

EARTHE

Activity 2

Digital toolkit for innovative curriculum and methodological development

Module – Empathy and Resilience

Method - The role of empathy in conflict

Class activities

Module 6 – Empathy & Resilience

Class activity 1. - Walking in Their Shoes

Related method

The role of empathy in conflict

Target group

Age: Adults 20–60

Gender: Mixed

Level of studies: Secondary and above (adaptable to lower literacy with simplified instructions)

Status: Employed, unemployed, or job-seeking

Fewer opportunities: Especially useful for learners under high stress, migrants adapting to new environments, or those with limited coping strategies.

This activity helps participants practise **perspective-taking** by retelling a conflict story from the viewpoint of the other person involved. Learners build empathy by imagining thoughts, feelings, and motivations different from their own.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- Practise perspective-taking in conflict scenarios.
- Recognise how empathy changes the tone of a disagreement.
- Communicate more respectfully in future conflicts.

Duration: 60 minutes

Materials and resources

Conflict scenario cards (e.g., workplace, family, community disputes), Role cards for each character in the scenario, Observer checklists (listening, paraphrasing, respectful tone), Flipchart/markers

Activity description

Learners practise taking on the perspective of someone they disagree with, by retelling a conflict through that person's eyes. This develops empathy, active listening, and emotional regulation.

Detailed Implementation Steps

Introduction

Facilitator explains: *“Often in conflicts, we only see our own side. Empathy means trying to understand how the other person feels.”*



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Brief brainstorm: *“What’s hard about putting yourself in someone else’s shoes?”* Facilitator notes answers on flipchart.

Group agrees on ground rules: respect, confidentiality, no judgment.

Main Activity

Learners divide into pairs. Each pair gets a scenario card (e.g., “Two neighbours disagree about noise levels”).

Round 1: Partner A tells the story from their own character’s perspective for 3 minutes. Partner B listens without interruption.

Round 2: Partner A retells the same story, but now from the perspective of their opponent. Partner B provides supportive feedback: *“You captured their perspective when you said...”*

Roles switch: Partner B does the same exercise with their scenario.

Observers (if in triads) use checklists to note evidence of empathy (e.g., summarising feelings, using “I understand”).

Conclusion and Reflection

Facilitator leads group discussion:

- *How did it feel to speak as the “other person”?*
- *What did you notice about your own assumptions?*
- *How can this change how you handle conflict in real life?*

Learners write down one empathy strategy they will use in their next conflict.

Assessment / Evaluation Method

Peer and observer feedback using checklists.

Group reflection on changes in tone and perspective.

Quick self-assessment: *“I found it easy/difficult to step into the other person’s shoes because...”*

Adaptation Tips

For low-literacy learners, facilitator reads scenarios aloud.

For migrants, include intercultural conflicts (e.g., cultural misunderstandings at work).

For online learning, use breakout rooms for pairs and digital scenario cards.

Module 6 – Empathy & Resilience

Class activity 2. - Empathy in Action Role-Play

Related method

The role of empathy in conflict

Target group

Age: Adults 20–60

Gender: Mixed

Level of studies: Secondary and above (adaptable to lower literacy with simplified instructions)

Status: Employed, unemployed, or job-seeking

Fewer opportunities: Especially useful for learners under high stress, migrants adapting to new environments, or those with limited coping strategies.

This activity allows learners to practise real-time empathy skills in short role-plays. By applying techniques such as active listening, paraphrasing, and using calm tone, participants learn to transform conflict into constructive dialogue.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- Apply empathetic listening techniques in simulated conflict.
- Demonstrate respectful communication under pressure.
- Reflect on how empathy reduces conflict escalation.

Duration: 75 minutes

Materials and resources

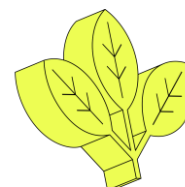
Conflict role-play scenario cards (e.g., “Two colleagues disagree about project deadlines”), Empathy technique cards (summarising, paraphrasing, asking open questions), Observer feedback sheets, Flipchart/markers

Activity description

Through structured role-plays, learners practise active listening and empathetic responses in conflict situations. Observers provide constructive feedback, highlighting effective use of empathy.

Detailed Implementation Steps

Introduction



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Facilitator explains: “Conflict doesn’t disappear when we avoid it—what matters is how we respond. Empathy helps us reduce tension.”

