

The Lecture Series With Reb T (Biweekly): **“The Recipe For Empathy: Feel The Real Deal”**

Sources from Sefaria (unless noted otherwise); Lookout for the *Points To Carryover (PTC's)*

All Shirum on shiurenjoyment.com/shiurim/shiurim-reb-t/ -Shoutout to Jake W.!

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-For the refuah sheleimah of Livia Margalit bat Ilana Devorah and for anyone sick or needing a yeshuah or refuah

What does it really mean to have empathy for another person? How can we really “Feel” for other people?

The dictionary defines empathy as “the ability to understand and share the feelings of another” whereas sympathy as “feelings of pity and sorrow for someone else's misfortune; understanding between people; common feeling.” We are going to incorporate some ideas of sympathy but more actually focus on real empathy.

skillsyouneed.com defines three types of empathy:

1. Cognitive Empathy

Cognitive empathy, also known as ‘perspective-taking’ is basically being able to put yourself into someone else’s place, and see their perspective.

...It enables you to put yourself in someone else’s shoes, but without necessarily engaging with their emotions.

2. Emotional Empathy

Emotional empathy is when you quite literally feel the other person’s emotions alongside them, as if you had ‘caught’ the emotions—also known as ‘personal distress’ or ‘emotional contagion’. This is closer to the usual understanding of the word ‘empathy’, but more emotional.

->can be both Good and Bad

- **Emotional empathy is good** because it means that we can readily understand and feel other people’s emotions. This is vital for those in caring professions, such as doctors and nurses, to be able to respond to their patients appropriately. It also means that we can respond to friends and others when they are distressed.
- Emotional empathy is bad, because it is possible to become overwhelmed by those emotions, and therefore unable to respond. This is known as *empathy overload*

—>Good self-control helps doctors and nurses to avoid possible burnout from empathising too much. There is a danger, however, that they can become ‘hardened’ and not respond appropriately.

3. Compassionate Empathy

Compassionate empathy is what we usually understand by empathy: feeling someone’s pain, and taking action to help.

—>compassion is about feeling concern for someone, but with an additional move towards action to mitigate the problem.

Compassionate empathy is the type of empathy that is usually most appropriate.

As a general rule, people who want or need your empathy usually need you to understand and sympathise with what they are going through and, crucially, either take, or help them to take, action to resolve the problem

Some people suggest that there are two other forms of empathy, *somatic* and *spiritual*.

- **Somatic empathy** is defined as feeling someone else’s pain physically.

For example, if you see someone hurt, you too might feel physical pain. Anecdotally, identical twins sometimes report that they know when the other has been hurt, which might be an example of somatic empathy. You can see an echo of somatic empathy, for example, if someone is hit in the stomach with a ball during a sports game, and one or two of the spectators may double over as if they too had been hit.

- **Spiritual empathy** is defined as a direct connection with a ‘higher being’ or consciousness.

It is the same as ‘enlightenment’ in the eastern philosophical tradition, and considered to be achievable through meditation.

chabad.org explains that the Talmud rules that "A man's wife is as his own body." Rabbi Aryeh Levine (d. 1969), known as "the Tzaddik of Jerusalem," exemplified this ideal. On one occasion, when accompanying his wife to a Jerusalem clinic, he explained to the physician: "Doctor, my wife's foot is hurting us."

[Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 63:1](#)

A person must be particularly careful not to hurt his wife's feelings and not to cause her pain with [harsh] words, for a woman is sensitive by nature, and even a slight hurt will bring tears to her eyes

PTC. Real empathy is feeling the true pain of another, especially one’s spouse, within your own very being.

Rabbi Sacks tells a wonderful story on rabbisacks.org ([adapted from William Ury, The Power of a Positive No, Hodder Mobius, 2007, 77-80.](#))

A young American, living in Japan to study aikido, was sitting one afternoon in a train in the suburbs of Tokyo. The carriage was half empty. There were some mothers with children, and elderly people going shopping.

Then at one of the stations, the doors opened, and a man staggered into the carriage, shouting, drunk, dirty, and aggressive. He started cursing the people, and lunged at a woman holding a baby. The blow hit her and sent her into the lap of an elderly couple. They jumped up and ran to the other end of the carriage. This angered the drunk, who went after them, grabbing a metal pole and trying to wrench it out of its socket. It was a dangerous situation, and the young student readied himself for a fight.

