



Empathy is the capacity to understand what another person is experiencing from within the other person's frame of reference, ie, the capacity to place oneself in another's shoes.

The Village eView

March 12, 2015

Elizabeth Jarrett-Jefferson, Editor

On-Line News of the Goodenough Community System

- **The American Association for the Furtherance of Community**
- **Convocation: A Church and Ministry**
- **Mandala Resources, Inc.**
- **Sahale Learning Center**
- **The EcoVillage at Sahale**

Six Habits of Highly Empathic People

By **Roman Krznaric** | November 27, 2012

We can cultivate empathy throughout our lives, says **Roman Krznaric**—and use it as a radical force for social transformation.

If you think you're hearing the word "empathy" everywhere, you're right. It's now on the lips of scientists and business leaders, education experts and political activists. But there is a vital question that few people ask: *How can I expand my own empathic potential?* Empathy is not just a way to extend the boundaries of your moral universe. According to new research, it's a habit we can cultivate to improve the quality of our own lives.

But what is empathy? It's the ability to step into the shoes of another person, aiming to understand their feelings and perspectives, and to use that understanding to guide our actions. That makes it different from kindness or pity. And don't confuse it with the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." As George Bernard Shaw pointed out, "Do not do unto others as you would have them do unto you—they might have different tastes." Empathy is about discovering those tastes.

The big buzz about empathy stems from a revolutionary shift in the science of how we understand human nature. The old view that we are essentially self-interested creatures is

Upcoming Events

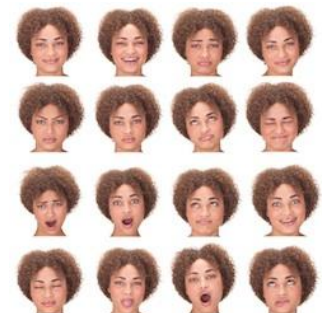
Relationship Group – Tuesdays – 7:30pm

[Women's Cultural Gathering - Mar 21](#)

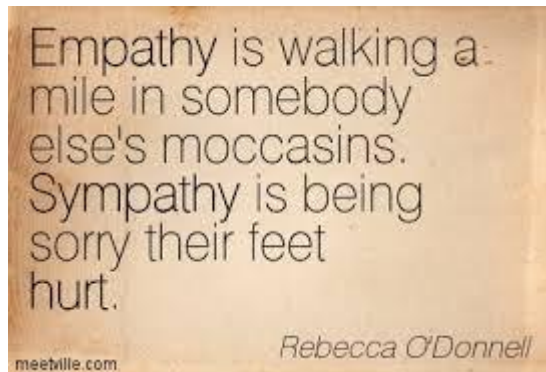
[Dedication of New Community Center - Mar 21](#)

[Community Annual Weekend – Mar 27-28](#)

[Maturing: A Workshop – April 17-19](#)



being nudged firmly to one side by evidence that we are also *homo empathicus*, wired for empathy, social cooperation, and mutual aid.



Over the last decade, neuroscientists have identified a 10-section “empathy circuit” in our brains which, if damaged, can curtail our ability to understand what other people are feeling. Evolutionary biologists like Frans de Waal have shown that we are social animals who have naturally evolved to care for each other, just like our primate cousins. And psychologists have revealed that we are primed for empathy by strong attachment relationships in the first two years of

life.

But empathy doesn’t stop developing in childhood. We can nurture its growth throughout our lives—and **we can use it as a radical force for social transformation**. Research in sociology, psychology, history—and my own studies of empathic personalities over the past 10 years—reveals how we can make empathy an attitude and a part of our daily lives, and thus improve the lives of everyone around us. Here are the Six Habits of Highly Empathic People!

Habit 1: Cultivate curiosity about strangers

Highly empathic people (HEPs) have an insatiable curiosity about strangers. They will talk to the person sitting next to them on the bus, having retained that natural inquisitiveness we all had as children, but which society is so good at beating out of us. They find other people more interesting than themselves but are not out to interrogate them, respecting the advice of the oral historian Studs Terkel: “Don’t be an examiner, be the interested inquirer.”



Curiosity expands our empathy when we talk to people outside our usual social circle, encountering lives and worldviews very different from our own. Curiosity is good for us too: Happiness guru Martin Seligman identifies it as a key character strength that can enhance life satisfaction. And it is a useful cure for the chronic loneliness afflicting around one in three Americans.

Cultivating curiosity requires more than having a brief chat about the weather. **Crucially, it tries to understand the world inside the head of the other person.** We are confronted by strangers every day, like the heavily tattooed woman who delivers your mail or the new employee who always eats his lunch alone. Set yourself the challenge of having a conversation with one stranger every week. **All it requires is courage.**

Habit 2: Challenge prejudices and discover commonalities



We all have assumptions about others and use collective labels—e.g., “Muslim fundamentalist,” “welfare mom”—**that prevent us from appreciating their individuality.** HEPs challenge their own preconceptions and prejudices by searching for what they share with people rather than what divides them. An episode from the history of US race relations illustrates how this can happen.

