

UNIT-2

Empathy:

- Empathy is the first step in design thinking because it is a skill that allows one to stand in the shoe of others.
- It is about understanding the feelings of fellow beings and viewing others as self.
- It involves understanding user needs through research, conducting interviews, surveys and developing empathy maps.

Empathy vs. Sympathy:

There is a thin line between empathy and sympathy.

□ SYMPATHY is acknowledging that the other person is going through an emotional or physical struggle, supporting them and giving them comfort. It is feeling sorrowful, pity, and sorry for their troubles.

□ EMPATHY is something more. It's actually understanding what the other person is feeling because you've had a similar experience yourself or you're able to put yourself in their shoes. It is to feel and share someone's experiences, feelings, and attitudes.

Empathy connects with the person's emotions and offers support, while sympathy acknowledges their struggle but remains more detached.

When to Use Sympathy vs. Empathy:

Both sympathy and empathy are heartfelt and honest feelings but empathy is a deeper one.

When you express sympathy, you realize that someone is feeling sad or depressed but when you express empathy, you actually feel exactly what the other person is feeling.

People who are going through difficult times can receive both empathy and sympathy from people around them. However, these feelings don't necessarily go together. One example is a person who has lost a loved one. This person will obviously receive a lot of compassion, support, and sympathy from his friends and family. But only those of his friends who have been in the same situation and lost someone as well will be able to be empathetic.

Role of EMPATHY in Design Thinking :-

Empathy is the first step in design thinking because it is a skill that allows one to understand

and share the same feelings that others feel. Through empathy, one is able to put one selves in other people's shoes and connect with how they might be feeling about their problem, circumstance, or situation. It is an intentional attempt to keep aside preconceived notions and uncover the real unspoken needs to truly resonate with the users. This encourages creating solutions that are sustainable and focused on all areas that affect in a long term. Some questions to consider:

- ☐ What is the person feeling?
- ☐ What actions or words indicate this feeling?
- ☐ Can you identify their feelings through words?
- ☐ What words would you use to describe their feelings?

These are just some of the guided questions that one can reflect on to identify the problem and how others are feeling about it.

The Empathize stage of the design thinking process is a time for one to collect as many experiences, insights and observations as possible, so that one can build a solid foundation for the rest of their design project.

It cannot be stressed enough on how important it is for a designer to develop the best possible understanding of their users, their needs and the problems that the product or service is trying to solve!

Many leaders within the fields of innovation, learning and entrepreneurship have pointed to three key parameters which define a successful product or service: desirability, feasibility and viability. It's not enough that the technology exists (i.e., feasibility is present) and that profits or business benefits may be derived (i.e., it is viable). Users need to feel a sense of desirability towards a solution. We can only design a desirable product or service when people's needs, experiences, wants and preferences are properly understood.

Empathy Helps One Read Between the Lines:

Empathy is also the only way to thoroughly understand what people mean, rather than just absorb what they say. It can be noticed by now people do not necessarily always cover the details when they share stories and other information. They may withhold information out of fear, distrust or another inhibiting factor — be it internal or based on those with whom they engage — and they may express themselves in a less than articulate way. As a designer, one

therefore needs to:

- Make sense of what is not being said, or what is being hinted at beneath the external expressions and words.
- Develop intuition, imagination, emotional sensitivity and creativity so you can dig deeper into people's experiences.
- Extract the right kinds of insight to ensure you make a meaningful difference.

Empathy is the difference between what your users say at face value and what IDEO Executive Design Director Jane Fulton Suri describes as “thoughtless acts.” Thoughtless acts are small, subtle acts people exhibit that reveal how their behaviours are shaped by their environment. For example, when people hang their sunglasses on their shirt or wrap coloured stickers around their keys to differentiate them, it's a sign of how an imperfectly tailored environment forces us to make an almost unconscious reaction. Empathy can help us find opportunities for new insights and new solutions to help people with these suboptimal, unconscious acts.

Types of Empathy:

1. Cognitive Empathy ("Thinking Empathy"):

• Definition:

Cognitive empathy is the ability to understand another person's emotions, thoughts, and perspectives without necessarily feeling them yourself.

