

# Module 7 - Lesson 3 (Export2)

Fri, 9/10 5:51PM 13:27

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

empathy, cognitive empathy, stranger, empathetic, family, team, understand, struggle, technical, motivated, affective empathy, gesture, work, cashier, life, stuck, connection, caring, exercise, small

---

Increasing empathy isn't easy, and it takes years to master it takes change, which means embracing discomfort, something that is hard for anybody, and it's hard for me as well to grow. I need to embrace him at the end, the change and discomfort that come along with it. Growth isn't all rainbows and unicorns as they say, but I embody it. Anyway. throughout my years in cybersecurity and in leadership, I discovered that in real life, most technical people struggle with empathy, because they struggle with human connection. They don't like small talk, chit chat, or speaking in general. And these employees tend to keep to themselves and focus their attention on their work, or on their computer, you rarely find them in the break room socialising. The irony is, when I played World of Warcraft, we socialised in the game, way more than we did in real life. So it's very interesting scenario for me.

In order to be empathetic, both in business and a personal life and just in general, connecting with other people, is essential in work. It allows us to better communicate with our colleagues, our clients, in our managers. In our personal life, we can communicate better with our friends, our family, and anyone we interact with on a routine basis, even total strangers,

an act of kindness.

A couple of decades ago, I was in a pretty tough spot, I just gotten a divorce. And I was quite depressed, confused, and really not in a good mental space. I was in a line at a grocery store. This is my local schnucks. It's what is called in St. Louis area. And my state of mind must have been written like all over my face. Because when I was checking out the cashier, she looked me in the eye and said, How are you doing? And this wasn't said with like a small talk kind of way it was, it was said, in a way that was out of concern, I guess she could tell that something was wrong with me. At first, I was taking a little bit aback. And I thought, hmm, had this stranger shown me compassion, and caring in a time of need, I quickly realised that she was showing me empathy, that she was trying to connect with me, she could tell that something was wrong, and had the wherewithal to ask me if I was okay, that moment, and demonstration of kindness, even though it's small, and like two decades ago, has always stuck with me and highlighted the importance of human connection. Rog going through life together, why not empathy, have some empathy towards our fellow humans? I'm not really sure why. But what I think about what that cashier did, it gets me a little bit emotional. Because I felt alone. depressed, disconnected. And yet, that simple gesture, made me realise I wasn't alone and strangers cared. And I think we underestimate our daily lives. How much something simple, like a smile, or a sincere question of caring, like the cashier, ask how much that means to somebody else.

small gestures

like I was referring to, when we talk about the human connection, something small, that smile, that asking how somebody is can make a massive difference. We don't have to do something miraculously, we could just show that we're listening. We're present. We understand who we're speaking with, and we appreciate them. And that can make a big difference, because sometimes it could just be a friendly smile, or a simple question to make a meaningful connection. I've been a fan of Tony Robbins for many, many years since right since I graduated college, I read unlimited power. And one of the things that always stuck with me, was one of Tony's defining stories, as he tells it, he grew up poor and his family really had no money to buy like Thanksgiving dinner. They didn't have any money at all. So they couldn't like, you know, have a decent Thanksgiving together. His father as he described, it was like the stubborn and proud man, but he was bitter that he couldn't afford to give his family a nice turkey dinner. for Thanksgiving and he was so bitter and embarrassed by this that he was obstinate about not accepting help from anyone one year though, all this changed a stranger knew that Robbins and his family were struggling. So the stranger stopped by the house with a big bag of groceries. Robin Robbins remembers that his father was refusing the help from the stranger and tried to push the stranger away. But the stranger was persistent. The stranger stuck his foot in the door. So the door could be held open and told Robbins his father, he said, It's okay, sir. Your family deserves some food. I know you're struggling. It was it that it was at this point that Robbins realised strangers actually care. And this was a defining moment for him. He discovered that after this moment, he wanted to help other people as well. In the grand scheme of things you may think, you know, buying a family a bag of groceries for Thanksgiving is somewhat of a small gesture. But if you think back to like Tony Robbins, in this scenario, this gesture, changed the trajectory of Robins life. So empathy, compassion, and the human connection, all have the power to do that. two categories of empathy. Did you know that there's two broad categories of empathy, most people I talked to don't really understand or think about two types of empathy, to only think about one type of empathy, which is typically the emotional one. However, there's two different categories of empathy. One of those is affective empathy. The other one is cognitive empathy. With affective empathy, we can actually feel what somebody else is feeling. with cognitive empathy, we're able to put ourselves in somebody else's shoes, and take their perspective, the most effective leader has high cognitive empathy, and low affective empathy. Tips and Tricks develop a cognitive empathy. We want to be cognitively empathetic, we want to have that cognitive cognitive empathy. We want to be able to understand the feelings of our clients, and our colleagues in our family and our friends. So we can communicate effectively, effectively with them, and help solve problems teaching your technical staff. Cognitive empathy is tough, but there are a few things you can try.