Claiborne Paul Ellis was born into a poor white family in Durham, North Carolina, in 1927. Finding it hard to make ends meet working in a garage and believing African Americans were the cause of all his troubles, he followed his father’s footsteps and joined the Ku Klux Klan, eventually rising to the top position of Exalted Cyclops of his local KKK branch.

In 1971 he was invited—as a prominent local citizen—to a 10-day community meeting to tackle racial tensions in schools, and was chosen to head a steering committee with Ann Atwater, a black activist he despised. But working with her exploded his prejudices about African Americans. He saw that she shared the same problems of poverty as his own. “I was beginning to look at a black person, shake hands with him, and see him as a human being,” he recalled of his experience on the committee. “It was almost like bein’ born again.” On the final night of the meeting, he stood in front of a thousand people and tore up his Klan membership card.

Ellis later became a labor organiser for a union whose membership was 70 percent African American. He and Ann remained friends for the rest of their lives. There may be no better example of the power of empathy to overcome hatred and change our minds.

Habit 3: Try another person’s life

So you think ice climbing and hang-gliding are extreme sports? **Then you need to try experiential empathy, the most challenging—and potentially rewarding—of them all.** HEPs expand their empathy by gaining direct experience of other people’s lives, putting into practice the Native American proverb, “Walk a mile in another man’s moccasins before you criticize him.”



George Orwell is an inspiring model. After several years as a colonial police officer in British Burma in the 1920s, Orwell returned to Britain determined to discover what life was like for those living on the social margins. “I wanted to submerge myself, to get right down among the oppressed,” he wrote. So he dressed up as a tramp with shabby shoes and coat, and lived on the streets of East London with beggars and vagabonds. The result, recorded in his book *Down and Out in Paris and London*, was a radical change in his beliefs, priorities, and relationships. He not only realized that homeless people are not “drunken scoundrels”—Orwell developed new friendships, shifted his views on inequality, and gathered

some superb literary material. It was the greatest travel experience of his life. He realised that empathy doesn't just make you good—it's good for you, too.

We can each conduct our own experiments. If you are religiously observant, try a “God Swap,” attending the services of faiths different from your own, including a meeting of Humanists. Or if you're an atheist, try attending different churches! Spend your next vacation living and volunteering in a village in a developing country. Take the path favored by philosopher John Dewey, who said, “All genuine education comes about through experience.”

Habit 4: Listen hard—and open up

There are two traits required for being an empathic conversationalist.

One is to master the art of radical listening. “What is essential,” says Marshall Rosenberg, psychologist and founder of Non-Violent Communication (NVC), “is our ability to be present to what's really going on within—to the unique feelings and needs a person is experiencing in that very moment.” HEPs listen hard to others and do all they can to grasp their emotional state and needs, whether it is a friend who has just been diagnosed with cancer or a spouse who is upset at them for working late yet again.



But listening is never enough. **The second trait is to make ourselves vulnerable. Removing our masks and revealing our feelings to someone is vital for creating a strong empathic bond.** Empathy is a two-way street that, at its best, is built upon mutual understanding—an exchange of our most important beliefs and experiences.

Organizations such as the Israeli-Palestinian Parents Circle put it all into practice by bringing together bereaved families from both sides of the conflict to meet, listen, and talk. Sharing stories about how their loved ones died enables families to realize that they share the same pain and the same blood, despite being on opposite sides of a political fence, and has helped to create one of the world's most powerful grassroots peace-building movements.

Habit 5: Inspire mass action and social change

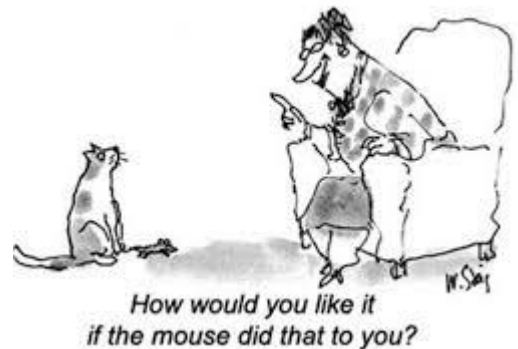


We typically assume empathy happens at the level of individuals, but HEPs understand that **empathy can also be a mass phenomenon** that brings about fundamental social change.

