Parents are doing it for their children, mostly intuitively, and educators are supposed to be doing it for students. So what is new about Enabling Empathy? What is new about it is that it is actually empathetic, namely: done from the point of view of the receiver of empathy, not from the point of view of the giver of it.

Nature is enabling the physical development of its creatures in established, repetitive given manner. Parents and educators do it by acting on their traditions, concepts, assumptions and theories regarding the best conditions for children to grow into the place they imagine for the child to occupy and the roles to play in later life. But that is still done from the outside, it is not yet empathetic. To be empathetic – the enabling must come out of interest and direct perception of the unique nature, impulse, inner being and authentic will of that child and the teenager, rather than moulding them into some ready-made picture coming from outside.

When it comes to adult education in training, coaching and therapy – the lack of empathy is progressively suppressive for the unique individual nature of the receiver. The conscious art of *Enabling Empathy* needs to be developed. It provides the relevant human attributes, attitudes, quality of space, of time, of attention that are required for a human beings to take the next step in their development, out of their own intrinsic nature, soul and spirit. To be able to provide this, the *Enabling Empath* has to perceive the inner nature, soul and spirit of the receiver. That capacity of perception can only evolve consciously. That is what we mean by Methodical Empathy.

Empathy is still young and growing in us all. We are all beginners in this new evolutionary process. Everyone has a need for it. The standard and expectation for it is now universal, but the ability to provide it is in short supply. It is in its infancy. This is the root cause of social tensions on every level: personal, relationship, families, parenthood, work relations, national affairs, policy, economy, international relationship, conflicts. The realisation that empathy is in its early phase of development in humanity as a

whole is essential for embarking on the conscious cultivation of empathy. There is no unconscious empathy - it can only evolve through the conscious effort of self awareness.

I hope that the above outline is a contribution to a constructive, sobering and a practical language and initiative in the development of this new field of inquiry.