Introduces three empathy techniques:

- Summarising the other’s point (“So you’re saying...”)
- Asking open questions (“How did that make you feel?”)
- Using calm, respectful tone and body language.

Demonstrates a short example role-play with a volunteer.

Main Activity

Learners form groups of three: two role-players, one observer.

Each group receives a scenario card (e.g., “One person feels overworked, the other thinks tasks are fairly shared”).

Round 1: Role-players act out the conflict naturally for 5 minutes.

Round 2: Replay the conflict, but role-players must apply empathy techniques.

Observer uses feedback sheet to note empathetic behaviours (listening, tone, paraphrasing).

Groups rotate scenarios so participants practise different contexts.

Facilitator circulates, offering guidance and support.

Conclusion and Reflection

Observers give structured feedback: “One empathetic strategy I noticed was...”

Facilitator leads group debrief:

- What changed between Round 1 and Round 2?
- How did empathy affect the conflict outcome?
- Which technique felt most natural to you?

Learners record one strategy they commit to practising outside the workshop.

Assessment / Evaluation Method

Observer feedback forms highlighting use of empathy.

Facilitator observation of tone, language, and listening behaviours.

Self-reflection: “What did I learn about my conflict style today?”

Adaptation Tips

For low-literacy learners, role-plays can be based on real-life conflicts learners bring up instead of printed cards.

For online groups, role-plays can be done in breakout rooms with digital empathy cards.

For advanced learners, scenarios can include complex workplace conflicts (e.g., disputes with managers or clients).

Module 6 – Empathy & Resilience

Class activity 3 – Walking in Their Shoes

Related method

The role of empathy in conflict

Target group

- **Age:** Adults 20–60
- **Gender:** Mixed
- **Level of studies:** Secondary and above (adaptable to lower literacy with simplified instructions)
- **Status:** Employed, unemployed, or job-seeking
- **Fewer opportunities:** Especially useful for learners under high stress, migrants adapting to new environments, or those with limited coping strategies.

This activity helps learners practise empathy by taking on the perspective of others in a conflict scenario. By role-switching, learners see the conflict through different eyes and practise constructive dialogue.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- Practise perspective-taking by role-playing different sides of a conflict.
- Identify how empathy can shift attitudes and reduce defensiveness.
- Apply empathetic listening to de-escalate disagreements.
- Reflect on real-life strategies to resolve conflicts more constructively.

Duration: 60 minutes

Materials and resources

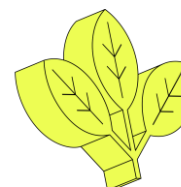
Scenario cards with conflict situations (e.g., “Two colleagues disagree on workload”, “Neighbour dispute about noise”), Chairs arranged for role-play dialogues, Reflection sheets for post-activity notes

Activity description

Learners act out a conflict twice: once as themselves and once while role-switching to adopt the other person’s perspective. This helps participants understand how empathy changes the dynamic of conflict resolution.

Detailed Implementation Steps

Introduction



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Facilitator introduces empathy as the ability to “step into someone else’s shoes.” The group brainstorms how lack of empathy worsens conflicts and how perspective-taking could make them easier to resolve.

Main Activity

Learners form pairs or small groups and receive a conflict scenario card.

Round 1: Learners role-play the conflict in their “natural” positions, arguing their own side.

Round 2: Learners swap roles, arguing from the other person’s perspective, including their needs, fears, and motivations.

Groups reflect on how it felt to defend a position they don’t agree with, and what they noticed about their partner’s perspective.

Volunteers perform for the larger group, showing how empathy shifted the dialogue.

Conclusion and Reflection

Facilitator leads discussion:

- “How did your feelings change when you stepped into the other person’s role?”
- “What insights did you gain about empathy in resolving conflicts?”
- “How can you apply this perspective-taking in your personal or professional life?”

Learners write down one empathetic listening strategy they will try in their next conflict situation.

Assessment / Evaluation Method

Observation of learners’ ability to articulate both sides of a conflict.

Group reflection highlighting shifts in perception.

Learner self-reflection on the emotional impact of perspective-taking.

Adaptation Tips

For shy learners, role-play in pairs without performing in front of the whole group.

For advanced learners, use more complex, multi-party conflicts.

For online groups, use breakout rooms for role-plays, then return to plenary for reflections.