Before he could do so, however, a small, elderly man in his seventies, dressed in a kimono, shouted "Hey" to the drunk in a friendly manner. "Come here and talk to me." The drunk came over, as if in a trance. "Why should I talk to you?" he said. "What have you been drinking?" asked the old man. "Sake," he said, "and it's none of your business!"

"Oh that's wonderful," said the old man. "You see, I love sake too. Every night, me and my wife (she's 76, you know), we warm up a little bottle of sake and take it out into the garden and we sit on an old wooden bench. We watch the sun go down, and we look to see how our persimmon tree is doing. My great-grandfather planted that tree ..."

As he continued talking, gradually the drunk's face began to soften and his fists slowly unclenched. "Yes," he said, "I love persimmons too." "And I'm sure," said the old man, smiling, "you have a wonderful wife."

"No," replied the drunk. "My wife died." Gently, he began to sob. "I don't got no wife. I don't got no home. I don't got no job. I'm so ashamed of myself." Tears rolled down his cheeks.

As the train arrived at the student's stop and he was leaving the train, he heard the old man sighing sympathetically, "My, my. This is a difficult predicament indeed. Sit down here and tell me about it." In the last glimpse he saw of them, the drunk was sitting with his head in the old man's lap. The man was softly stroking his hair.

What he had sought to achieve by muscle, the old man had achieved with kind words.

A story like this illustrates the power of empathy, of seeing the world through someone else's eyes, entering into their feelings, and of acting in such a way as to let them know that they are understood, that they are heard, that they matter.[2]

PTC. The power of a kind word, a kind outlook, a kind internal feeling can dissuade all the anger and all the madness in the world.

If only we would learn how to harness such great power of empathy, the world could be and would be a much warmer and more loving place.

Let's look at how the Torah explains to us this concept:

The torah itself leads us to have empathy by caring for others, that society might let slip through the crack otherwise:

[Shemos 3:2](#)

An angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire from within the thorn bush, and behold, the thorn bush was burning with fire, but the thorn bush was not being consumed.

Rashi:

from within the thorn bush: But not from any other tree, because of “I am with him in distress” ([Ps. 91:15](#)). — [from Tanchuma, Shemoth 14]

[Sefer HaIkkarim, Maamar 4 45:6](#)

And the meaning of the covenant is that He would be with him in his distress and sympathize with him in his trouble; even as the whole body shares in the pain of one of its limbs, as our Rabbis say: “The Shekinah suffers in the suffering of Israel, as is said: ‘I will be with him in trouble,’ ” just as a person, suffers when his friend with whom he has a covenant is in trouble.

[Rabbeinu Bahya, Devarim 21:23:1](#)

Another verse testifying to this empathy of G’d with the pain of the Jewish people is found in Isaiah 63,9 בכל צרתם לו צר, “in all its troubles, G’d is troubled.”... We have to understand the words קללת אלו-הים in a similar fashion, describing G’d’s empathy with this particular individual’s fate.

[Devarim 9:18-19](#)

18 And I fell down before the Lord as before, forty days and forty nights; I neither ate bread nor drank water, because of all your sins you had committed, by doing evil in the eyes of the Lord to anger Him

19 For I was frightened of the wrath and the fury that the Lord was angry with you to destroy you, and the Lord hearkened to me also at that time.

20 And with Aaron, the Lord was very furious, to destroy him; so I prayed also for Aaron at that time

PTC. As Hashem is always with us and our true leaders feel for us, so should we really feel for others, internally, as if we ourselves are in pain and look how to help

[Leviticus 19:34](#)

You will treat the convert who dwells with you just like any other citizen: You will love him like yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Eternal, your Almighty.

[Exodus 22:20](#)

You must not hurt the feelings of an alien resident, nor shall you oppress him by robbing him of his possessions, for you yourselves were once helpless aliens in the land of Egypt.

[Exodus 23:9](#)

You shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the feelings of the stranger, having yourselves been strangers in the land of Egypt.

[Deuteronomy 10:19](#)

Love therefore the unprotected alien as the Almighty loves him; for you were aliens in the land of Egypt, and from this bitter experience you will learn to sympathize with the alien in your land.

[Rabbeinu Bahya, Shemot 22:20:1](#)

The Torah reminds us that we of all people should have empathy for strangers seeing we had been taken advantage of in Egypt because we were strangers.