Just think of the movements against slavery in the 18th and 19th centuries on both sides of the Atlantic. As journalist Adam Hochschild reminds us,

“The abolitionists placed their hope not in sacred texts but human empathy,” doing all they could to get people to understand the very real suffering on the plantations and slave ships. Equally, the international trade union movement grew out of empathy between industrial workers united by their shared exploitation. The overwhelming public response to the Asian tsunami of 2004 emerged from a sense of empathic concern for the victims, whose plight was dramatically beamed into our homes on shaky video footage.

Empathy will most likely flower on a collective scale if its seeds are planted in our children. That’s why HEPs support efforts such as Canada’s pioneering Roots of Empathy, the world’s most effective empathy teaching program, which has benefited over half a million school kids. Its unique curriculum centers on an infant, whose development children observe over time in order to learn emotional intelligence—and its results include significant declines in playground bullying and higher levels of academic achievement.



Beyond education, the big challenge is figuring out how social networking technology can harness the power of empathy to create mass political action. Twitter may have gotten people onto the streets for Occupy Wall Street and the Arab Spring, but can it convince us to care deeply about the suffering of distant strangers, whether they are drought-stricken farmers in Africa or future generations who will bear the brunt of our carbon-junkie lifestyles? This will only happen if social networks learn to spread not just information, but empathic connection.

Habit 6: Develop an ambitious imagination

A final trait of HEPs is that they **do far more than empathize with the usual suspects**. We tend to believe empathy should be reserved for those living on the social margins or who are suffering. This is necessary, but it is hardly enough.

How empathic are you? Take the quiz!

We also need to empathize with people whose beliefs we don’t share or who may be “enemies” in some way. If you are a campaigner on global warming, for instance, it may be worth trying to step into the shoes of oil company executives—understanding their thinking and motivations—if you want to devise effective strategies to shift them towards developing renewable energy. A little of this “instrumental empathy” (sometimes known as “impact anthropology”) can go a long way.

Empathizing with adversaries is also a route to social tolerance. That was Gandhi’s thinking during the conflicts between Muslims and Hindus leading up to Indian independence in 1947, when he declared, “I am a Muslim! And a Hindu, and a Christian and a Jew.”

Organizations, too, should be ambitious with their empathic thinking. Bill Drayton, the renowned “father of social entrepreneurship,” believes that in an era of rapid technological change, mastering empathy is the key business survival skill because it underpins successful teamwork and leadership. His influential Ashoka Foundation has launched the Start Empathy initiative, which is taking its ideas to business leaders, politicians and educators worldwide.



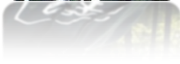
The 20th century was the Age of Introspection, when self-help and therapy culture encouraged us to believe that the best way to understand who we are and how to live was to look inside ourselves. **But it left us gazing at our own navels. The 21st century should become the Age of Empathy, when we discover ourselves not simply through self-reflection, but by becoming interested in the lives of others.** We need empathy to create a new kind of revolution. Not an old-fashioned revolution built on new laws, institutions, or policies, but a radical revolution in human relationships.

[See the end of the eView for additional readings on empathy. - Editor](#)

Watchcare & Member News



Congratulations to **Brynn Zebold**, who was recently accepted to Evergreen College for the coming academic year. We're thrilled for you!



Congratulations to **Keith Jarrett** and **Erin Pettersen**, who announced their engagement last spring and who will marry July 11, 2015, on Orcas Island.



Sending prayers and healing to **Janet Walker**, who recently announced a recurring health concern. We miss you Janet!

Congratulations to **Kathleen Buchmeier** on her upcoming graduation from Central Washington University in Ellensburg on June 13. Hip hip hooray, Kathleen!





Kudos to **Gillen Martin**, who has been accepted into the freshman class at Brown University (Providence, RI) for the fall. Congratulation again, Gillen!

Claudia Fitch has recently arrived in Berlin, Germany, for her three-month ceramics residency, and has sent us more pictures from her trip. She said she “hit the ground running” upon arrival in Berlin. Below are pictures of the Altes Museum and “walls riddled with bullets.” More to come from Claudia!



Muscles and Brussels and Brains

Insights and Observations from The Next Generation of Goodenough

Writing and Photography by Serena Davidson



Evelyn demonstrates a way to cut down a tree with a smart technique.

This past week was a whirlwind of activity getting ready for and leaning into the relational weekend offered to the community at Sahale. In addition there is a bustle of springtime work to accomplish for ongoing maintenance of the buildings and tools, stewardship of the land and daily upkeep to feed and tend the growing number of residents. We are all pulling together to tighten up ship as the calendar is filling with groups of



guests to welcome into our community, the permaculture gardens and this beautiful spot of land and water we share.



Pharaoh listened closely to Evelyn teach a new way to take trees down before trying it out on this old fruit tree which hasn't produced fruit in

years. Jim, Josh and Serena (behind the camera) also gleaned info from this new method and discussed the benefits with Evelyn as we saw the results in action.

