

**Welcome, please grab a pen and paper and
draw a better table than this**



↓ ↓ ↓

THE HUMAN

‘STUFF’ MADE EASIER
LEADING WITH EMPATHY

Presented by

ED KIRWAN
CEO & FOUNDER



What's the most important thing happening in your life right now?

- Professionally the changing landscape of post-16 curriculum offer
- Dad's cancer treatment
- Well the answer shouldn't be related to work
- Leading my school through its next stage of development.

LAWYERS

- Alcoholism
- Improving myself in my life & job
- Advisory Away Day
- Waiting for a son to call and say he has burnt himself cooking pasta while watching World Cup...
- Xmas is coming
- Family
- Survival
- Parents not well
- Advisory away day
- Finding a partner
- Planning permission
- Family

HEADTEACHERS

- Son applying for Masters in USA
- Navigating the busy lives of my two teenagers
- Seeing my daughters on Tuesday night
- Embarking on next stage house reno project
- Settling back in the UK after 5 years in Hong Kong
- Catching up with old friends
- Changing job after 13 years - both kids have just left home...
- Being in a happy supportive relationship
- Buying a boat to sail the seas
- Moving house- exchanged on Friday!

C-SUITE LEADERS

- New job
- Preparing to move back to California
- Spending intentional, quality time with family
- 2023 planning!
- Trying to move in to a new house
- Becoming
- Getting personal life in order.
- Being authentic.
- Family
- Mum flying from abroad to see me.
- My wife's struggle with cancer
- Supporting my mum after my dad died
- Finding growth and happiness in my relationship with my partner
- Setting up new business
- Career in transition

A man with short dark hair and glasses, wearing a red and black jacket, stands on a green soccer field. He is looking to his right and holding a black jacket. The background features a modern building with green accents, stadium lights, and a large mountain under a bright sky. The word "CHANGE" is overlaid in large white letters across the center of the image.

CHANGE

A group of runners is captured in motion on a dirt path through a dense forest. The runners are wearing various athletic gear, including blue and red shirts. The scene is filled with tall trees and lush green grass, creating a natural and serene atmosphere. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

**THE SKILL TO NAVIGATE
CHANGE BETTER**

3 years of asking this question

How empathetic are
YOU at work?

77.7%

How empathetic are
OTHERS to you at
work?

66.7%

How empathetic is the
WORLD right now?

44.6%

-11%

-33.1%

We ultimately **see ourselves as more empathetic and understanding than the people in our lives AS WELL AS the collective world around us.**

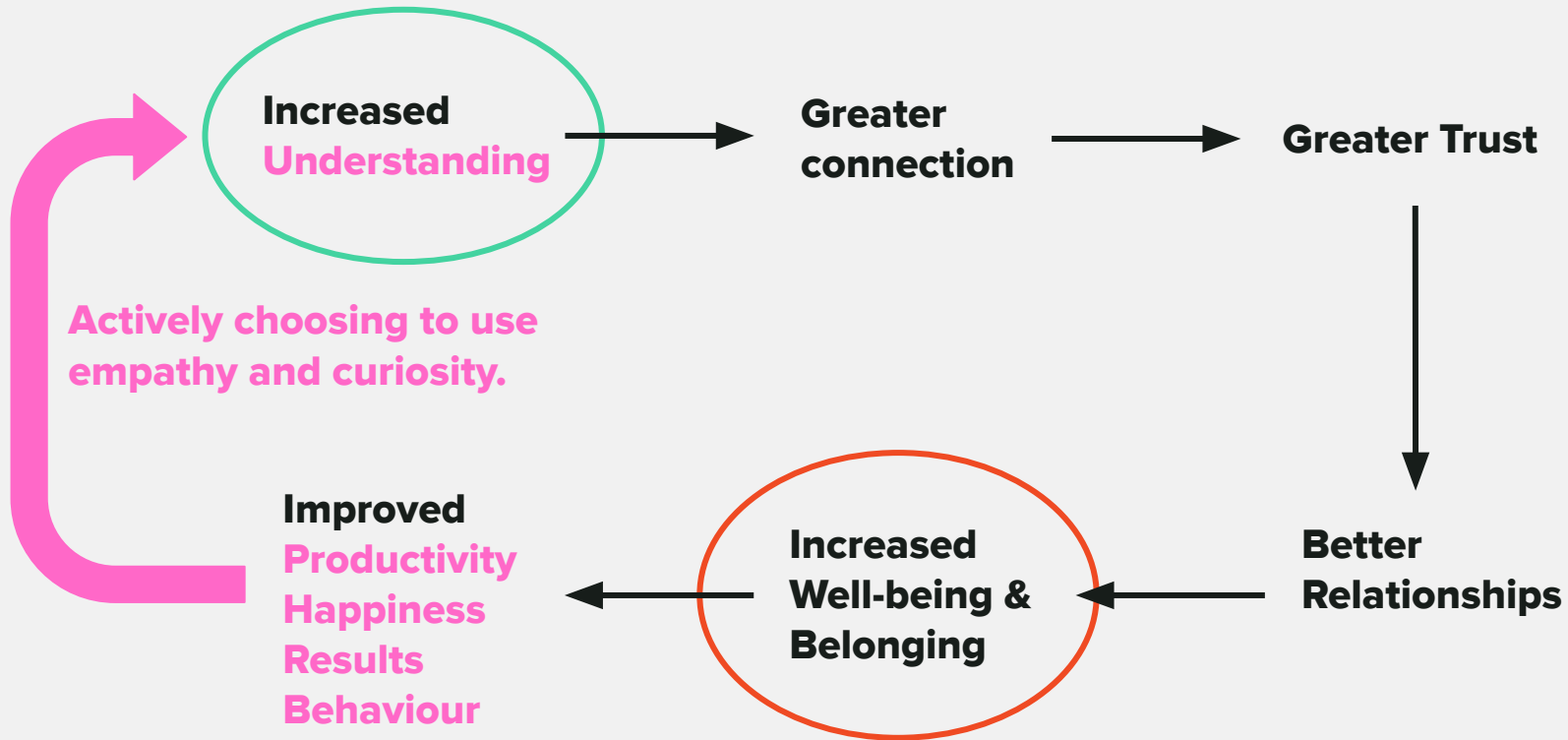
1251 pieces of data across Legal, healthcare, education, tourism, consultancy, filmmaking and broadcasting industries