PTC. We must take care of and feel for those who may “fall through the cracks” in society and around us

[Deuteronomy 10:7](#)

10:18 He brings justice to the orphan and widow, and loves the foreigner, granting him food and clothing.

[Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 29:19](#)

You should be very careful [in the way you treat] orphans and widows, to speak only kindly to them, to treat them respectfully, not to hurt them even with words,⁵⁹ because their souls are very depressed and their spirits are low, even if they are wealthy. Even [regarding] the widow and the orphans of a king, we are warned [in the Torah], for it is said: "Do not mistreat a widow or an orphan."⁶⁰ A covenant was made [with widows and orphans] by Him Whose Word called the world into being, that whenever they cry because of an injustice that was done to them, their [cries] will be answered, for it is said: "For if he cries out to Me I will hear his cry."

[Mishneh Torah, Human Dispositions 6:10](#)

One ought to be especially cautious when dealing with orphans and widows, because they are particularly depressed and low-spirited, even though they may be wealthy. We are warned even with respect to the widow and orphans of a king, for it is written: "You shall not mistreat any widow or orphan" (Exodus 22:21). How should we behave toward them? One should address them with tender words only and be unfailingly courteous with them. One must not cause them pain physically through hard work or emotionally through harsh words. One should take greater care of their property than one's own. Whoever irritates or vexes them, hurts their feelings or tyrannizes over them, or causes them financial loss, violates a prohibition; still more so, if one strikes them or curses them.— — There is no distinction between orphans bereft of either father or mother. Till when are they called orphans in this respect? Till the time when they are in no need of an adult person on whom to depend, who should bring them up and take care of them. When one of them can adequately care for himself like all other grown people, he is no longer considered an orphan.

[Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 34:8](#)

It is forbidden to turn away a poor person, empty handed, even if you give him only a dried fig [a mere pittance], as it is said: "Let not the oppressed turn back in disgrace."²² And if you have nothing to give him, console him with words. It is forbidden to scold a poor person or to raise your voice to him in a shout, because he is brokenhearted and humbled, as it is said: "A heart that is broken and humbled God does not despise."²³ Woe is to him who embarrasses the poor. Rather act towards him like a father, both in [feelings of] compassion and with words, as it is said: "I was a father to the poor."²⁴

PTC. Care for those around us who may lack in what many of us have, whether it be in family, possessions, or goods, as we should try to put ourselves in others' shoes and take care of them through truly feeling for them

[Moed Katan 20b:16](#)

His son came before him, and he rent his garments again in the presence of his son, as an expression of empathy with the his son's pain and grief.

[Daat Zkenim on Exodus 22:26:1](#)

G-d's response is to be understood as follows: "if the borrower in his prayers mentions that you have treated him with consideration, I too will consider your own problems having due regard for the empathy

[Berakhot 6b:14](#)

Rav Pappa said: The primary reward for attending a house of mourning [bei tammaya] is for the silence, which is the optimal manner for those consoling the mourners to express their empathy.

[Rabbeinu Bahya, Bamidbar 11:16:1](#)

G'd meant that Moses was aware that the people in question had demonstrated empathy for the people in Egypt absorbing physical punishment on their own bodies rather than inflicting it on their charges.

[Sforno on Exodus 5:23:1](#)

הַצֵּל לֹא הַצֵּלָה, the overseers of the Israelites who are being beaten for showing empathy with the people.

PTC. Sometimes actions, not words are needed, for real empathy whether it be in outpouring of grief or sitting in shared grief

[Mishneh Torah, Gifts to the Poor 10:4](#)

Rather, one should give cheerfully, with happiness [to do so] and empathy for his plight, as it is said, Did I not weep for the unfortunate? Did I not grieve for the needy?

[Chizkuni, Exodus 22:26:2](#)

An alternate explanation of the line כי חנוך אני...the lender, who had demonstrated empathy by lending the poor borrower his money in the first place...

[Rabbeinu Bahya, Devarim 22:7:5](#)

An investigative/scientific approach: the reason behind the commandment to dispatch the mother bird is to teach us empathy and to encourage us to turn our backs on all forms of cruelty.

[Sforno on Deuteronomy 23:20:1](#)

Not muzzling an ox while he threshes, is a show of understanding for the ox's feelings in helping to provide food for its owner while himself being denied that same food.

