

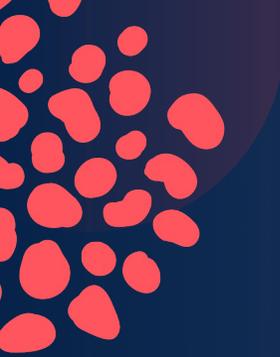
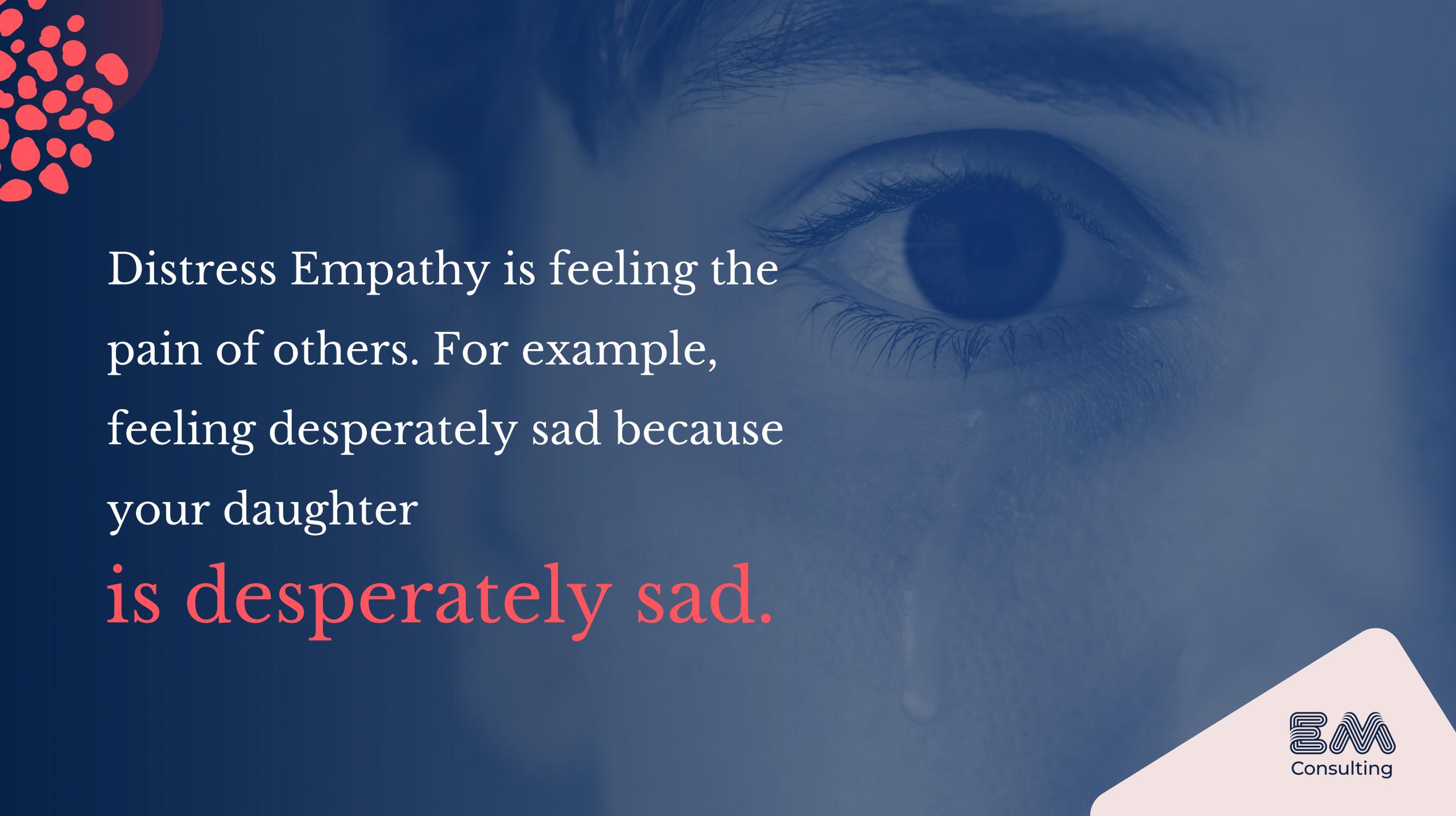
# EMPATHY 101





# Distress Empathy vs. Perspective Taking Empathy

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Distress Empathy is feeling the pain of others. For example, feeling desperately sad because your daughter **is desperately sad.**



This isn't necessarily  
desirable - it can feel  
intolerable, so we might  
try to 'fix' our daughter,  
so we can feel better too.



Distress empathy is the driver for many unhelpful responses like:  
**‘you should have known better’.**

is correlated to **high levels of stress**, and for health professionals, to **burn out**.





