

Practice - MAKE A COPY

- Pick a conflict in your life. Pick one that is meaningful but not the most challenging. 5lb conflict, NOT 100 lb conflict -
- Reflect for 5 minutes solo
- Begin with a grounding or short breathing exercise (“Notice your breath, your seat, your heart rate—what’s here for you right now?”).
- Name agreements: confidentiality, curiosity, presence, no fixing or advice.
- Frame the purpose: “We’re practicing empathy as a *shared* skill—listening to understand, not to solve.”

Solo Reflection (5 min)

Write slowly and *feel* as you answer each one—“Notice what sensations arise as you write about this conflict.”

From your experience name:

- How you feel/felt:
- Why you felt that way:
- An impact from the conflict was:
- What happened (in one sentence):
- What value do you hold dear that makes you care about this:
- What is another feeling you have/had:
- How did you feel about the person you’re in conflict with before this incident:
- What is a strength you have in this situation:
- What is a question you would ask yourself about how you could move forward?

Empathy Pair Practice -

10 min each

Participants pair up and take turns as:

- **Speaker:** shares their conflict reflection for 3 minutes uninterrupted.
- **Listener:** uses the *Restorative Chat Mad Libs* script as a structure—not to fill in mechanically, but to *mirror and attune*.

Pro Tips:

- *Speak slowly, paraphrase feelings and needs.*
- *Take guesses at feelings.*
- *Check for accuracy (“Did I get that right?”).*
- *Reflect back values (“It sounds like fairness and trust are really important to you”).*

Then switch roles.

Restorative Chat Mad Libs:

Hi _____, thanks for meeting with me. So what happened?

(name)

From what I’ve heard so far, it sounds like you’re feeling

(emotions)

because _____.

(impact)

I can see how _____

(impact)

might be weighing on you.

What I’m hearing is that _____

(what happened),

and this connects to your value(s) of _____.
(value/s)

That must be really _____
(feeling)

to carry, especially considering
_____.
(how they feel about the person they're in conflict with)

Does that sound right so far?

Can I ask (pause your partner): what's felt most important to you in all of this?
What kind of support would feel meaningful moving forward?

I want to name that your

(a strength of the person you're listing to)

really comes through here. That's not always easy to show.
What would it be like to view this as a moment to explore how
_____?
(a question they might be having to empower/heal)

Optional follow up questions:

- *What would you need in order to feel like progress is possible?*
- *How might we approach this together?*

Thank you again for your openness—I'm here with you in this & glad we can talk.

Partners' Debrief:

After both share:

- Each names one moment when they *felt empathy land* ("I felt seen when you said...").
- Each names one moment when they *noticed themselves withdraw or want to fix*, and what they learned from that.

Group Debrief (15 min)

In a larger circle, reflect:

- *"What helped you feel most understood?"*
- *"What was it like to listen without fixing?"*
- *"How might this practice support you in future conflicts?"*