

Three Examples of Empathy

Would you like to deepen your capacity for empathy?

Then watch these three short video clips and ask God to help you imitate what you see.

As you watch each clip, continually ask yourself, “What is this person feeling?” Discerning others’ emotions is often the first step to understanding their struggles, thoughts, and needs, and then responding with relevant, compassionate action.

In addition, pay attention to how the people in each of these clips model the seven elements of EMPATHY, which we looked in detail in last week’s post.

- **E**nlist all of your faculties (time, ears, eyes, imagination)
- **M**ove in physically, verbally, and emotionally
- **P**ray for discernment
- **A**sk caring questions
- **T**hink deliberately
- **H**elp in meaningful ways
- **Y**ield your convenience, pride, and resources

Young Thai Man <https://youtu.be/632CHpeHYZE>

Debrief

What emotions did you observe in the various people in this clip? Did you see the shame, loneliness, hopelessness, sadness, skepticism, frustration and suspicion in the people the young man encountered? Did you see his kindness, concern, gentleness, patience, hope and joy ... and how his actions infused others with similar feelings? That’s the fruit of empathy.

How did he live out the key elements of EMPATHY (Enlist your faculties, Move in, Pray, Ask, Think, Help, Yield)? Which of these elements would you like to imitate in your life today? Pray that God would help you to do so.

Two Warring Women https://www.wingclips.com/system/movie-clips/stepmom/have-us-both/images/stepmom-movie-clip-screenshot-have-us-both_large.png

This clip is from **Stepmom**. Jackie (played by Susan Sarandon) is divorced and dying of cancer. Isabel (played by Julia Roberts) has married Jackie’s former husband. The two women have fought constantly over Jackie’s children through most of the movie. But in this scene near the end of the movie, their relationship is transformed as they finally show empathy for one another.

Debrief

What emotions did you observe in Jackie? In Isabel?

How did each of them live out the key elements of EMPATHY (Enlist your faculties, Move in, Pray, Ask, Think, Help, Yield)? Which of these elements would you like to imitate in your life today? Pray that God would help you to do so.

One More Person https://www.wingclips.com/system/movie-clips/schindlers-list/one-more-person/images/schindlers-list-movie-clip-screenshot-one-more-person_large.jpg

This clip is from **Schindler's List**. Oskar Schindler (played by Liam Neeson) was a German businessman who employed Jews during World War II to profit from their misfortune. Toward the end of the war his heart changed and he used his money to bribe Nazis to allow him to save 1,100 of his workers from execution. During his final parting with these workers, he realizes that he could have help many others if he had acted earlier. As you watch this scene, note how empathy is flowing in both directions.

Debrief

What emotions did you observe in Oskar? Why did he feel that way? What emotions did you observe in the workers? Why did they feel that way?

How did Oskar fail to live out the key elements of EMPATHY prior to this scene? (Enlist your faculties, Move in, Pray, Ask, Think, Help, Yield)? How did he begin to live them out now? How did the Jewish workers live them out?

What behavior did you see in this scene that you would like to imitate in your life today? Pray that God would help you to do so.

As we discussed in last week's post, God has wired you to experience and show empathy. I hope these clips have inspired you to develop and exercise this precious gift, so that you can obey one of the most relationship-changing commands in Scripture,

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God (Eph. 5:1-2).

– Ken Sande

Reflection Questions

If you'd like to continue developing your capacity to show empathy toward others, I encourage you to review the posts in our Movie Blog section asking, asking yourself these two questions.

- What are the people in this clip feeling? Why?
- How are people living out the key elements of EMPATHY (Enlist your faculties, Move in, Pray, Ask, Think, Help, Yield)? Which of these elements would you like to imitate in your life today?
- Then pray that God would help you to do so.

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