**Empathy Blockers – The Art of Listening**

Listed below are empathy blockers, followed by examples of how to show empathy.

For example, someone says, “I had a really bad day at my job this morning.” Some typical responses below are often said with the best of intentions, but they can unknowingly create distance and disconnection.

**One-Upping/Storytelling**

“You think you had a hard day. Let me tell you about mine.”

**Advising/Fixing**

“Maybe you should get up earlier’

“Maybe you should think about another line of work.”

“Maybe you should…”

**Educating**

“There’s a good book that I think will help you.”

**Analyzing/Data Gathering**

“You know, this seems to be a pattern of yours.”

**Consoling/Sympathy**

“I’m sorry to hear that. I am sure you did your best.”

**Discounting/Shutting Down**

“Well, you know you should be glad you have a job.”

**Some things we can say to show empathy:**

**“I hear you.”** Said with sincerity, meets a person’s need to be heard.

**“Tell me more.”** Said with sincerity, shows you are really interested.

**“Wow.”** Said softly, gives the speaker a sense you are listening.

**“I don’t even know what to say right now, but I’m grateful you told me.”** When someone is in a difficult situation, this may be all you have to say.

The Relationship Foundation.  (n.d.)  *Empathy the Art of Listening.*Retrieved from <https://therelationshipfoundation.org/free-tools/free-empathy-exercise>