**We do not
feel seen,
heard or
understood.**



What do you wish more people understood about you at work?

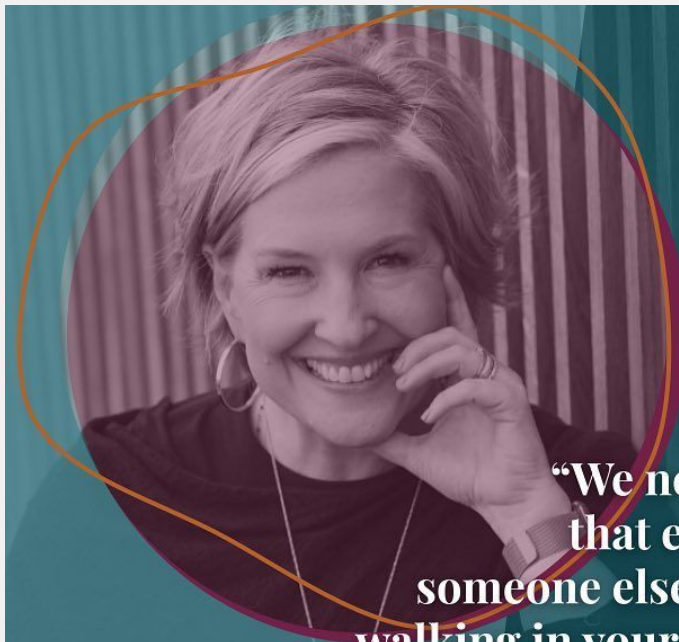
- The broad sector offer with Creative Industries and the potential of a exciting and rewarding career.
- That I'm an individual with a family, friends and outside responsibilities and enjoyments not just a headteacher
- Just how challenging school life can be trying to support all learners.
- While outcomes are important, providing a rich, solid, value based foundation is more important for children in the modern world.



EMPATHY

The skill to **understand** another and the ability to **create space** for someone to reveal their authentic self whilst **reserving judgement**.





“We need to dispel the myth that empathy is ‘walking in someone else’s shoes.’ Rather than walking in your shoes, I need to learn how to listen to the story you tell about what it’s like in your shoes and believe you even when it doesn’t match my experiences.”

- BRENE BROWN

**LEADERSHIP
DOESN'T HAVE TO
BE COMPLICATED**

**LEADERSHIP
REQUIRES NUANCE**

Preventative



Connects and **nurtures** a shared culture (and saves time)



Vitamin and **Painkiller**

Reconnects and **repairs** culture (and saves time)



