

Bridging Divides Empathy Circle

Bridging social and political divides - building a culture of empathy

Page URL: <http://j.mp/2SMzl9F>

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.

Topic: What aspect of the current political situation do you feel angry about and why?

Date: Saturday, January 05

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

Website Page: <http://j.mp/2QVr9qp>

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. [See a 60-second video with instructions](#) about joining a Zoom meeting. [You can test zoom here](#). The circle will be recorded and posted to social media for educational purposes. (Youtube and Facebook)

Special Notes:

1. If you take part, please come and stay for the full time.

PARTICIPANTS

We want to give more people the experience of an empathy circle. As many people (left or right) as would like can join this Empathy Circle can take part. We will use the breakout rooms and divide into smaller groups of 4 if need be. We will try to have a facilitator for each room.

Facilitator 1: Edwin Rutsch EdwinRutsch@gmail.com

IN PREPARATION

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.

Download and Print: PDF Version: [Empathy Circle: How-To Do Empathic Listening V 2.0](#)

[You can watch a sample empathy circle.](#)

We look forward to seeing you. Feel free to email EdwinRutsch@gmail.com with questions or post them to our [Facebook group](#).

Meeting Notes And Transcripts

Feel free to write in this area during the circle.

David Carson

I Like: I always get something out of this. There is a few times where I really had to bite my tongue, because I wanted to jump right in there. Usually that is in response to me having a short attention span and if I don't do that, then I lose it. But maybe that is something I'm supposed to learn from all this is to think before I act sometimes.

I Wish: Again I would reiterate maybe a later time. I think we might get a different crowd and I would be a bit more awake. I think it would be different if it would be later.

Edwin Rutsch

I Like: I always get a lot out the taking part in an Empathy Circle. There was a depth to it today talking about trauma and it seemed to go deeper.

I Wish: I have a lot of hope in the process, that if we can get more people learning this and spreading it, and replicate it. Because it is easy to replicate and is very effective. I would wish we keep working to spread the process.

Marki Webber

I Like: I really appreciated the opportunity to dialogue. I appreciated the ways that each person was willing and able to really be present with what arose for them in the moment. One of the ways I knew that was happening was that there were surprising things that showed up. And that always speaks of authenticity, which I like and I especially appreciated because it is the thing I find lacking in the political spectrum is depth and authenticity. So I like that.

Sam Kifer

I Like: I always appreciate these too. I feel like I learn new things and I learn how to see things in a different way. I appreciated and was surprised at the depths that occurred. I also feel like the times I participated in these I feel at the end like the conversation is so incomplete. Like I could keep going for hours before you get to all the nooks and crannies of it. I'm trying to think of how to maybe address that or if it needs to be addressed

I Wish: I appreciated how we did the breakout sessions and how kind of reduce the size of the group, that is helpful too because it gives each person more time to be able to speak and more back and forths to happen. So maybe even smaller groups, but I also get that you want a range of opinions and viewpoints as well. So that gets challenging.

Maybe another suggestion might be to be more specific with topic. Because I feel when we start really broad, everybody sort of goes in 10 different directions and there are some many different themes you can go in. I guess that is one way to do it. It's not a bad thing, but maybe another way is to get extremely specific and kind of really explore in depth one very small piece of that whole conversation. Maybe there could be people piggy backing off each other. We could take what developed from one empathy circle and then decide as a group what some thread of that do we want to explore in more depth and then pick it up and have a sequence.

Again, I love participating in these and feel that it really helps my own personal growth and development and open mindedness and flexibility and it's great.

Corey Collier

I Like: There is so much left unsaid at the end of it and yet I don't think I can imagine trying to do this for more than two hours. I feel it takes a lot out of me and I don't think I am the only one who experience it as being an exhausting and effortful to participate in. But I keep showing up. So I must think something about it. It would be really interesting to see how the discussion unfolded around one very small small and specific thing. But I also like the format of people bringing whatever is alive for them. In our group we delved more into trauma and the function of trauma and how it works on our

brains and I think it was helpful in lot of ways. I’m glad that this exists even though it’s hard. Thanks to all for being here.

Tyler Morris

I Like: As always and like everybody, I got something out of it. For those of you that don’t know my background I spent quite some time in some wilderness survival programs where we did this for believe me, way longer than two hours and it is extremely exhausting. I realize I am like marathon trained to do this. I did deploy to Afghanistan and Africa in the military and I have witnessed the power of empathy to literally stop war in its tracks. What we are doing is effective and I want to iterate that from a military standpoint. This is no BS, this really works and I really believe in it.

Evan Magor

I Like: I always enjoy getting to meet with new people and hear their thoughts. It’s really interesting and I definitely learned something new. It’s helping meet my need for connection and community and self expression.

Oceana Glantz

I Like: Needs met for hope, effective communication and deep listening. I definitely enjoyed the process and feel grateful.

Judith Gottlieb

I Like: I always love hearing people's experiences and what causes them to feel a certain way. I thought we were just going to talk about politics and we talked about things like abortion, homelessness, interracial children. We just talked a lot about things and I think what is so amazing, what I was reminded of, that we are all just people together with different backgrounds and were we hear each other, we have a commonality. And I am pleased to have been on the call.