Serena took the opportunity of the exceptional winter weather to stage and capture a sunny shot that shows off the spring blossoms and Kopet Wawa for promoting the rental of Sahale as a retreat center.



Postcard from the Relationship Weekend

From Irene Perler

Got Relationship? WANT Relationship?.... Got Attitude?.....What are they? How did you learn them? Do they work?....hmmmm.....

Change possible? Yes. What's it take? Insight, reaffirming attitudes that support relationship. Taking responsibility to be the kind of relational partner I can learn to be.

Imagine that. If I want a positive and supportive relationship, I have to want that. I

have to take responsibility to be a relational person who wants to do the work of transforming myself into the relational partner that is kind, patient, compassionate, interested in others happiness. Add into that being able to listen heartfully and then forming clear questions of interest in others. Then make sure I can also make clear "I" statements and tell others how I feel and what I need to be happy.

Then drop any expectations or assumptions and add a lot of hope and resilience and then join a group of friends who want to learn

together...because this isn't the culture at large that any of us grew up in, so we have to learn new things and it REALLY feels good to work at it together.



Our group this weekend was really great. I was so happy to have a large enough group to hold the work of 6 committed couples and everyone's work in relationship. It was a very good time and full of feeling for the challenges of relating. I am hopeful now and inspired. I believe I could be happier and calmer in relationship!

Come join us on Tuesday nights as we continue this program and support each other.

Love

Jrene

Yet Another Postcard from the Relationship Weekend

From Kirsten Rohde

I think some of us say this often after community weekends, but truly, this was a *really* good weekend. While the community has sponsored couples weekends for many years, this year we decided to have a weekend open to anyone wanting to work on relationship skills. So the group was a nice mix of couples and individuals, newcomers and people who have been in the community for a while. Learning to relate well applies to everyone and I experienced us applying ourselves to some good work of learning to give and receive feedback, talk about our good points and where we would like to improve, learn conversational skills, and get to know each other better.

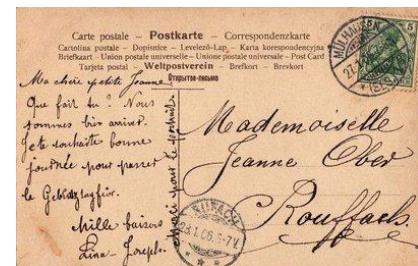
I appreciate learning more about how others see me. These types of feedback conversations helps me confirm some things I know about myself and also gain some insight. For example, learning to ask for help on a project or task in a good way that others feel invited to join. This will help me from becoming resentful or frustrated because I'm "working too hard." There's often plenty of help around, it's just a matter of remembering the relationship I have with folks and caring for my own set points.

I believe one of the things that made this a good weekend was that almost everyone was "all in." Willing to do personal and relational work and share what we are learning openly. This provided energy for more. We worked with the concept of the "Johari Window" which leads to exploration of, for example, what others know about me that I'm not aware of myself.

I'm also appreciating the long term relationship that Colette and John hold with each other. Their partnership and personal rigor is a great demonstration and helps us rise to the same level. We are fortunate.

Love

Kirsten



Announcing ...

The Dedication of our new Community Center

March 21, 2015

6:00 PM to 9:00 PM

3610 SW Barton Street SW, Seattle 98106

For almost 40 years, the community owned the big home at 2007 33rd Avenue South in Seattle as our Community home and meeting place. We were shaken by the loss of our physical center yet we are brightened and lifted by finding such a nice new home for our community. This dedication allows us all an opportunity to bless our space and to appreciate the people who have guided us to it. We hope you will join us! For more information or to RSVP, contact [Irene Perler](#), [Elizabeth Jarrett-Jefferson](#), or [Colette Hoff](#).



Coming soon! **Mark your calendars** for the

Annual Meeting of the Goodenough

Community and its supporting organizations: **March 27- 28-29, at Sahale**

Our annual meetings are integral to our community and formally mandated by the charters of the Association for the Furtherance of Community and Convocation: A Church and Ministry. Our annual meetings are a wonderful opportunity to see members and friends and to lend our energy and good will to the vision and ongoing work of our community. Please join us! [We have been known to have a good time and even party!] *More information to follow.*

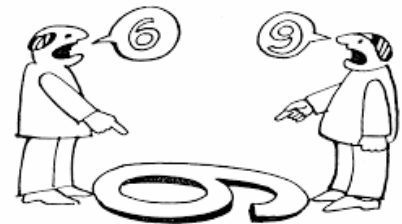
The Den

by Bruce Perler

I've been reflecting on the overall process we're in as a community--that of transition--and wrote this letter to men friends of this community about some of my recent experience and thinking.