Resolution



Empathy is the skill to build all of this



BELONGING

RELATIONSHIPS

CONNECTION & TRUST

SEEN + HEARD = UNDERSTOOD

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCES

CULTURE AND BELIEFS

HOME LIFE

Empathy is the skill to make sense of all of this



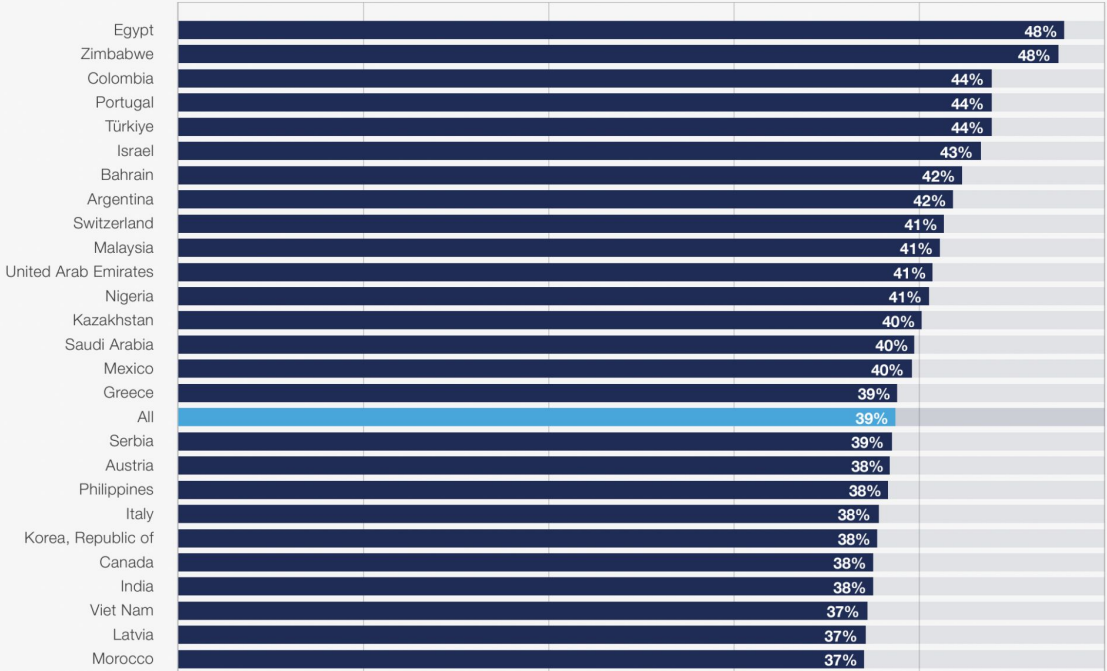
EMPATHY
IS NOT JUST A NICE TO
HAVE.
THE WORLD NEEDS IT NOW.

The Future of Jobs Report 2025

FIGURE 3.2

Disruption to skills 2025-2030, by economy

Share of workers' core skills that will change in the next five years



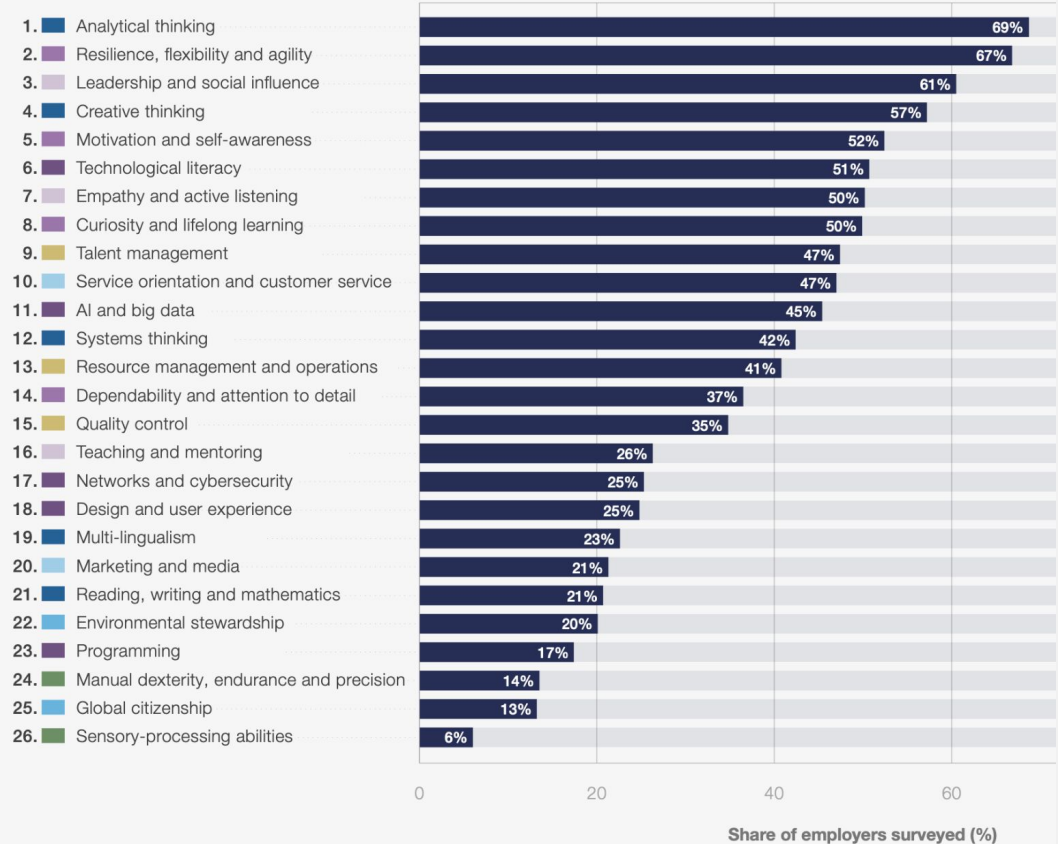
**33% OF
WORKER'S
CORE SKILLS IN
THE UK WILL
NEED TO
CHANGE IN
THE NEXT 5
YEARS**

