

## Left - Right Empathy Circle

Bridging social and political divides - building a culture of empathy

Page URL: <http://j.mp/2RsSoVP>

References: [Facebook Group](#) and [Website](#)

An Empathy Circle is a structured dialogue process. The process increases mutual understanding and connection by ensuring that each person feels fully heard to their satisfaction.

**Date:** Saturday, November, 2018-11-10

**Time:** 10 am to 12 pm PT/1pm ET (2 hours)

**Topic:** How do you feel about the election results?

**We are opening up the circle to anyone that wants to take part.**

**Location:** Zoom Meeting Room URL: <https://zoom.us/j/9896109339>

Click on the link to enter the Zoom video conferencing room. The first time you use Zoom you may need to install a small app. [You can test zoom here.](#)

## PARTICIPANTS

**Add your name below to take part. First come first reserved.**

**Facilitator:** Lou Zweier - [empathycirclelou@gmail.com](mailto:empathycirclelou@gmail.com)

**Co-Facilitator:** [Edwin Rutsch](#) [EdwinRutsch@gmail.com](mailto:EdwinRutsch@gmail.com)

**Left: (Progressive/Liberal/etc)**

1. [Evan Magor](#)
2. [Rick Feltington](#)
3. [Lewis Brown Griggs](#)
- 4.

**Right: (Conservative/Libertarian/etc)**

- 1.
- 2.

## IN PREPARATION

1. Zoom Meeting Room URL: Click on the link to enter the Zoom video conferencing room. The first time you use Zoom you may need to install a small app. [You can test zoom here.](#) The circle will be recorded and posted to social media (Youtube and Facebook)
2. Read: [How-To Host an Empathy Circle](#): These are basic instructions for holding an empathy circle. This material will be reviewed again in the circle.
3. Download and Print: PDF Version: [Empathy Circle: How-To Do Empathic Listening V 2.0](#)
4. [You can watch a sample empathy circle.](#)
5. We look forward to seeing you. Feel free to email [EdwinRutsch@gmail.com](mailto:EdwinRutsch@gmail.com) with questions or post them to our [Facebook group](#).

## Facilitators Notes

### Create a Facebook Poll

What are blocks you experience that may hinder you in signing up to take part in an Empathy Circle?  
(need the training videos with example)

### How do you feel about the election results?

#### Notes:

#### Rick

Regarding the election, Have a mild sense of relief. There is a check on power.  
Have concern that things could go bad.  
We could have the violent outbursts potentially. There is a trend of violence.

#### Lou

People worked very hard to get out the vote.  
I feel that happened  
There were people who were disappointed that they didn't do better.  
There was a lot of participation which is good. I like that .

#### Lewis

Have been a never Trumper.  
Am appaled to have a egotistical, narciistic, asshole, in office  
Ethics is important to him. - wants someone with better ethics.  
Support 10 to 30 percent of Trump's policies.  
Glad the house switched so there is more shared power  
Hope both sides will work together.  
**Hope People will listen to each other.**

#### Evan

Feel there is a sense of relief when there is a blue uptick.  
There is a sense of fear, related to empathy  
There are elitists of each side, and the people are struggling,  
Elitists are not empathic with the middle.  
Fear of the gamification of politics.  
Just want more empathy in the world.

#### Rick

Processing what is going on..  
Felt good to hear Evan support empathy and talk about the gamification.  
It is important to be able to go deeper with people  
What is most important is to be able to listen and understand the other.  
It is like someone has a different view. If I understand why they have that view, then I can connect.  
(times seems short)

#### Lewis

#### Lou

Feel strongly about extremism on the left and right.

Demonization - attacking each other, happen on each side.

Assigning evil intent - creates disconnection.

People take something that has a grain of truth. Then distort that.

For example saying that. too much government assistance can be bad. Take one instance of ineffectiveness , and then generalizing to the whole.

### **Evan**

Taking single grains of truth

Pains me. The lack of constructive nature.. - do they think they are convincing.

Not stuck.. It's a form of venting. When we get home it's a way to vent.

It's a way to express anger.

### **Lewis**

Why I don't like the left right label.

Can not understand why the left and right can not get together on licencing.

There are Drivers licence,

People do not want gun registration.

Everyone should be registered,

Don't understand why the left and right don't support licencing and coming together on

le. Guns and immigration.

Why can't they all be registered

Another peeves.

The supreme court,. Needs a variety of voices on the court. Want balance of left and right on the court.

### **Rick**

I've been more on the left.