- It *involves intellectual awareness* rather than emotional connection.
- Cognitive empathy allows for a more objective perspective, while affective (emotional) empathy is more subjective.

Example:

- *Resolving team conflict as a team leader* by remaining objective and giving a less biased perspective on the issue.
- **Best for:** Negotiations, leadership, psychology, teaching, and conflict resolution.
- **Limitation:** Can seem cold or distant if not paired with emotional connection.

2. Affective Empathy ("Emotional Empathy"):

Definition:

Emotional empathy is the ability to **physically and emotionally feel** what another person is experiencing. It goes beyond understanding their feelings; you **mirror their emotions** as if they were your own.

Example:

A friend starts crying after hearing that their best friend lost a loved one because they feel their pain deeply.

A nurse feels emotional distress when a patient receives bad news and offers comfort with genuine warmth.

Best for: Close relationships, counseling, caregiving, and social bonding.

Limitation: Can be overwhelming, leading to emotional exhaustion.

3. Compassionate Empathy ("Actionable Empathy"):

Definition:

Compassionate empathy is the balance between cognitive and emotional empathy. It not only understands and feels another's pain but also takes action to help.

Example:

A colleague notices a struggling teammate and offers to help with their workload.

A social worker sees a homeless person suffering and not only feels their distress but also works to get them shelter or food.

Best for: Humanitarian work, leadership, friendships, and medical professions.

Limitation: Requires emotional intelligence and problem-solving skills to take meaningful action.

Comparison of the Three Types

Type of Empathy	What It Does	Example
Cognitive Empathy	Understands feelings logically	A psychologist understands a patient's anxiety but remains neutral to offer clear guidance.
Emotional Empathy	Feels and mirrors emotions	A mother feels her child's sadness and cries with them.
Compassionate Empathy	Understands, feels, and acts	A volunteer helps flood victims by providing shelter and food.

Unique needs of the customer:

- Empathy is at the core of human-centered design because it ensures that the final product is created with the users' well-being and experience in mind, rather than simply solving problems in a technical or detached way.
- Customer needs are defined as the influential factors that trigger them to buy a product or service.
- In order to identify customer needs, it is important to understand the reasons behind their decision making.
- It's very important to know who our customers are.

Four simple steps to follow in order to meet customer needs successfully.

- **Identify** – Follow customer needs analysis via surveys, interviews, focus groups, or social listening.
- **Distribute** – Once you have identified the needs, you can distribute it across the right teams and departments.
- **Create** – Tailor product features, create detailed content that speaks about customer needs.
- **Collect** – Obtain customer feedback regularly to learn how your efforts meet their expectations.

When designing a product or service, it's important to address both the physical and psychological needs of customers. While physical needs ensure the product works well and is comfortable, psychological needs are key to creating an emotional connection, building trust, and fostering long-term loyalty.

- **Ex: Tata Nano** succeeded in functionality (a physical need) but it failed to meet psychological needs like status, aspiration, and emotional connection.

Steps in empathize phase:

The **five steps** in cultivating empathy are:

- Understand yourself.
- Understand others.
- Build comfort into conversations.
- Learn how to listen.
- Practice

4 Steps to Practice Empathy from Dr. Brene Brown

- Perspective taking.
- Staying out of judgment.
- Recognizing emotions someone else is feeling.
- Communicating that you understand an emotion

According to design researcher **Froukje Sleeswijk Visser**, the **four steps** to promote empathy in the design process are:

- **Discovery**- The "Discover" step is about gathering as much information as possible to understand the context, the users, and the challenges they face by observations, surveys etc.
- **Immersion** - fully engaging with the user's world, experiencing things from their perspective, and deeply understanding their needs by living the experience.
- **Connection** – establishing an emotional link with the users, understanding their motivations, frustrations, and desires on a deeper level by engaging in deep listening.
- **Detachment**- stepping back and detaching from the data which is gathered, our biases and preconceived solutions. It allows us to analyze and synthesize the findings without being overly attached to the initial ideas or judgments.

Beginners Mind set for empathizing:

- Having a beginner's mind means you approach the world through a beginner's eyes.