Skills rooted in human interaction – including **empathy** and active listening, and sensory processing abilities – and manual dexterity, endurance and precision, **currently show no substitution** potential due to their physical and **deeply human components**.

FIGURE 3.3

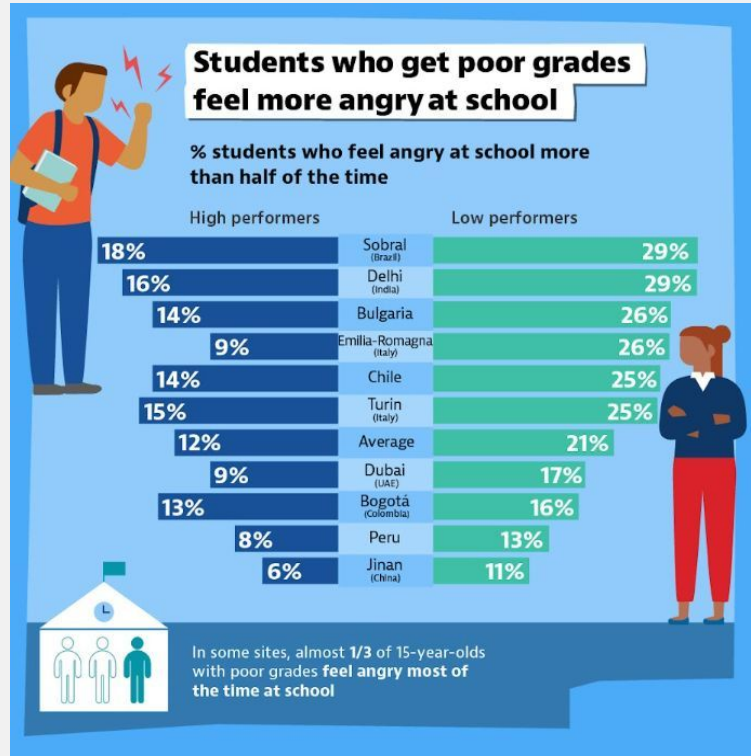
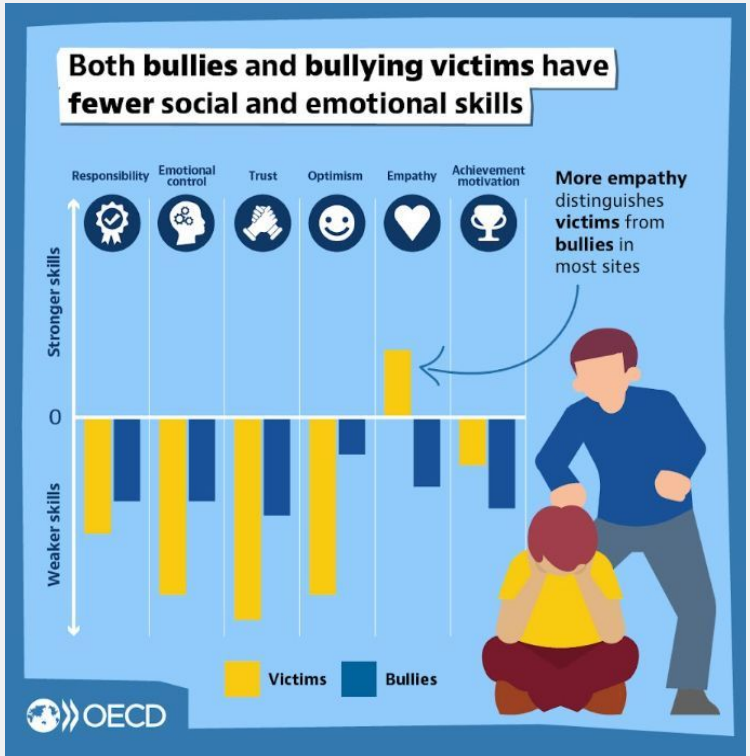
Core skills in 2025

Share of employers who consider the stated skills to be core skills for their workforce.