Dear Men,

I've been thinking of the last time we gathered, at Lab 2014, a time of the feeling (we were gathered in the Swamp) as we shared & recollected important times this community and in its story. In late February I attended a leadership training intensive as part of the overall transition I am in with other leaders and our founders, John and Colette



Hoff. My own work--to strengthen my skills and mitigate the impact of my weaknesses--is ongoing and encouraging to me. I'd like to share some of what I'm learning and appreciating with you, fellows on your own path of ever becoming your best.

Some areas we focused on that touched me personally and our group:

- Building the inner leader - observing and seeking to understand my inner process as a leader, the inner work / inner development of being leader in life.
- Relationship with other leaders - the practices of teaming, collaboration, empathy, mutuality and support.
- Specific skills in leadership: event and project planning, the nature of social/working groups and our culture of group process, creating and managing a budget.
- Being a strong person in public life: What are the ways, in my own inner life, that get in the way of my being a trainer? It's about knowing what works for me as a trainer.
- Cooperation: We must help each other with our relating. Ask - "Where do you see me strong as a leader?" Ask - "Where do you see me weak?" It's better to be proactive with feedback, to begin the process by asking.
- Skills group: communication for example. To be more skillful and to be a training toward a being a whole person means that I am working with communication and modeling communication in my behaviors.

As men friends of mine and of this community, I know of your interest and feeling for her, our community's, future. In many ways she is already in the very good hands of a group of longtime friends and members who care for and want the best for her. At the same time, our community is at a crucial place in any long time community's story, that of transition with founders. Fewer non-profits and communities survive this passaged than not and, although at times I've been troubled by the process, part of my work is to not become discouraged in the face of difficulty. At this time, I'm feeling quite good about the changes for improvement over the past few years. Most particularly a palpable change in our leadership group's will and ability (culture) to talk through anything that must be talked through. This area of practice has not been a strength in this community's past and has troubled this community in its ability to know well its own heart and mind on important topics with enough clarity to take needed action. I can honestly say now though, after several years of leaning into this area together, that there is nothing we won't talk through, completely, as well intended friends and stewards of the Goodenough Community.



I hope this message finds you feeling good about your own sense of being on the path of the good man and, if you're at all like me, and most others, you need authentic men friends in your life for brotherly support. For me sometimes that support takes the form of a warm hug, a good talk or metaphorical kick in the pants.

Please join me in stepping up your consciousness and caring for your own life's journey and future and that of this community. And do please consider coming to our spring [Men's Retreat Weekend \(May 8 to 10, 2015\)](#) at [Sahale Learning Center](#). See our web site (www.goodenough.org) for more details.

Warmly,

Bruce

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The deAnguera Blog: Relationship Weekend

Every so often relationships need a tune up. So we had a weekend focused on our relationships. This allowed us to tune in to each other. That's why we celebrated Connie DeMers' 70th birthday. Having a whole roomful of people sing Happy Birthday has quite an impact. For me relationship is the most important work for it is the foundation for everything else in our society.

My experience is that relationships in society are mostly unconscious. In my case I let others determine my choices and



preferences. So I became a bundle of other people's desires for me with no Mike present. I was AWOL from my own life.

I wonder if that's true for most of us. Do you suppose that's why we spent so much time of family of origin stuff?

Parenting is a two way street. The parents have their work to do and so do the children. We are all doing relational work. Question is: what is that relational work resulting in?

I honestly think my parents did the best they could with what they had. Parents go at it as isolated nuclear families. Is that why parenting is so hard?

We all have character traits to go along with our character roles. Yes, we are like characters in a movie. We are sharing a story together. A story with plenty of ups and downs. Thrills. We come together to create what? Community. What's that? It's the place we consciously work on strengthening our ties with each other. Common sense to me now except I have never really done this anywhere else.

Community can't be imposed. But society thinks it can. So we have institutions imposing themselves on us for our own good. Institutions of education, government, religion, and business. We do things the way we are told. As a result most of my relationships in the past were pretty shallow.



When I go to church there isn't even any attempt to build lasting friendships. That's also true for other organizations I have spent time with including a radical political party.

Friendships should be easier to cultivate. I guess it takes common interests but even that doesn't always work. Maybe that's the consequence of living in a society where friendships are not valued. Or maybe it doesn't understand what friendship is. How can one value what one doesn't understand?

Society is concerned with making a profit. Whatever it is it needs to make somebody a profit. If it can't make anybody a profit it is not valued. That's why you have books like Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends and Influence People*. In other words friendship becomes a way to manipulate other people. The Soviet KGB used Dale Carnegie's book in the training of their new agents.



This particular Buddha received a daffodil over his head during the weekend. We must have done something really important!