->Empathy is not just for people, it should also apply to animals too—halacha says to feed animals first (and I'd say spouse and kids before oneself)

[Sforno on Deuteronomy 22:7:1](#)

of the dispatch of the mother bird the Torah appears to teach us that even the display by us of concern for such totally unclaimed eggs or chicks is rewarded by the Creator with the party showing this empathy

[Akeidat Yitzchak 69:1:6](#)

The commandments concerning treatment of "slaves" who had become such due to having lost their financial independence, is stated here to enlist our empathy.

PTC. Empathy is not only for humans but for animals as well

[Akeidat Yitzchak 94:1:10](#)

experience in Egypt serves two purposes. 1) G'd who became your Master is entitled to order you to do the things that are easy as well as the ones that seem hard on you. 2) Your experience enables you to feel empathy...

[Shenei Luchot HaBerit, Torah Shebikhtav, Vaera, Derekh Chayim 5](#)

The tribe wished to demonstrate its empathy with the rest of the tribes who were suffering, and they did this by way of the names they gave to their children.

[Shenei Luchot HaBerit, Torah Shebikhtav, Ki Teitzei, Torah Ohr 50](#)

The Torah demands that we put aside such petty considerations and display empathy with the pain of such a human being....By having demonstrated this kind of empathy you may feel confident that, should the occasion arise, you too will become the beneficiary of someone else's empathy.

[Kedushat Levi, Numbers, Sh'lach 12](#)

This attribute called רחום, is G'd's ability to attach Himself closely to the "lower" parts of His universe, just as a rich man who displays true empathy for the poor needs to share the poor man's (plight/situation)

[Kol Dodi Dofek, The Covenants of Sinai and Egypt 9](#)

A feeling of empathy is a basic fact in the consciousness of shared Jewish fate. The suffering of one segment of the nation is the lot of the entire community.

[Care of the Critically Ill, A Biography of Greatness 32](#)

Rav Moshe, as we all knew him in times of family crisis, was a most competent, cool-headed individual despite his great empathy and emotional involvement with anyone who was under stress.

PTC. Sometime our positions and our experiences can lend greater value and more understanding with empathy than others around us use your lens of your life and its travels to help understand what others go through

[Flames of Faith 21:39](#)

Netzach, "dominance," and hod, "subservience," or "empathy," are represented by Elijah with the right and left foot respectively....Hod can be viewed as empathy, because empathy is an experience where I entirely accept the needs of the other.

[Marbeh Lesaper on Pesach Haggadah, Magid, Ha Lachma Anya 3:1](#)

One should empathize with the needy person in his misery and speak to him with consolation.

[Kol Dodi Dofek, Job 3](#)

Loving-kindness means empathizing with one's fellow man, identifying with his hurt and feeling responsibility for his fate.

[Redeeming Relevance; Exodus, CHAPTER 3 Exile, Alienation and the Jewish Mission 48](#)

Although Moshe's foreign objectivity benefited the Jewish people, he could not be their leader if he did not empathize with their affliction.

PTC. We need to identify with another person's situation so much so that it resonates as if it were our own g-d forbid

Think of the shunammite woman who made a home for Elisha on his travels:

[Kings II 4](#)

One day Elisha visited Shunem. A wealthy woman lived there, and she urged him to have a meal; and whenever he passed by, he would stop there for a meal. Once she said to her husband, "I am sure it is a holy man of God who comes this way regularly. Let us make a small enclosed upper chamber and place a bed, a table, a chair, and a lampstand there for him, so that he can stop there whenever he comes to us."

PTC. Try to feel for others around us, empathizing with their travels and needs, like the shunammite woman.

Make sure to fully feel the pain of another and be present in the current suffering. Look at the difference between Avraham and his second wife Hagar in relation to the banishment of Ishamel and the subsequent sickness:

[Genesis 21](#)

Sarah saw the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham playing. She said to Abraham, "Cast out that slave-woman and her son, for the son of that slave shall not share in the inheritance with my son Isaac." **The matter distressed Abraham greatly, for it concerned a son of his.** But God said to Abraham, "Do not be distressed over the boy or your slave; whatever Sarah tells you, do as she says, for it is through Isaac that offspring shall be continued for you. As for the son of the slave-woman, I will make a nation of him, too, for he is your seed." Early next morning Abraham took some bread and a skin of water, and gave them to Hagar. He placed them over her shoulder, together with the child, and sent her away. And she wandered about in the wilderness of Beer-sheba. When the water was gone from the skin, **she left the child under one of the bushes, and went and sat down at a distance, a bowshot away; for she thought, "Let me not look on as the child dies."** And sitting thus afar, she burst into tears. God heard the **cry of the boy** (NOT hagar)

[Redeeming Relevance; Genesis 1:21](#)

Finally and perhaps most significantly, G-d responds to Avraham's feelings for Yishmael and consoles him, telling him that Yishmael will flourish even after his expulsion.