Nurturing Social and Emotional Learning Across the Globe

Findings from the OECD Survey on Social and Emotional Skills 2023



[Access here](#)



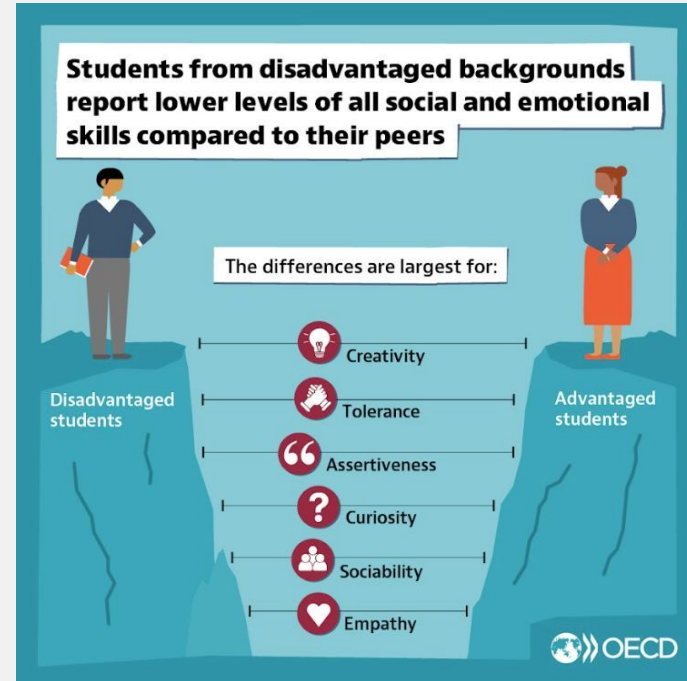
Social and emotional skills are important predictors of key life outcomes

Type of outcomes		Self-control	Self-efficacy	Social problem-solving	Empathy	Assertiveness	Co-operation
Teachability	Teachability	++++	++++	++++	++++	++++	++++
Academic	Academic performance	++++	++++				
	Academic attainment	++	0				0
Labour market	Employment	+++	+++				
	Earnings	++	++++				
	Job performance	+++			++	+++	++
	Subjective outcomes	++	+++				
Quality of life	Life satisfaction	+	++		++	++	++
	Health	++	+++	++++			
Societal	Civic engagement				++++		
	Prevention of antisocial behaviour	++++	++	++++	++		

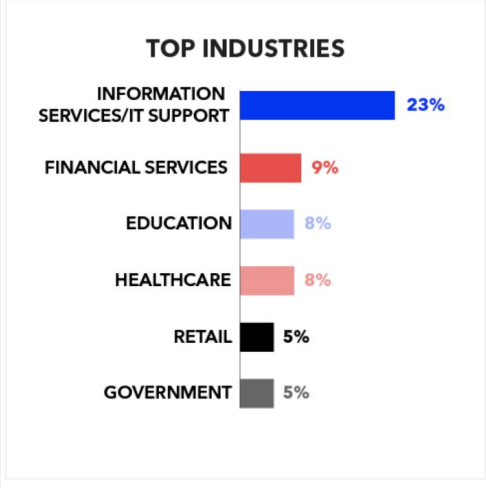
Very high (++++) to *Limited (+)* = Over 7 to 1 primary studies showing a positive relationship; *Null (0)* = most studies indicating null findings ; *Empty cell* = mixed findings – similar number of articles showing diverging relationships, or no articles identified.

Social and Emotional Skills for Better Lives

Findings from the OECD Survey on Social and Emotional Skills 2023

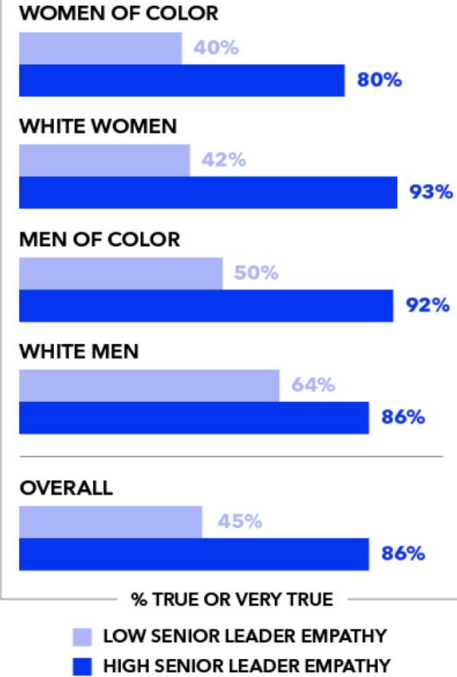


[Access here](#)

