

# EMPATHY BUDDY INSTRUCTIONS by Kate Raffin 2016

**Scheduling:** A suggested length of time is 20 mins to an hour long, on a regular basis eg once a week / fortnight.

**How to do it:**

- You call each other at a pre-arranged time, check how much time you have available.
- Decide who will receive empathy first. Person A or B (2 mins)

- **Offering empathy:** Take 1/2 the time each eg on a 40 min call person A speaks for approx 16 mins and your empathy buddy, person B is totally present for you for that time – reflecting back feelings and needs or whatever empathy you request – it may be just to be heard in silence and have the needs reflected back at the end OR it may be to ask for a natural flow of reflection – eg when a natural pause is felt the listener offers empathy guesses of feelings and needs.

“Are you feeling ...(eg upset, anxious) because you are needing ...(eg support and assurance)?”

Person A continues to speak and then more reflection from B.

- **Reflecting back what worked:** It can be an added learning edge to request to hear, as listener, what you said or reflected back that worked for the speaker – or did not work. This feedback can be guided by you. eg some days you may just want to hear what did work and celebrate that.
- I recommend being as specific as possible with your feedback eg “when you said ....., I felt ....”
- The intention of the empathy buddying is to **practice and learn**. You may not be able to give each other all the empathy you are looking for in the time available. This would be a bonus.
- Then swap over.

This practice is worth doing for what ever time you have available.

SIX minutes of focused listening is SIX minutes of quality empathy.