PTC. Be there, present, in the moment when someone needs you and feel their pain, even if it is something you have to so, make sure to allow the pain in

Make sure not to discredit, neglect, or put down another's pain or suffering. As in the case of Chana's husband elkanah: (Samuel 1:1):

וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ אֱלִקָנָה אִישׁוּהָ חַנָּה לָמָּה תִבְכִּי וְלָמָּה לֹא תֹאכְלִי וְלָמָּה יָרַע לְבַבְךָ הַלּוֹא אֲנִכִּי טוֹב לָךְ מֵעֲשָׂרָה בָנִים:

Her husband Elkanah said to her, "Hannah, why are you crying and why aren't you eating? Why are you so sad? Am I not more devoted to you than ten sons?"

Chana was in real pain over the inability to have children. It wasn't about how good a husband he was or not. It was the lack of children that she sorely missed, he may have missed the point here and we should learn from that.

PTC. Make sure to understand why a person is in pain and what the situation really means; Don't miss the point or the opportunity to feel for another's plight

*Don't have **misplaced empathy** though:*

(I Samuel 15:9), “And Saul and the nation **spared Agag**,”

the Midrash says (Tanhuma, Parashat Mezora,1; Yalkut Shimoni, I Samuel, Chapter 121.):
R’ Elazar said: **One who becomes compassionate to the cruel will ultimately become cruel to the compassionate**, as it is written, “And Saul and the nation spared Agag and the best sheep and cattle.”, and it is written (Ibid. 22:19) “And Nov, the city of priests, he smote with the edge of a sword.” (also the one night he was alive allowed him with his wife to produce human many generations later)

PTC. Don’t have misplaced empathy for those who don’t deserve it and should not get it because that is not empathy, but cruelty then and for the future

Let’s look at how sympathy ties in as well:

[The Antiquities of the Jews 4:8:30](#)

It is not lawful to pass by any beast that is in distress, when in a storm it is fallen down in the mire, but to endeavor to preserve it, as having a sympathy with it in its pain.

[Avot D’Rabbi Natan 14:5](#)

JOSE came forward and SAID: A GOOD NEIGHBOUR,¹⁴Implies sympathy and goodwill. ‘A good impulse’, etc., is omitted in Aboth 2:13 . a good impulse and a good wife.

[Duties of the Heart, Second Treatise on Examination 5:59](#)

He on his part protects them, treats them with sympathy, judges their causes righteously, governs them for their common good, so that their interests shall not suffer and no enemy prevail against them.

[Rashi on Deuteronomy 32:11:1](#)

He directed them with compassion and sympathy, like the eagle who is compassionate with his children.

[Radak on Genesis 12:3:1](#)

The blessing’s effect is that people displaying sympathy and love for Jews will be recompensed by G’d.

PTC. Make sure to feel for everyone around you, including other nations and creatures, not just our own “kind”

[Guide for the Perplexed, Part 2 15:2](#)

He who desires to be just must not show himself hostile to his opponent; he must have sympathy with him, and readily acknowledge any truth contained in his words;

[Guide for the Perplexed, Part 3 39:1](#)

When you examine these precepts you will clearly see the use of every one of them: they teach us to have sympathy with the poor and infirm, to assist the needy in various ways; not to hurt the feelings...

[Rabbeinu Bahya, Shemot 22:20:1](#)

He means that if you have bread you can give the poor do this; if you do not have what to share at least display some sympathy for the suffering creatures so that they will regain hope and confidence.

[Shenei Luchot HaBerit, Torah Shebikhtav, Mishpatim, Ner Mitzvah 34](#)

Commandment 80 prohibits display of sympathy for a poor man during litigation. The Torah says: "Do not favour a poor man in his cause" .

PTC. Make sure to have proper sympathy and empathy for another, not distorting justice as a result

[Shenei Luchot HaBerit, Torah Shebikhtav, Eikev, Torah Ohr 36](#)

The only way to overcome such signs of pride is to train oneself to present a face radiating sympathy at all times.

[Abraham Cohen Footnotes to the English Translation of Masechet Berakhot 6b:11](#)

Silent sympathy is better than profuse words of consolation.