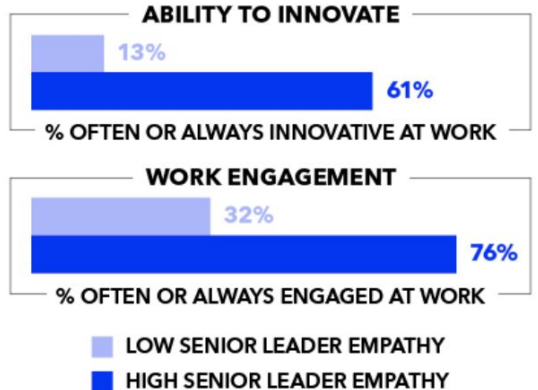


Senior Leader Empathy Drives Feelings of Being Respected and Valued

I FEEL MY LIFE CIRCUMSTANCES ARE RESPECTED AND VALUED BY MY COMPANY



How Senior Leader Empathy Impacts Employee Innovation and Engagement



SOURCE: Catalyst.org (889 employees across USA - [report link](#))

THE RESEARCH

- Empathy **increases creativity** in students ([Cambridge University, 2021](#))
- Increases prosocial behaviour and **conflict resolution** - ([Emotion Review, 2019](#))
- Greater empathy **reduces cyber-bullying** in teenagers ([Florida Atlantic University, 2022](#))
- Must have **leadership** skill of the workplace ([Catalyst, 2021](#))
- A life-long skill that aids **positive well-being** ([American Psychological Association, 2008](#))
- 98% of people can improve our empathy skills at any point in our lives - **empathy can be taught** ([Krznaric, 2014](#))
- Empathy is both intrinsically and extrinsically valuable in virtue of the pleasant experiences we share with other- it's vital for great relationships ([Monika Betzler, 2019](#))
- Film and stories are effective ways of developing empathy ([Journal of Education and learning, 2012](#))



OUR RESEARCH

We have carried out our own research in 2022 and 2023 which has been conducted in collaboration with the University of Cambridge. Investigating how effective our Empathy Programme is and the impact on students and school communities.

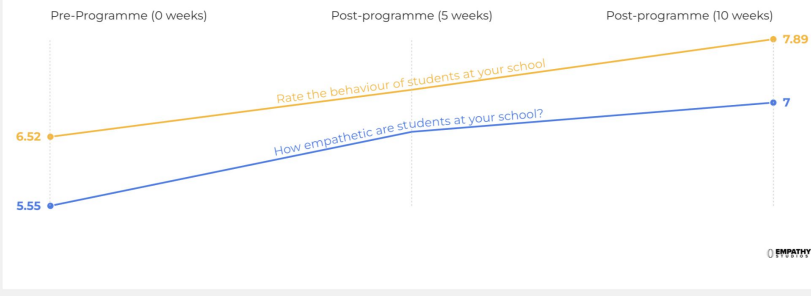
In 2022 we showed:

- **Increased emotional empathy** levels
- Increased self-compassion and **heightened self-esteem**.
- **A greater desire to care for and connect** with others (even from different countries).

In 2023 (report released August 2024)

- Empathy **can be taught** (across cultures and countries)
- Teachers reported **increased empathy** levels.
- Teachers reported **improved behaviour**.

We asked teachers to rate empathy levels & behaviour at their school out of 10
Responses indicate that, on average, both empathy and behaviour levels of students improved



Scores shown represent the average of all teacher respondents: 31 respondents in Survey 1 (pre-programme), 17 in Survey 2 (post-programme - 5 weeks), 9 in Survey 3 (post-programme - 10 weeks).



OUR LATEST RESEARCH

3

KEY TRENDS

Teachers reported:

