



EARTHE

Activity 2

Digital toolkit for innovative curriculum and methodological development

Module – Empathy and Resilience

Method - The role of empathy in conflict



Module 6 – Empathy & Resilience

Method 3 – The role of empathy in conflict

Soft skill focus

This method develops the ability to use empathy as a tool for conflict resolution, teaching learners how to understand others' perspectives, regulate emotions, and communicate constructively during disagreements.

Learning outcomes

- Define empathy and explain its importance in conflict resolution.
- Practise perspective-taking to understand different viewpoints.
- Apply empathetic listening techniques in simulated conflict situations.
- Demonstrate constructive responses to conflict that reduce tension and build trust.

Target group

Age: Adults 20–60

Gender: Mixed

Level of studies: Secondary education and above (adaptable for low-literacy groups with simplified instructions)

Status: Employed, unemployed, or job-seeking

Fewer opportunities: Particularly suitable for adults under stress, migrants adapting to new contexts, or those experiencing anxiety, burnout, or lack of coping strategies.

Many adults experience conflicts at work, home, or in community life. This method provides practical tools to reduce defensiveness, foster understanding, and resolve disagreements constructively. By focusing on empathy, learners strengthen resilience and relationship-building skills.

Method description

“The Role of Empathy in Conflict” introduces participants to empathy as a core conflict-resolution skill. Through guided reflection, role-plays, and group dialogue, learners practise active listening, perspective-taking, and non-judgmental communication. The method emphasises that conflict is natural, but how we respond can either escalate or resolve tension.

Implementation instructions

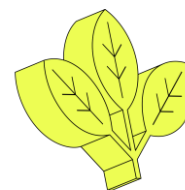
Timeline: 60–75 minutes

Number of participants: 8–20 (works in pairs or small groups)



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Necessary materials: Conflict scenario cards, role cards (conflict roles), empathy checklists, flipchart/markers, timer

Space: Classroom or training room with movable chairs for role-play circles

Implementation in 5 steps

Step 1 – Introduction & Context

Facilitator explains: *“Conflict happens in every aspect of life. Empathy allows us to pause, understand the other person, and respond constructively.”* Group brainstorms: *“What usually makes conflicts worse?”* (e.g., interrupting, blaming, shouting).

Step 2 – Understanding Empathy

Facilitator introduces empathy: the ability to put yourself in someone else’s shoes. Short demonstration: facilitator shares a personal example of conflict and how empathy changed the outcome.

Step 3 – Role-Play Practice

Learners are divided into pairs or groups of three (conflict roles + observer).

Each pair/group receives a scenario card (e.g., *two colleagues disagree about workload, neighbours argue about noise*).

First round: participants role-play without guidance.

Second round: same scenario repeated, but the “empathy rule” is applied: one person must summarise the other’s perspective before responding.

Observers use empathy checklists to note behaviours (listening, paraphrasing, respectful tone).

Step 4 – Group Reflection

Each group shares: What changed between the first and second round? How did empathy affect the tone and outcome? Facilitator records key differences (e.g., less defensiveness, more problem-solving).

Step 5 – Consolidation & Debrief

Facilitator leads closing discussion:

- *How can empathy change conflict in your workplace or family?*
- *What is one empathetic strategy you will try next time you face conflict?*

Learners write down one personal action plan (e.g., “Next time I argue, I will summarise the other person’s point before responding”).

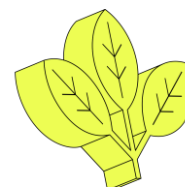
Practical tips

Tip 1: Start with low-stakes scenarios before tackling sensitive issues.

Tip 2: Encourage learners to use neutral, respectful language and tone.

Tip 3: Rotate roles often so everyone practises being both speaker and listener.

Debriefing questions



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1. How did it feel to practise empathy during conflict compared to your usual approach?
2. What strategies helped you understand the other person better?
3. How can empathy improve not just conflict resolution, but also everyday communication?

Practical description sheet

Title: The Role of Empathy in Conflict

Purpose: To teach learners how to use empathy to reduce tension and resolve conflicts constructively.

Duration: 60–75 minutes

Format: Role-play, guided reflection, group discussion

Core Steps: Context → Understanding empathy → Role-play → Reflection → Debrief

Materials: Scenario cards, empathy checklists, flipchart

Target Group: Adults 20–60, especially those facing workplace/family stress

Learning Outcomes: Define empathy, practise perspective-taking, apply empathetic listening, resolve conflicts constructively

Key Benefits: Reduces tension, builds trust, strengthens resilience and relationships