PTC. Sometimes just being there for someone, without even saying anything, is greater than anything else we could do i.e. at Shivah house, just be there don't need to speak

[Jastrow, ערב I](#)

Keth. 17^a לעולם תהא דעתו של אדם מעי עם הבריות at all times man's disposition should be sweet in associating with men, i.e. sympathize with their feelings; Treat. Der. Er. ch. VI.

[Ein Yaakov \(Glick Edition\), Taanit 1:44](#)

And he who afflicts himself in sympathy with the community, will live to see the relief of the community.

[Legends of the Jews 4:8:6](#)

Like his teacher (Eliyahu), Elisha was always ready to help the poor and needy, as witness his sympathy with the widow of one of the sons of the prophets, and the effective aid he extended to her.

PTC. Be at one with the pulse of the community, if something wrong or sad is happening, commiserate and feel for it

[Introductions to the Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot, Summary of Perek IX 4](#)

Some blessings are recited as an expression of sympathy, for example: The true Judge...

[Between Yesterday and Tomorrow, II; A New World in the Making? 10:17](#)

In spite of the many good intentions and sympathy and understanding for the Jewish cause, Jews are systematically forgotten.

Which reminds me of the mishns in [Pirkei Avot in 2:3](#):

הוּוּ זְהִירוּ בְּרִשּׁוֹתַי, שְׂאִין מְקַרְבִּין לוֹ לְאָדָם אֶלָּא לְצַרְדָּה עֲצָמוֹ. נִרְאִין כְּאוֹהֲבִין בְּשַׁעַת הַנְּאֻטָּה, וְאִין עוֹמְדִין לוֹ לְאָדָם בְּשַׁעַת דְּהִקּוֹ:

Be careful [in your dealings] with the ruling authorities for they do not befriend a person except for their own needs; they seem like friends when it is to their own interest, but they do not stand by a man in the hour of his distress.

PTC. Very often we must remember that we have to stand on our own and care for our own because others will forget us

[Likutei Moharan 220:1:2](#)

That is, if someone has a problem, God forbid, and he goes to one of them and tells him about it, such that he arouses the other's sympathy, this can bring about his rescue.

[Major Themes in Modern Philosophies of Judaism, CHAPTER 1; Hermann Cohen's Religion of Reason 2:18](#)

...Sympathy is the original form of man's love for his fellow human being...

[Major Themes in Modern Philosophies of Judaism, CHAPTER 1; Hermann Cohen's Religion of Reason 2:19](#)

"The sympathy with the poor which God awakens within us through His commandments, becomes for us the understandable ground for the meaning of God's love.

[Shulchan Arukh, Yoreh De'ah 249:3](#)

Charity should be given with a friendly countenance, with joy, and with a good heart; the giver should, sympathize with the poor man, and should speak words of comfort to him.

[Mivchar HaPeninim 44:25](#)

It is preferable to sympathize with the unhappy, than to rejoice with the mirthful.

[Berachot 28a](#)

As Rabban Gamliel would proclaim and say: Any student whose inside, his thoughts and feelings, are not like his outside, i.e., his conduct and his character traits are lacking, will not enter the study hall.

[Shulchan Shel Arba 2:8](#)

One who is "outward" is a hypocrite; their outward behavior does not match their true inner feelings.

->We need to truly feel for others on the outside and inside, not just playing/paying “face value” or pretending to care, but caring through our very essence and being

PTC. Actions must come with true feelings; don't do something to commiserate with others while having a grudge about it, have a smile inside and out—inner and outer should reflect the happiness to help and feel for others

[Yevamot 65b:9](#)

(took out the words “and my master is old” for the sake of shalom bayit) G-d adjusted Sarah's words in order to spare Abraham hurt feelings that might lead Abraham and Sarah to quarrel

[Mishneh Torah, Sales 14:12](#)

Just as there is a law against defrauding in buying and selling, so there is a law against wronging a person by means of words, as it is written: "You shall not wrong each other, but you shall fear your God; I am the Lord" (Leviticus 25:17). This refers to wounding the feelings of another by words.

PTC. Think about words you say or shouldn't say to spouse family or others so as not to hurt their feelings, make sure to properly accord feeling for a person especially if they are going through something

[Rashi on Joshua 14:7:1](#)

As long as he was with the other spies, he hid his true feelings, because he wanted them to think that he agreed with them. Otherwise, he was afraid that they would harm him.