I have felt the elbow, of people in power who can shut one up.

They tell you to be quite.

Value Integrity and process

There is this sense of tribalism and can't people can not see the problem with their own group.. This happened with Hillary Clinton. The democratic primary was a problem.. Am bothered by how Bernie was not given a unfair process. This was not dealt with and was swept under the carpet.

### **Lou.**

### **Edwin**

### **Evan**

This is great.. When the turn gets to me I don't have thoughts because I have been listening so intently.

Trump got elected because there was a desire for him to be in power.

How do we address the desire?

If we can identify needs and have an identification of that.

How do we address that needs, hear them and address them.

Looking for a way to talk to people - borch the topic of needs based awareness.

### **Steps**

1. Want to promote a needs based approach..
2. Identify the needs instead of the philosophy
3. Get away from Right and wrong judgemental thing to a common human needs approach

Can we apply this to the country. We have so many resources in the country that has a lot of potential.

**Lou**

Feel very moved,

One of the teachings of Nonviolent communication - is recognizing the different needs and the strategies.

A culture is how people meet those needs.

We get very identified with the strategies.

Gun issue, both sides need 'safety'. Have the same needs but different strategies to get those addressed.

Seeing the needs people have, is seeing them as a person. If I see them as needing safety.. I can see them as a human and can solve the problem.. We have the common value of needs, like safety. The mutuality,

**Edwin****Rick****Lewis**

What is right and left?

He was doing diversity training. Was one of the first to address this.

Felt he needed to get an MBA to be able to express yourself.

Feels good to bring your whole self.

Have a value of diversity and learning it no from compliance but doing it to be all we are.

I love learning how to be all of me,

I love living with a valuing of diversity.

It's about everyone learning from everyone else. Deeply celebrating and love.

It is integrated. To fully educate everyone

Fully support each person.

It is hard to for people to hear that basic humanness,

**Lou****Closing Summary: How are you right now?**

Each participant shared some closing comments.

## Facilitator Notes

### Anger Venting Empathy Circle.

(have a anger venting space)

Could be have an anger venting empathy circle. Are you angry, want to vent all your frustrations. Join the Anger Venting Empathy Circle. You are encouraged to deeply express your anger, and have it be empathically heard, and accepted.

### (Times of 3 minutes seems short)

When people are very contentious and charged, It seems to be good to have shorter times to speak because the others (the Active and Silent Listeners) really want to speak in reply to what they are hearing. However, if there is not a lot of conflict, the speaking time limit can be longer, like 5 minutes. Also, after about an hour of a contentious dialogue, and once people have been able to express themselves and feel heard, the time can be raised from 3 to 5 minutes.

Once the time limits are internalized, they can be done away with all together.

## What blocks may people be having about signing up to take part in the online empathy circle. Created a poll for this.

- Two hours is too long for me a circle.
    - 2 hours to much time, a big block of time. However, Lewis mentions 2 hours is good for going deeper.
  - Have Concern about being recorded and it being publicly posted
  - Have concern about my emotional safety.
  - The name 'Empathy Circle' is strange. I don't get what it is really about
  - Have concerns about about emotional Safety in the circle
  - Concern about my safety if others see the recording online.
  - Concerns the dialogue will become a shouting match like many political discussions.
  - Concern about my safety if others see the recording online.
  - Concerns that I may lose my temper with others.
  - Concerns I will not do the empathic listening process correctly.
- 
- I like to avoid any conflict.
  - Concern about my safety if others see this
  - I'm afraid I may lose mt temper with others.
  - Recording - Concerned about being recorded.
  - The name 'Empathy Circle' is strange.
  - I don't know who the other people are and have concerns about meeting new people.
  - Don't know who the people are.
  - Concerned I may get into a shouting match or verbal fight.
  - Concerned I may get attacked.
  - Concerned I may not be able to honestly express myself.
  - Worried I will get mad and get angry at others.
  - The facilitator helps to keep the peace
  - Have busy life and it's hard to find a time that works.
  - Concern, since I don't understand the what the process is about.
  - Lots of stuff to do and different times available.

### Other Facilitator Notes.

- You learn by doing.

## Feedback

The Empathy Circle Host.

The Facilitator setting the tion of being = helps model the expression.  
Co-facilot ifless people.

### Note Taking

Advantage - can jump take the times.  
Use a stopwatch  
Not having the times.  
Note time right now.

Note about the circle.

**A Post Survey, - do it via email - google form  
testimaol.**

**Who was the empathy circle experience?**

I like...  
I wish ...  
What if..