**Empathy and Blame Video Discussion Guides**

**Overview:** This activity is designed to prompt participants to think about the definition of empathy and behaviors that block empathy. Participants will also reflect on their own empathetic behavior and experiences of empathy.

**Begin By Playing the** [**Empathy Video**](https://youtu.be/1Evwgu369Jw) **(3 minutes):**

Notes:

* Empathy fuels connection, sympathy drives disconnection

***A few notes:***

***Individuals who enroll in professional school (medical/dental) often score lower on empathy assessments as they progress through those programs of student. In medical school, that assessment declines the most between the 2nd and 3rd year because of the increase in clinical exposure in the 3rd year.***

***At least one study (Savieto et al, 2019) indicates a positive correlation between self-compassion and empathy.***

* 4 qualities of empath
  + Perspective taking – seeing the world as others see it
  + Non-judgmental
  + Understanding another’s feelings
  + Communicating the understanding
* Empathy is feeling with people
* Empathy is a choice, a vulnerable choice
* Rarely if ever, does an empathic response begin with “At Least” – the Silver Lining

**Begin processing the video by asking participants to respond to the following polling questions (3 minutes):**

* How often do you take time to see the world or an event through the eyes of another?
  + Almost Always
  + Frequently
  + Sometimes
  + Rarely
* Choose the best answer regarding your relationship to judgement.
  + Hello, my name is Amy and I’m a judger. I can tell determine a person’s poor life choices in 30 seconds or less.
  + I judge others, but I’m hardest on myself
  + I try to refrain from judging other people. I know the circumstances and experiences of others can be very different than mine.
* How often do you notice and communicate about the feelings of others?
  + I pretty much live in my own world. Someone has to be in the middle of a breakdown or a fit of rage before I notice anything.
  + I often notice the feelings of others but I don’t want to intrude or invade the privacy of others.
  + I am pretty in tune to the emotions of people around me. I try to reach out when I notice someone is uncomfortable, worried, confused, or afraid.

**Continue Discussion by asking the following questions (4 minutes):**

* Who deserves empathy in the clinic/classroom?
* Why is it important to practice empathy in the clinic/classroom?

**Play the** [**Blame Video**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAULTfEbe6M) **(Runtime 3.5 minutes):**

Notes:

* Damn you, Steve. The blame chain.
* I’d rather it be my fault than no one’s fault. Because it gives you some semblance of control.
* Blame is simply the discharging of discomfort and pain.
* Blame has an inverse relationship with accountability.
* Accountability is a vulnerable process.
* People who blame a lot lack the tenacity and grit to actually hold people accountable. Why?
* Because they expend all of our energy blaming.
* Blame blocks empathy

**Process the video using the following discussion questions (5 mintues):**

* When are you most likely to express blame?
* What does the blame chain look like to you? Who is you blame “go to”?
* Have you thought about how blame blocks accountability and what makes us think blame is a tool of accountability?

**End by giving empathy and blame homework:**

Reflect on the following two questions:

* Identify a person who you think lives their values in the clinic/classroom? What specific behaviors has that person engaged in that let you know they are living their values?
* Think about times when you have seen individuals blame others in the clinic/classroom. What did that feel like? As the person receiving the anger and pain or as the person witnessing the discomfort and pain?