

Empathy:

Empathy is a quality of being able to feel for the suffering of others. It is **compassion in action**. Thus not only can we feel for the pain and the torments of others, we become one with them. We begin to **share their grief and pain** and therefore **empathizing is the first step** towards resolving the distress of others.

Walt Whitman wrote in one of his essays that “I do not ask how the wounded person feels. I become that person”. Therefore empathy involves putting oneself in another person's shoes.

A person with empathy tries to **comprehend the emotions and thoughts of others** and he tries to respond in a **compassionate and supportive manner**. Therefore empathy requires openness, attentiveness, and a willingness to **suspend our own judgments** and biases. Mahatma Gandhi has called being empathetic a religion in itself.

Examples of Empathy:

Empathy is a very broad ranging emotion. Therefore, the acts of empathy covers a diverse range of actions.

- An empathetic individual **attentively listens to the grievances** of others. They provide a safe space for others to express their emotions.
- The work of volunteers during natural disasters is an example of empathy by the masses and ordinary people.
- **Good Samaritans** who save the lives of people who have met road accidents and go out of their way to donate blood.
- Empathy has been called a **virtue of the state** and a part of natural justice. Gandhi himself preached to **hate the sin and not the sinner**.
- Modern day work environment puts stress on the capability of empathy in those who are in managerial roles. It helps the team to perform better.
- The philanthropist attitude towards giving it back to society. Such benevolent actions are rooted in empathy.

Role of empathy:

Empathy plays a major role in personal as well social life. Daniel Goldman recognized that empathy helps to put us cognitively in touch with what others are feeling. Thus empathy as an

emotion and a virtue, enables us to look beyond ourselves. It helps us in breaking down the barriers that our ego enacts.

Human beings, as per Hobbes, are self centered and preoccupied with domestic troubles. It's a world of "Dog eats dog". It becomes necessary to calm these self-centered tendencies with a compassionate attitude towards others. Thus empathy enables social harmony.

The role of empathy has been accepted by not only philosophers but also by men of science. Albert Einstein famously asks us to not limit our interest by personal desires but open ourselves to the beauty of the world and nature.

For a ruler or a bureaucrat, empathy goes a long way in ensuring just and kind administration. Not only does an empathetic attitude make the administration desirable, it also harbors the formation of social capital. Fairness, justice, and empathy play a major role in deriving social change and creating a just society.

Only for nagendraraiput9753@gmail.com