Improved behaviour



Increased emotional literacy
and affective empathy



Increased curiosity levels
and global citizenship



3

DRIVERS OF SUCCESS

Start by engaging & entertaining
students



Increase the amount & diversity
of students' experiences

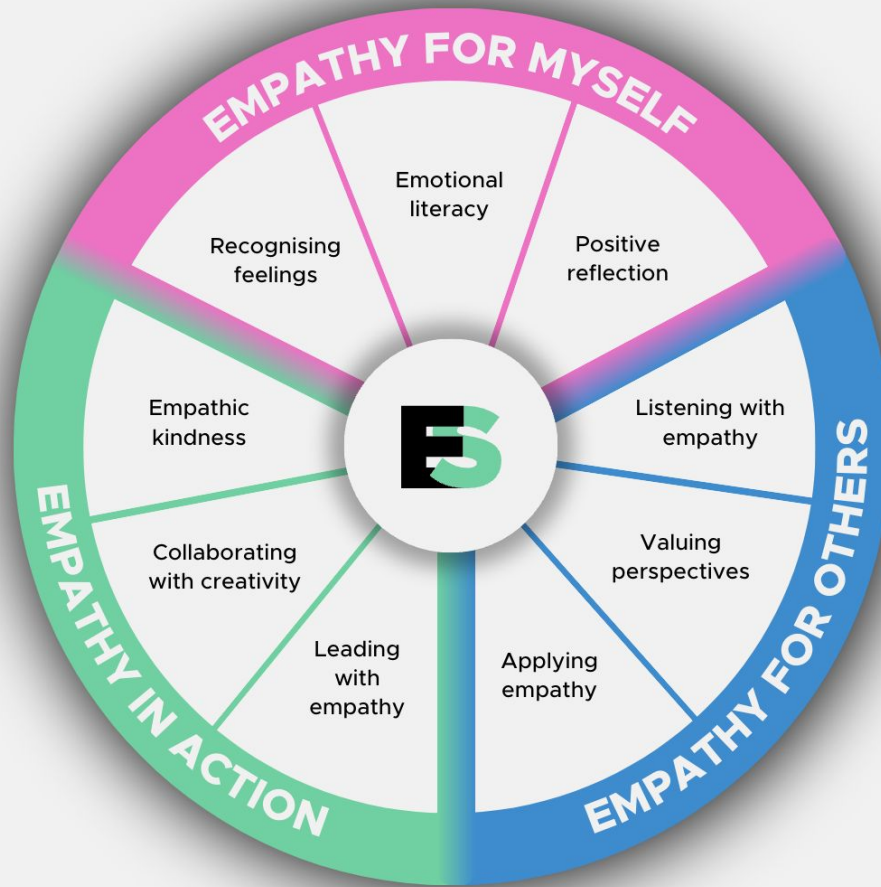


For even better results, ensure a
sustained intervention



EMPATHY FOR MYSELF

- Understanding your own story.
- Recognising & accepting bias & privilege.
- Emotional regulation.
- Being vulnerable.



EMPATHY IN ACTION

- Using empathy in every-day life.
- Navigating change & difficult conversations.
- Embedding the behaviour change and creative outlet empathy can unlock.

EMPATHY FOR OTHERS

- Understanding others' stories.
- Developing skills to understand other perspectives.
- Learning techniques to develop stronger interpersonal relations.



Talk



Action

**Mission,
Values,
Ideas.**

?



**Leading
and
creative a
culture of
empathy**



Increase the **amount**
and **diversity** of the
experiences we have.



MONI'S STORY

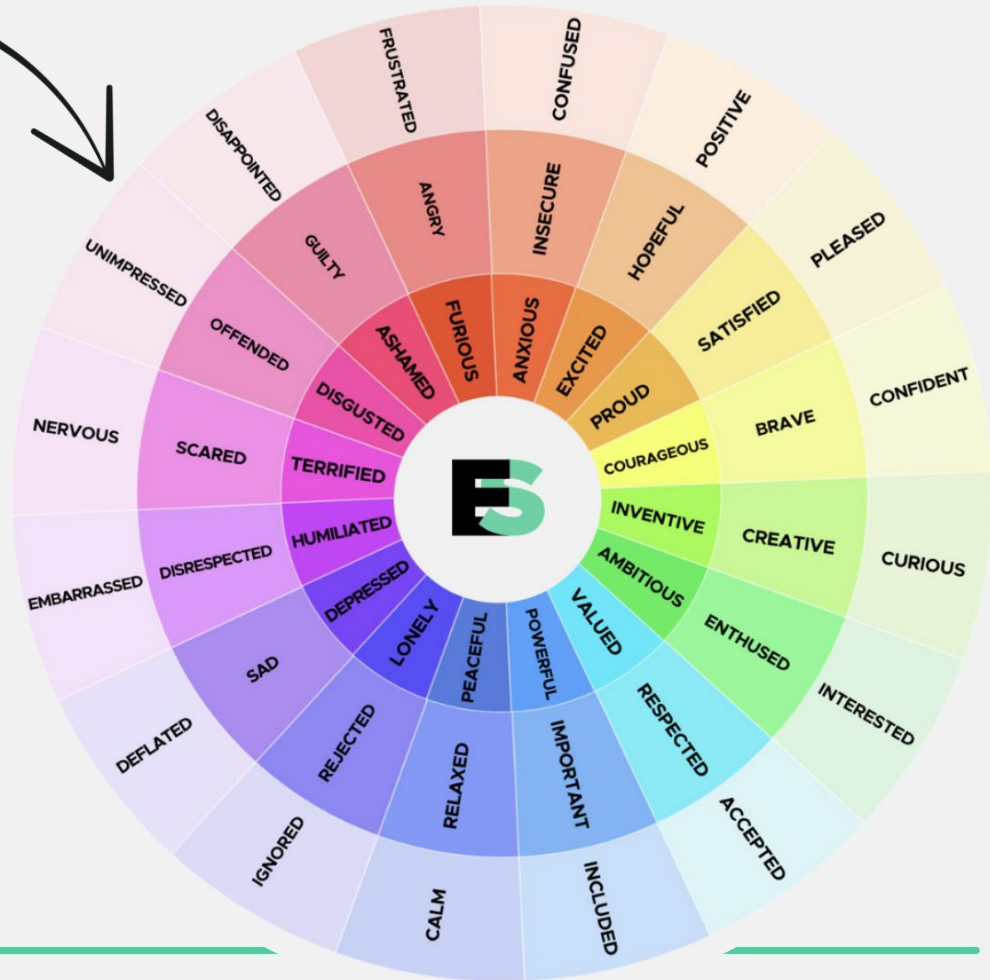
Assembly
(14-16 Years)