Work Resourcing Needed!

by Marjorie Gray

Many of you know I am seeking work. Do you know of any jobs available or people who work in any of these areas that I could contact for information interviews?

- Writing (brochures, website content, blog posts, articles, marketing)
- Graphic design (for web or print, layout, image selection, photo editing, Adobe Creative Suite)
- Web design & maintenance (front-end, information architecture)
- I am also interested in finding out more about recreational therapy, as a completely different direction.

If you know of anyone I could contact about any of these, could you please let me know? Also feel free to give out my contact info:

email: m.dancingriver@gmail.com

Phone: 206-300-1315

Rent a Marjenta!

In the meantime, I would love to help you with any household needs:

- Cooking
- Organizing
- Cleaning
- Color consultation and interior painting

Thanks so much!

Marjorie/Marjenta



Upcoming Events

15th ANNUAL

Fairy & Human Relations Congress

Communication & Co-Creation with Nature Spirits, Devas and the Faery Realms

JUNE 26-28, 2015

Skalitude Retreat, Twisp, WA.

<http://www.fairycongress.com/>

- Spring Fairy Connections

Michael Pilarski, original founder of the Fairy Congress, is giving a series of talks in the Pacific Northwest this spring, on **The Emerging Alliance: Fairy & Faery Beings, Humans, Wild Creatures & Plants Working Together for Gaia**. Talks will be from 7-9pm; contact Michael at friendsofthetrees@yahoo.com for more information!

Bellingham, April 11
Whidbey Island, April 15
Port Townsend, April 19
North Seattle, April 22
South Seattle, April 23
Tacoma, April 24
Olympia, April 27

"Greening Our Neighborhoods With Permaculture."

Permaculture Convergence, the weekend of August 28, 29 and 30.

This year's Convergence will be in the River Road Neighborhood, 3 miles northwest of downtown Eugene, Oregon.

We are excited to be planning the first Convergence ever to be held in a residential suburban neighborhood.

Many people know River Road has an unusual number of property transformation projects. Grass to garden, solar design, edible landscaping, rain water catchment, reclaimed automobile space, green building and more. There are several dozen projects within a 5 to 20 minute bike ride of the River Road Recreation Center— Convergence Central. Literally thousands of people have attended tours and permaculture events in the neighborhood. You can find many of the [places we will be visiting on tours here](#).

Plus, there are "invisible social structures" of friends and neighbors engaged in various mutual assistance networks and outreach to the public.

The Convergence will feature a variety of site tours, plenary sessions, panels and presentations from urban to rural, an educational expo along with hands on projects around the neighborhood. You can find [early schedule info here](#).

Bit O'Early Spring

By Elizabeth Jarrett-Jefferson

Happy Birthday!

Pamela Jarrett-Jefferson – March 17. Congratulations on reaching the speed limit, Pam!

The Goodenough Community:

Cultural Programs & Events in 2015

For the Goodenough Community, cultural life is an arena for creative expression. All programs and events are open to the public. We welcome your interest and participation.

Over thousands of years human communities have organized not only their work life but also their relational and cultural life. The Goodenough Community organizes its cultural life around encouraging human development—through our programs for men, women, committed couples, families and around age groupings. Cultural programs usually encourage maturity, responsibility, and the development of valued relationships. Some of our programs bring everyone together with a seasonal emphasis. Following, are program offerings for the next period on our calendar.

Programs & Events in 2015

Third Age Gatherings

Women's Culture

The Conscious Couples Network

Human Relations laboratory

Family Enrichment Network

Sahale Summer Camp

The Men's Culture

Relational Weekend, page

Third Age Gathering: Next Meeting April 24, 2015

Joan Valles

The Third Age group is for older adults, approximately age 60 and older, who are interested in exploring the issues of living well while aging and supporting each other in this “third stage” of life.

April 24, Sept 18, October 23, and November 20 are the remaining 2015 dates.



Third Agers meet at the home of [Phil, Joan, Barbara, and Jim](#) in West Seattle. Gatherings start at 6 PM with potluck supper. An RSVP is always helpful – either by phoning us at 206-763-2258 or by emailing me at joanvalles70@yahoo.com

Women's Culture, Upcoming Gathering: Saturday, March 21 – our new community home in West Seattle, 10am to 2pm

Hollis Ryan



The Women's Culture meets on Saturdays, and our upcoming dates are **March 21, September 11, October 24 and November 21, from 10am to 2pm.** There will be a weekend **May 1 to 3.** *Mark your calendars!*

And Happy new year! Spring is a time of fresh starts, of sturdy resolve, of high hopes and expectations for the future. And we all know that change also comes upon us unexpectedly. Transitions can begin before we fully realize what is happening. This can be unsettling, and it can be exciting.

