Growing Communication Skill with the Empathy Toy

Andrew Annett @akannett
Sue Johnston @itsunderstood
PLEASE NOTE
SLIDES ≠ PRESENTATION

• These slides are designed to be viewed in conjunction with human beings talking and interacting with you.

• They may make little sense to you if you were not at the live session.
CUSTOMARY “WHO ARE WE?” SLIDE

ANDREW ANNETT

Current role
Agile coach + trainer
Professional training
Business/Coaching
IT roots
Software development
Came to agile via
Agile Coach Camp
Inspired by
Flow

SUE JOHNSTON

Agile coach + trainer
Professional training
Psychology/Business
UX, user docs + training
Effective communication

Required cute animal image
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What is empathy?

It’s the ability to step into the shoes of another person, aiming to understand their feelings and perspectives, and use that understanding to guide our actions.

- Roman Krznaric
Types of empathy

• Emotional/Affective
  • Responding with an appropriate emotion to another’s mental state
  • We sense their emotion and take action in response

• Somatic
  • Literally feeling another’s emotion
  • A somatic or physical connection/reaction

• Cognitive
  • Purposeful understanding of another’s reasoning or mental state + model
  • A capacity for “perspective-taking”
Types of empathy

- Emotional/Affective
  - Literally feeling another’s emotion
  - A somatic or physical connection

- Compassionate
  - Responding with an appropriate emotion to another’s mental states
  - We feel their emotion and take action in response

- Cognitive
  - Purposeful understanding of another’s reasoning or mental state
  - A capacity for “perspective-taking”
Why do we care?

Work is **social**
Group success depends on **shared understanding**
Perspective-taking

"I'm glad we all agree then"

"oh..."

"ah ha!"

"I'm glad we all agree then"

Images from Jonathan Rasmusson
Agile Principle #6

The most efficient and effective method of conveying information to and within a development team is face-to-face conversation.
How can we grow skill?

Clairvoyance is not widespread...

We create cognitive empathy by paying attention.
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“Collaborating with peers, coaching direct reports, understanding where your leaders are coming from - all of it is transformed by listening.”

– Indi Young
"WHAT'S IN A NAME? THAT WHICH WE CALL A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME WOULD SMELL AS SWEET."

Language matters!
Visualization helps
Metaphor is a way of thought more than a way with words
Metaphor enables us to navigate the unknown.
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Let's play!
21st century skills... taught with toys.

#EmpathyToy

21OneToys
The Empathy Toy

Educator’s guidebook for K-12

Learning Foundations edition;
Designed for students and teachers across K-12
elements, this guidebook explains how practicing the skill of empathy helps to improve in areas
of all other universal learning skills.

Ages 6-99

21Toys

#EmpathyToy
The Empathy Toy

...a blindfolded puzzle game that can only be solved when players learn to understand each other.
“[One of] six new technologies that are shaping the classrooms of the future.”
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Basic Gameplay

Builder (Blindfolded)
Builds!

Guide (Blindfolded)
Has a built pattern!

Observers (Takes notes)
Can’t speak!
Basic Gameplay

3 *15 minute iterations:
  10 for building,
  5 for debrief at your table

Rotate players

#EmpathyToy21Toys
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Let’s thank Ilana with a photo...
Thanks Ilana Ben-Ari!
Founder and designer @21Toys
References


Young, Indi, *Practical Empathy*, Rosenfeld Media, 2015


Thanks for your attention empathy!

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