In this state of mind, you are:

- Free of preconceptions of how anything works
- Free of expectations about what will happen
- Filled with curiosity to understand things more deeply

- Open to a world of possibilities, since you don't yet know what is or isn't possible

Immersion activity:

- Immersion: An immersion activity in empathizing refers to actively placing oneself in another person's situation to deeply understand their experiences, emotions, challenges, and perspectives.
- It is the mostly widely used technique for finding the root or origin of the problem.
- This is used as part of Empathy phase for understanding and getting close to the problem, researching it and contextualizing it. The team of the empathy phase seeks to dive into the implications of the challenge, studying it from both the company's and client's perspective
- Immersive design (Experimental Design) describes design work which ranges in levels of interaction and leads users to be fully absorbed in an experience.
- Observation experiences are meant to provide insights and provoke thought, while immersion experiences might fill in gaps in evolving emerging or advanced technologies or IT needs or provide an opportunity for deeper learning and career progression.

Immersion activity – Steps:

1. Define the theme for the session : Usually emerge out of any business issue like resources, payments, onboarding, retention, self service are common examples. This sets parameters for the activity to explore and find various alternatives as outcomes or solutions.
2. Invite the right people : experts or senior personal from product managers and software developers to brand and content, to marketing managers and change and improvement managers. In an immersion workshop they literally read every comment left by a customer in the past few months. Each person has a different life view, or lens, to empathise. This breadth of viewpoints ensures the customers are best advocated for. We are a customer, but not the customer.
3. Get everyone prepared : Planning will make or break this process. There is about an hour of pre-reading. This is the usual stuff; graphs, charts and financials . The most critical part is the pre-thinking tasks. This ensures time in the workshop is the best use of everyone's time.
4. Thinking like a customer : The beginning of a workshop is to talk through the pre thinking, agree ground rules and move people through obstacles to the content. In order to empathise with the customer context empathy we run empathy activities. There are many different activities such as personas, group journey mapping, empathy mapping and empathy scenarios depending on the group, theme and learnings from pre thinking. The main point - to realise every customer's expectations of a company are different, their goals are different, their problems are different and the solutions accordingly.
5. Exploring the customers problems / how the workshop works : Explore the customer's problems, in their own words; with all the flavour and frustration of their

perspective. We do this as many customer comments as we can get our hands on, from variety of feedback sources including all stages in the customer's journey. :

Body Storming:

- Bodystorming is a method used to physically experience with the self as a way of subjecting a researcher's own body to be with the real situation and understanding the given situation as it is in order to explore and ideate . A combination of role-play and simulation, bodystorming takes place in a physical environment, instilling a feeling of empathy for the users.
- Bodystorming is a technique sometimes used in interaction design or as a creativity technique. It has also been cited as catalyzing scientific research when used as a modeling tool. The idea is to imagine what it would be like if the product existed, and act as though it exists, ideally in the place it would be used.
- Bodystorming uses simple and inexpensive props to simulate scenarios. Role-playing allows participants to come up with solutions by understanding the users' pain points and finding the core of the problem. For example, participants would experiment with different ways to hand coffee to guests who carry the luggage.
- The idea is to imagine what it would be like if the product existed, and act as though it exists, ideally in the place it would be used. It is going through an idea with improvised artifacts and physical activities to envision a solution. This User Experience Design (UXD) technique is ideal to design physical spaces (e.g. the interior design of a shop) but can also be used to design physical products or software.
- Bodystorming is part of brainstorming. Unlike brainstorming, bodystorming gives the designer a closer look at the user's emotions and comfort with the product or experience without assumptions. This leads to more accurate adjustments to optimize the user experience and present a more realistic prediction of how streamlined the implementation of a design process may be. Bodystorming can be completed on an individual scale of physically re-enacting a user experience;
- Example of bodystorming: If a design team is bodystorming how to design an environment or space, they may use cardboard boxes in replacement of tables or furniture. Simulating the environment with boxes would still give the team a better grasp of the scale and atmosphere of the space and allow them to open a conversation on how to best rearrange items or components of the design. Spaces such as living rooms or lobbies that typically hold a collection of people can be simulated so designers can get an overview of the flow of space and scale.
- Bodystorming is a hands-on design thinking technique where participants physically act out scenarios to explore user experiences, test ideas, and generate insights.
- Unlike traditional brainstorming, which is mostly discussion-based, bodystorming involves physical movement and role-playing to simulate real-world interactions.