# Perspective-Taking Empathy

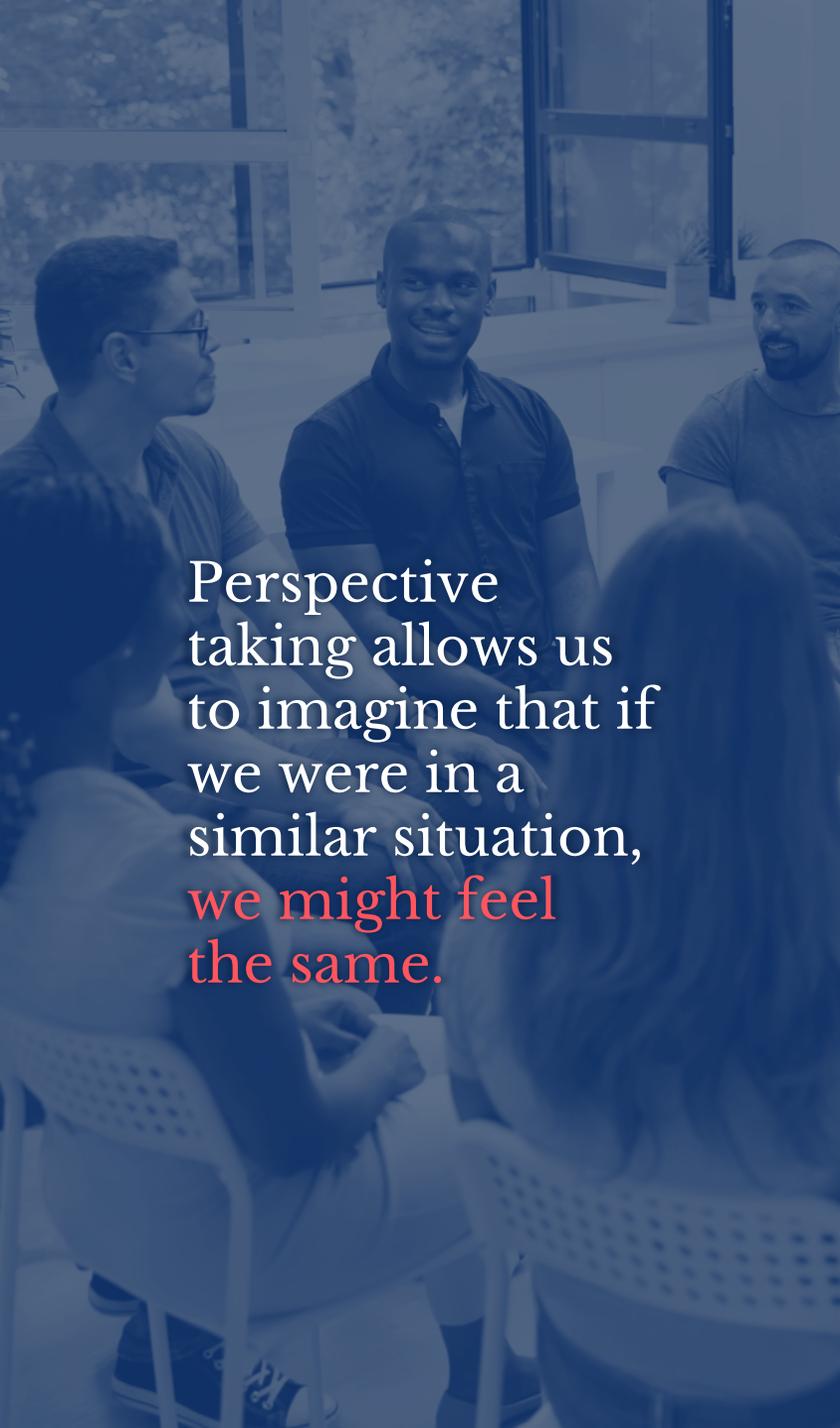
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# Cognitive Empathy

‘perspective taking’

mentally getting into another person’s world, to **understand** what they might be feeling.



Perspective taking allows us to imagine that if we were in a similar situation, **we might feel the same.**



It helps us **'get'** what another person might be going through, and lose our negative judgements



Even if they are **very different from us.**

It is **not** associated with stress or burnout, and in fact has been shown to increase health professionals job satisfaction.