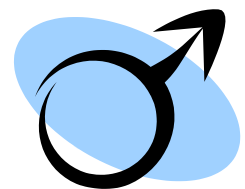
As we look around our circle of friends, we see that change and transition abound in our lives. Some of it is planned, some of it is not. As we move more fully into spring, what changes are taking place in your life?

Our meetings will take place at our new community center. Come join us!

Men's Program

Theme: Friendship among Men

The men of the Goodenough Community will be meeting for a weekend this spring, **May 8 to 10, 2015.** Please let [Bruce Perler](#) know of your interest.



Introducing .

Maturing . . .

Growing your self up . . .

Saving your Own Soul:

..A Workshop offered by John and Colette Hoff

April 17 to 19, 2015

This is a weekend for remembering your own journey and your story of trying to develop your self. Each individual will review where they are in their story and in their growth. We will become a supportive circle. Guided meditation on our lives will be a primary method the Hoff's will be using to in leading the workshop and we will practice meditation as a whole group. Small group interaction will also be utilized.

Email hoff@goodenough to express your interest.



Memorial Day Weekend, May 22-25, 2015

at Sahale Learning Center

Join us for a weekend of well-organized work parties balanced with play, wholesome meals, hot tubbing and relaxation. The only charge is a donation for food.

Sahale Summer Camp for 9 to 12 Year Olds

June 22 to 28, 2015

<http://www.goodenough.org/camp.htm>



Sahale Summer Camp is entering its 10th season! We invite youth aged 9 to 12 to join us for 6 nights and 7 days of fun living in nature at Sahale Learning Center.

We enjoy a program rich in experiences just right for this age zone. Youth enjoy traditional camping experiences with our tent village set up around a giant campfire pit for evening programs complete with stories, singing, s'mores and friends under a canopy of stars.

We teach skills of outdoor living and provide experiences which help you get to know yourself and have confidence making friends. We also impart a gentle sense of responsibility for caring for each other and the land. We do this through natural activities of taking care of camp and being part of small



clans that spend time together each day getting to know each other and working together.

A training program for 13- to 17-year-olds is also included and is an excellent opportunity for leadership training. For more information, see [The Junior Staff Training Program](#). Please contact Irene Perler for more information - 206.419.3477 or irene_perler@hotmail.com.



Human Relations Laboratory

August 9 to 15, 2015

The best event to experience the Goodenough Community

Seven Fun-filled Days of Social Creativity & Experiential
Learning about Friendship and Effective Relationship

Sahale Learning Center

A 68-acre retreat on the Kitsap Peninsula

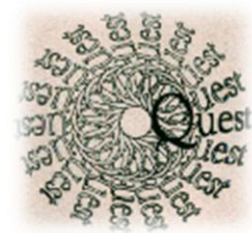
*** More information soon about the event and registration ***

Family Enrichment Network Parent Group

If you are interested in developing a supportive parent circle for study and conversation about family life, please contact *Irene Perler at 206-419-3477 or email irene_perler@hotmail.com*. Topics could include simplifying and organizing life, creating a family culture, development stages and sibling dynamics, understanding roles within the family.

Quest: A Counseling and Healing Center

Our belief is that mental and emotional health is a prerequisite for spiritual well-being, collaboration, and the expression of compassion. Quest's counseling and education programs, open to all interested individuals, focus on empowering individuals, couples, and family groups to be happier and be more effective in relationships. **Call John (206 963-4738), Colette (206-755 8404).**



Where are you working, you might ask?

Currently, John and Colette are now visiting with clients at the new community center, 3610 SW Barton Street, Seattle 98106

What Is Empathy?

From Greater Good: Science of A Meaningful Life

The term “empathy” is used to describe a wide range of experiences. Emotion researchers generally define empathy as the ability to sense other people’s emotions, coupled with the ability to imagine what someone else might be thinking or feeling.

Contemporary researchers often differentiate between two types of empathy: “Affective empathy” refers to the sensations and feelings we get in response to others’ emotions; this can include mirroring what that person is feeling, or just feeling stressed when we detect another’s fear or anxiety. “Cognitive empathy,” sometimes called “perspective taking,” refers to our ability to identify and understand other peoples’ emotions. Studies suggest that people with autism spectrum disorders have a hard time empathizing.

Empathy seems to have deep roots in our brains and bodies, and in our evolutionary history. Elementary forms of empathy have been observed in our primate relatives, in dogs, and even in rats. Empathy has been associated with two different pathways in the brain, and scientists have speculated that some aspects of empathy can be traced to mirror neurons, cells in the brain that fire when we observe someone else perform an action in much the same way that they would fire if we performed that action ourselves. Research has also uncovered evidence of a genetic basis to empathy, though studies suggest that people can enhance (or restrict) their natural empathic abilities.