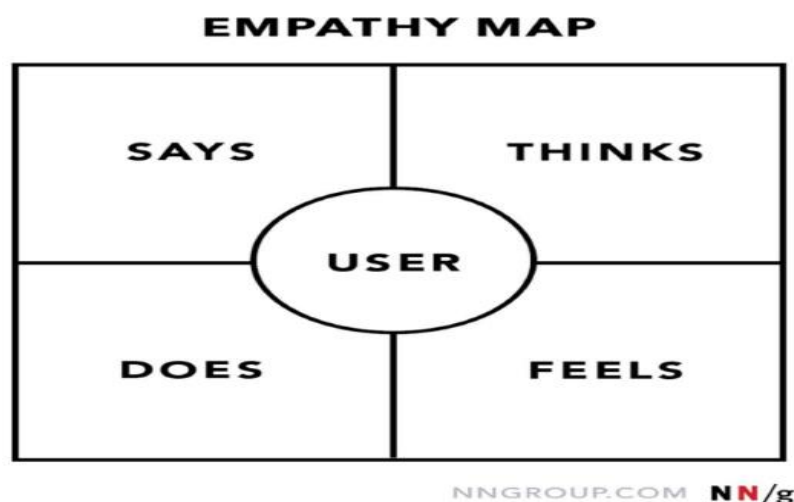
Key Elements of Bodystorming:

- *Physical Simulation* – Participants act as users and perform tasks in a setting that mimics the real environment.
- *Role-Playing* – Designers take on different roles (e.g., customer, service provider) to experience pain points firsthand.
- *Rapid Experimentation* – Ideas are quickly tested through movement and interaction.
- *Empathy & Immersion* – By "being" the user, designers deeply understand the emotional and physical challenges involved.

Empathy Map:

An empathy map is a simplified visualization of the information in hand about particular users. Empathy map is a tool that helps to connect with the ideal user and relate with them in the right way. The format of the empathy map varies, but all of them have common core elements and purposes.

Empathy maps are split into 4 quadrants (Says, Thinks, Does, and Feels), with the user or persona in the middle. Empathy maps provide a glance into who a user is as a whole and are not chronological or sequential.



The Says quadrant contains what the user says out loud in an interview or some other usability study. Ideally, it contains verbatim and direct quotes from research. □ “I am allegiant to Delta because I never have a bad experience.”

□ “I want something reliable.”

□ “I don’t understand what to do from here.”

The Thinks quadrant captures what the user is thinking throughout the experience. Ask yourself (from the qualitative research gathered): what occupies the user’s thoughts?

What matters to the user? It is possible to have the same content in both Says and Thinks. However, pay special attention to what users think, but may not be willing to

vocalize. Try to understand why they are reluctant to share — are they unsure, self-conscious, polite, or afraid to tell others something?

- ☐ “This is really annoying.”
- ☐ “Am I dumb for not understanding this?”

The Does quadrant encloses the actions the user takes. From the research, what does the user physically do? How does the user go about doing it?

- ☐ Refreshes page several times.

- ☐ Shops around to compare prices.

The Feels quadrant is the user’s emotional state, often represented as an adjective plus a short sentence for context. Ask yourself: what worries the user? What does the user get excited about? How does the user feel about the experience?

- ☐ Impatient: pages load too slowly
- ☐ Confused: too many contradictory prices
- ☐ Worried: they are doing something wrong

The users are complex humans. It is natural (and extremely beneficial) to see juxtaposition between quadrants. One will also encounter inconsistencies — for example, seemingly positive actions but negative quotes or emotions coming from the same user. This is when empathy maps become treasure maps that can uncover nuggets of understanding about the user. It is the job of a design thinker to investigate the cause of the conflict and resolve it.

Some of these quadrants may seem ambiguous or overlapping — for example, it may be difficult to distinguish between Thinks and Feels. Do not focus too much on being precise: if an item may fit into multiple quadrants, just pick one. The 4 quadrants exist only to push our knowledge about users and to ensure we don’t leave out any important dimension. (If one doesn’t have anything to put into a certain quadrant, it’s a strong signal that one needs more user research before proceeding in the design process.)