PTC. Empathize with those who deserve it, but in warranted situations like danger, on face value can pretend to have different type of empathy

[Guide for the Perplexed, Part 3 39:1](#)

When you examine these precepts you will clearly see the use of every one of them: they teach us to have sympathy with the poor and infirm, to assist the needy in various ways; not to hurt the feelings of those who are in want, and not to vex those who are in a helpless condition [viz., the widow, the orphan, and the like]. The purpose of the laws concerning the portions which are to be given to the poor is likewise obvious; the reason of the laws concerning the heave-offerings and the tithe is distinctly stated: "for he hath no portion and inheritance with thee" (Deut. 14:29). You certainly know that the Levites had no portion, because their whole tribe was to be exclusively engaged in the service of God and the study of the Law. ...In the Law we meet frequently with the phrase, "the Levite, the stranger, and the orphan and the widow"; for the Levite is reckoned among the poor because he had no property. The second tithe was commanded to be spent on food in Jerusalem: in this way the owner was compelled to give part of it away as charity...

[Tur HaAroch, Deuteronomy 22:6:1](#)

The purpose of the legislation in both instances is to ensure that our hearts will not become insensitive to animal's feelings, as once they have become such, the next step is insensitivity to our fellow...humans' feelings.

[Rabbeinu Bahya, Bereshit 3:21:3](#)

Even though they had sinned, this did not mean that G-d no longer related to them with feelings of fondness. He, personally, engaged in the act of dressing them.

PTC. Even if someone sins, even if someone makes us angry, we should still have sympathy for their plight and for their needs and not hold things against them

[Rabbeinu Bahya, Bereshit 19:17:4](#)

Irith, Lot's wife, had feelings of compassion for her married daughters whom she had left behind, and this is what caused her to turn around. She wanted to see if these daughters now followed them.

PTC. Even if it causes us some "pain" or discomfort, even if it is difficult, we should try to put our selves in someone else's shoes and see their viewpoint, understand their pain with sympathy and proper empathy

Reminds me of [Pirkei Avot 2:4](#), where Hillel says

ואל תדין את חברך עד שתגיע למקומו

Do not judge your fellow man until you have reached his place.

As well as [Pirkei Avot 4:17](#)

רבי שמעון בן אלקעזר אומר, אל תרצה את חברך בשעת כעסו, ואל תנחמונו בשעה שמתו מטל לפניו, ואל תשא לו בשעת נדרו, ואל תשתדל לראותו בשעת קלקלתו:

Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar said: Do not try to appease your friend during his hour of anger; Nor comfort him at the hour while his dead still lies before him; Nor question him at the hour of his vow; Nor strive to see him in the hour of his disgrace.

PTC. Sometimes it's all about understanding timing and place. When someone loses someone, just be there for them, comfort them by being there, understand proper tact

[Akeidat Yitzchak 93:1:7](#)

Only when we do not abuse feelings of mercy, pity etc. can we in turn expect the Almighty to employ His sense of pity, mercy etc. when we are in need of it

PTC. If have have proper empathy and sympathy for others, Hashem will for us

[Sforno on Deuteronomy 24:17:1](#)

You should go out of your way to argue on their behalf so as to compensate for their feelings of insecurity in facing adversaries. [the verse is directed at the judges.

[Or HaChaim on Genesis 48:16:4](#)

This sentiment is expressed in Jeremiah 31,19 when the prophet exclaims that every time G'd merely hears the name of Ephrayim mentioned He recalls him with feelings of mercy and has pity on his plight.

[Or HaChaim on Exodus 19:4:3](#)

Of course, it requires a great deal of emotional fortitude to always relate to G'd from feelings of love...G'd wanted to encourage such feelings in the Jewish people by reminding them that He had already demonstrated that He treated them as a father treats his son.