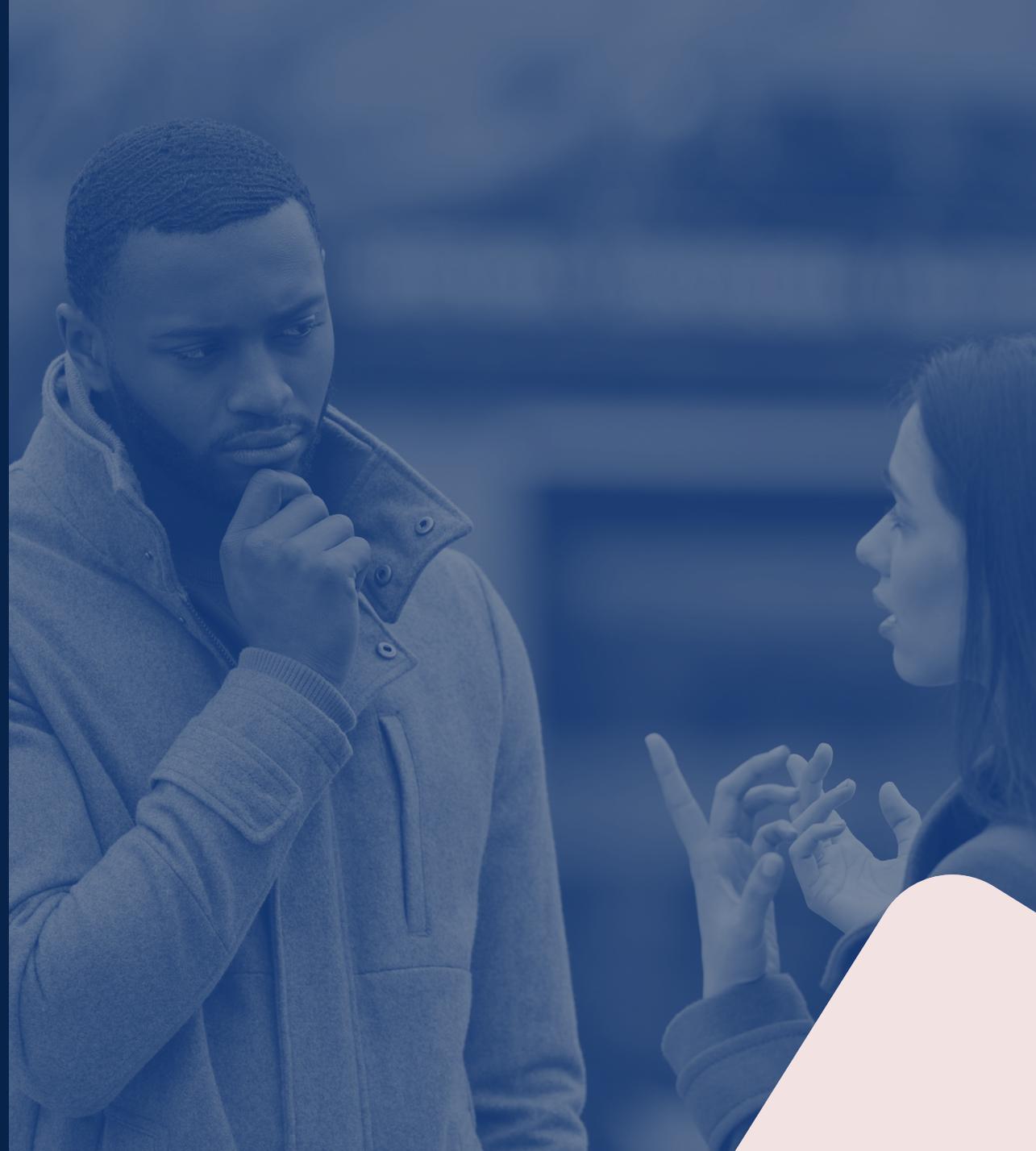
Interactions with others are **more rewarding** when we feel connected to them this way.





Empathy is not just a feeling we have...empathy must be **communicated** for others to feel it.

If we feel empathy for someone yet cannot communicate this to them, *we aren't able to provide the care and comfort we would like.*



This is why helping professionals spend their lives practicing empathic *communication* skills, such as:

Empathic  
Reflection



Affirming  
Strengths



Open Ended  
Questions



Acknowledging  
Feelings



Empathy is the opposite of bias, judgment and stigma





Communicating empathy  
sometimes comes easily to  
us, sometimes it takes  
some practice.



It is harder to feel and communicate empathy when:

- We have judgments about the person or their actions
- We have strong opinions on what the other person should do
- We are angry or fearful
- When others are angry at us
- When we are tired, or in a hurry

There is no 'script' for conveying empathy, because we are all different in terms of what 'feels' like caring.

Also, the context of the interaction, and the relationship is different in every situation.



We can enhance our ability to communicate empathy by avoiding:

~~Advice~~

~~Distraction~~

~~Judgment~~

~~Over-relating ('me too')~~

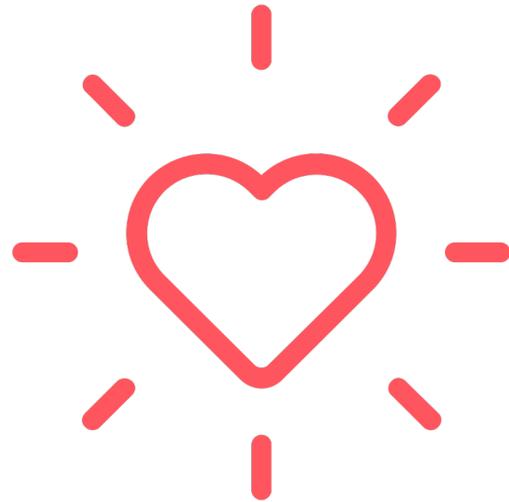
When empathy is  
effectively shared with  
another, it is  
**POWERFUL.**





Empathy helps us relax  
& increases our  
tolerance for the  
suffering we are going  
through.

Empathy improves health outcomes for both physical conditions and emotional ones.



It helps us make healthy changes in our lives, & also supports us in sharing empathy with others... in an empathy cascade.



For more useful resources  
please visit:



[www.emorrisonconsulting.com](http://www.emorrisonconsulting.com)