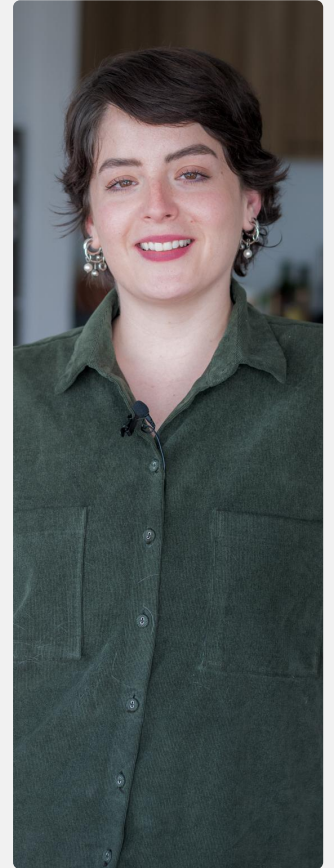
CHECK IN

Again...

Please spend a moment 'checking in' with yourself by recognising what your thoughts, feelings and emotions are at this moment.



- **If comfortable to do so - share what you wrote down for your pre-film and post-film check in.**
 - Why did it change?
 - What specific moment of the film caused that shift for you?
- **Moni's 'spark' is visible both in the tone of her voice and in her excitement when she speaks about music. Where do you notice and see your own 'spark' light up? As a leader, how are you helping others to 'show off' their spark too?**
- **What did you learn from Moni?**
- **What do you and Moni have in common?**
- **What do you and Moni not have in common?**
- **If Moni's story is important to you, why?**
- **Has Moni's film brought up anything in yourself that you'd like to share with your own group.**
- **What makes the experiences of the person next to you different from your own?**



A person wearing a wide-brimmed hat, a light-colored long-sleeved shirt, dark trousers, and tall rubber boots stands in a field of young plants. The person is seen from behind, looking towards a line of trees in the background. The field is filled with various green plants, some with reddish stems, and the ground is covered with straw or mulch. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

THE SPACE IN BETWEEN

LEADING WITH EMPATHY CHECKLIST

- 👉 **Are you actually seeking to understand?** Be curious, be vulnerable yourself, reserve judgement.
- 👉 **What is your environment?** There's a reason people pay more to watch a film in a cinema.
- 👉 **What action are you taking?** Sometimes that's the decision to not take action too and realise a need for more understanding first.
- 👉 **Acknowledge that you have bias** - You're human. So is the other person. Bias is a part of your genetic makeup but noticing it is vital to actually empathising.
- 👉 **You deserve to be understood as well** - Empathy is interdependent - it connects in every direction.

1

EMPATHY WEEK 2025
10-14th March

THE WORLD'S LARGEST EMPATHY FESTIVAL IS BACK IN 2025

(AND FREE FOR ALL SCHOOLS) ✨

REGISTER NOW at www.empathy-week.com



2

EMPATHY WEEK WEDNESDAY 5TH FEB 2025
6:30PM - 9:00PM

Hosted at:


PLEASE JOIN US TO CELEBRATE THE **EMPATHY WEEK** **SHOWCASE 2025**

AN EVENING OF STORYTELLING, FILM & EMPATHY



WITH GUEST SPEAKER JO BERRY



3



4





TO TRULY CHANGE THE
WORLD YOU FIRST HAVE TO
UNDERSTAND
THE PEOPLE IN IT

SCAN ME



bit.ly/joinourempathymission

LINKS:
EMPATHY WEEK
FREE FILM TRIAL
TALK SLIDES