The first one is motivation. If you think back on the steps, we've gone over in the secure methodology. One of the steps was mindset to teach yourself and your team how to be more empathetic, it's beneficial that you understand what motivates you and your team. For instance, why are you pursuing a career in this area in the first place, is it to help protect sensitive data, if it's to help protect sensitive data, reminding yourself for this may help you with cognitive empathy. If you and your team understand your why which we went over in the seven levels, deep exercise, and how you fit into the big picture, you will more likely see yourselves as a unit working together, rather than individuals. Again, inclusion versus division. If we are motivated to accomplish something, we're more likely to take the steps to figure it out. I talked about Doug quite a bit. And Doug was and probably still is only motivated by being the smartest person in the room. And for Doug, that trumps everything, and moded motivated all of his behaviour. The other thing to consider is acknowledgement. If you want your technical staff to be more empathetic, it's beneficial if you acknowledge them and show appreciation for what they have accomplished. A lot of highly technical staff members feel underappreciated. They feel undervalued because it takes a lot of effort to understand highly technical things. But then when nobody else understands what you're referring to a lot of highly technical people feel undervalued. So if you recognise the hard work they've gone through, your staff will feel more connected and will more likely be able to improve their cognitive empathy. You also want to acknowledge your staff similarities, struggles and perspectives. The other thing to consider is if your team hasn't practised empathy in the past, learning, it can be a challenge. So as somebody is learning, empathy, a little acknowledgement can go a long way. This is sort of like that baby that is first learning to walk. We give it encouragement. So it gets up again and continues trying to walk until it finally masters walking. Another tip is to adapt your communication. We've talked about this a lot in the communication module. But as a leader, it's important that you're cognitively empathetic with your technical team. And just as just as empathetic with them as you expect them to be with your clients. In this case, it's important you have some

empathy with the difficulties in your industry. Many technical staff and we sort of talked about struggle, admitting when they don't understand something or admitting when something is tough. They have a hard time or difficult time asking for help if your technical team doesn't know how long something will take, because they don't really understand the problem. How can leadership as example set deadlines. So some awareness of this allows you to have better empathy, and it's important to have that understanding of the struggle and adapt your communication with your team? So instead of asking questions, you can ask or try statements. We talked about this before. But generally you want to avoid, why questions or why statements because they typically put people on the defensive. So you can ask something like, tell me what you know, or tell me your plan to figure this out. If there isn't a plan, you know, your team needs time to actually develop a plan. This will help you come up with an adequate timeline, and maybe give your team some extra time, which will cause them less stress. And as a leader, we should never assume something we should ever assume. A technical task is very easy to accomplish, and it should be done quickly. We should make sure we are empathetic to the struggles of our team, the perspective they have and ask the right questions to get some insight into where they're coming from. This seems simple, but it's not very easy. key takeaways. Most technical people struggle with empathy because they struggle with the human connection in order to be empathetic in business and in our personal lives. connecting with others is essential. Sometimes a small gesture, like a friendly smile, or a simple question is all it takes to have a meaningful connection to teach yourself and your team how to be more empathetic. It helps to understand what motivates you and your team. If you know your why, you will more than likely accomplish something and go through those obstacles, especially when it gets difficult, highly technical people have worked very hard learning the technical skills, and they often feel under appreciated. So So instead of appreciation, which is one of the steps in the secure methodology will help with empathy as well. What's next. In the next lesson, I'll show you one of the most powerful activities you and your team can do. to cultivate gratitude. This exercise will also help you let go of tension, improve your mindset, and strengthen your empathy. It's a really awesome and powerful exercise, so I can't wait to share it with you. Let's move on to lesson four.