[Or HaChaim on Exodus 21:4:6](#)

The meaning of that verse is that people who harboured envy or jealousy in their hearts will experience that their bones decay and rot;

[Kedushat Levi, Exodus, Vaera 13](#)

Another approach to the last paragraph. it is the duty of every Jew to serve his Creator at all times from feelings of awe and fear and to look at fellow Jews with a benevolent attitude,

PTC. Feelings of empathy are like an emotional muscle, the more we work it and flex it, the stronger it will be

[Likutei Moharan, Part II 98:1:2](#)

Even if it seems to him that he has no feelings, when he speaks many inspirational words, supplications, entreaties, and the like—the very act of speaking is the concept of revealing and rousing his heart

[Nineteen Letters 11](#)

Your duties towards humanity are more intelligible to you simply because you have only to think of yourself, your own views and feelings, in order to recognize and sympathize with the demands and needs of your fellow-man. Could you put yourself as thoroughly in the place of other beings, could you even understand the conditions of the union and the combined activity of your own body and soul, you would find it as easy to comprehend Chukkim as Mishpatim. They ask of you to regard all beings as God's possessions; destroy none; abuse none; waste nothing; employ all things wisely; the kinds and species of plants and animals are God's order; mingle them not. All creatures are servants in the household of creation.

[Towards Historic Judaism, VIII; Organising the Golah 3:15](#)

our prophets, thinkers, and teachers expressed themselves bears the stamp of their soul; only a thorough knowledge of their language allows one to participate in their innermost dreams, thoughts, and feelings

[Flames of Faith 9:26](#)

...Most of what I feel is internal; only a small fraction of my love or hate can be seen by others.

[Flames of Faith 13:15](#)

Man connects himself to that transcendent holiness through feelings of fellowship with the entire community.

[Flames of Faith 21:15](#)

The judge must stay within the bounds of the law and prevent his feelings of compassion from bursting out of his heart and tainting his legal decisions.

PTC. Understand that Hashem gives you the ability in your life to help others by understanding them; if you try to understand, Hashem will lead you to more truly feel for another in their life

Points To Carryover:

-Real empathy is feeling the true pain of another, especially one's spouse, within your own very being.

-The power of a kind word, a kind outlook, a kind internal shared empathetic feeling can dissuade all the anger and all the madness in the world.

-As Hashem is always with us and our true leaders feel for us, so should we really feel for others, internally, as if we ourselves are in pain and look how to help

-We must take care of and feel for those who may "fall through the cracks" in society and around us

-Care for those around us who may lack in what many of us have, whether it be in family, possessions, or goods, as we should try to put ourselves in others' shoes and take care of them through truly feeling for them

-Sometimes actions, not words are needed, for real empathy whether it be in outpouring of grief or sitting in shared grief

-Empathy is not only for humans but for animals as well

-Sometime our positions and our experiences can lend greater value and more understanding with empathy than others around us use your lens of your life and its travels to help understand what others go through

-We need to identify with another person's situation so much so that it resonates as if it were our own g-d forbid

-Try to feel for others around us, empathizing with their travels and needs, like the shunammite woman.

-Be there, present, in the moment when someone needs you and feel their pain, even if it is something you have to so, make sure to allow the pain in

-Make sure to understand why a person is in pain and what the situation really means; Don't miss the point or the opportunity to feel for another's plight

-Don't have misplaced empathy for those who don't deserve it and should not get it because that is not empathy, but cruelty then and for the future

-Make sure to feel for everyone around you, including other nations and creatures, not just our own "kind"

-Make sure to have proper sympathy and empathy for another, not distorting justice as a result

-Sometimes just being there for someone, without even saying anything, is greater than anything else we could do i.e. at Shivah house, just be there don't need to speak

-Be at one with the pulse of the community, if something wrong or sad is happening, commiserate and feel for it

-Very often we must remember that we have to stand on our own and care for our own because others will forget us

-Actions must come with true feelings; don't do something to commiserate with others while having a grudge about it, have a smile inside and out—inner and outer should reflect the happiness to help and feel for others

-Think about words you say or shouldn't say to spouse family or others so as not to hurt their feelings, make sure to properly accord feeling for a person especially if they are going through something

-Empathize with those who deserve it, but in warranted situations like danger, on face value can pretend to have different type of empathy

-Even if someone sins, even if someone makes us angry, we should still have sympathy for their plight and for their needs and not hold things against them

-Even if it causes us some "pain" or discomfort, even if it is difficult, we should try to put our selves in someone else's shoes and see their viewpoint, understand their pain with sympathy and proper empathy

-Sometimes it's all about understanding timing and place. When someone loses someone, just be there for them, comfort them by being there, understand proper tact

-If have have proper empathy and sympathy for others, Hashem will for us

-Feelings of empathy are like an emotional muscle, the more we work it and flex it, the stronger it will be

-Understand that Hashem gives you the ability in your life to help others by understanding them; if your try to understand, Hashem will lead you to more truly feel for another in their life