Having empathy doesn’t necessarily mean we’ll want to help someone in need, though it’s often a vital first step toward compassionate action.

For more: Read Frans de Waal’s essay on “The Evolution of Empathy” and Daniel Goleman’s overview of different forms of empathy, drawing on the work of Paul Ekman.

Why Practice Empathy?

Empathy is a building block of morality—for people to follow the Golden Rule, it helps if they can put themselves in someone else’s shoes. It is also a key ingredient of successful relationships because it helps us understand the perspectives, needs, and intentions of others. Here are some of the ways that research has testified to the far-reaching importance of empathy.

- Seminal studies by Daniel Batson and Nancy Eisenberg have shown that people higher in empathy are more likely to help others in need, even when doing so cuts against their self-interest.
- Empathy reduces prejudice and racism: In one study, white participants made to empathize with an African American man demonstrated less racial bias afterward.
- Empathy is good for your marriage: Research suggests being able to understand your partner’s emotions deepens intimacy and boosts relationship satisfaction; it’s also fundamental to resolving conflicts. (The GGSC’s Christine Carter has written about effective strategies for developing and expressing empathy in relationships.)

- Empathy reduces bullying: Studies of Mary Gordon’s innovative Roots of Empathy program have found that it decreases bullying and aggression among kids, and makes them kinder and more inclusive toward their peers. An unrelated study found that bullies lack “affective empathy” but not cognitive empathy, suggesting that they know how their victims feel but lack the kind of empathy that would deter them from hurting others.
- Empathy promotes heroic acts: A seminal study by Samuel and Pearl Oliner found that people who rescued Jews during the Holocaust had been encouraged at a young age to take the perspectives of others.
- Empathy fights inequality. As Robert Reich and Arlie Hochschild have argued, empathy encourages us to reach out and want to help people who are not in our social group, even those who belong to stigmatized groups, like the poor. Conversely, research suggests that inequality can reduce empathy: People show less empathy when they attain higher socioeconomic status.
- Empathy is good for the office: Managers who demonstrate empathy have employees who are sick less often and report greater happiness.
- Empathy is good for health care: A large-scale study found that doctors high in empathy have patients who enjoy better health; other research suggests training doctors to be more empathic improves patient satisfaction and the doctors’ own emotional well-being.

For more: Consider the dark sides to empathy: Some argue that sociopaths can use empathy to help them exploit or even torture people, and caregivers risk feeling emotionally overwhelmed if they can’t regulate their empathy.

How to Cultivate Empathy

Humans experience affective empathy from infancy, physically sensing their caregivers’ emotions and often mirroring those emotions. Cognitive empathy emerges later in development, around three to four years of age, roughly when children start to develop an elementary “theory of mind”—that is, the understanding that other people experience the world differently than they do.

From these early forms of empathy, research suggests we can develop more complex forms that go a long way toward improving our relationships and the world around us. Here are some of the best research-based practices for nurturing empathy in ourselves and others.

- Focus your attention outwards: Being mindfully aware of your surroundings, especially the behaviors and expressions of other people, is crucial for empathy. Indeed, research suggests practicing mindfulness helps us take the perspectives of other people yet not feel overwhelmed when we encounter their negative emotions.
- Get out of your own head: Research shows we can increase our own level of empathy by actively imagining what someone else might be experiencing.
- Don’t jump to conclusions about others: We feel less empathy when we assume that people suffering are somehow getting what they deserve.
- Meditate: Neuroscience research by Richard Davidson and his colleagues suggests that meditation—specifically loving-kindness meditation, which focuses attention on concern for

others—might increase the capacity for empathy among short-term and long-term meditators alike (though especially among long-time meditators).

- Explore imaginary worlds: Research by Keith Oatley and colleagues has found that people who read fiction are more attuned to others' emotions and intentions.
- Join the band: Recent studies have shown that playing music together boosts empathy in kids.
- Play games: Neuroscience research suggests that when we compete against others, our brains are making a "mental model" of the other person's thoughts and intentions.
- Pioneering research by Paul Ekman has found we can improve our ability to identify other people's emotions by systematically studying facial expressions. Take our Emotional Intelligence Quiz for a primer, or check out Ekman's F.A.C.E. program for more rigorous training.
- Consider researcher John Medina's two steps for developing an "Empathy Reflex" toward your romantic partner: Describe the emotions you think you're seeing in your partner and try to imagine what might be motivating those emotions (taking care to reply to your partner with "I" statements).
- Similarly, some research, including a study among male parolees enrolled in a substance abuse treatment program, has suggested that the practice of Nonviolent Communication (NVC) can boost empathy.
- Take lessons from babies: Mary Gordon's Roots of Empathy program is designed to boost empathy by bringing babies into classrooms, stimulating children's basic instincts to resonate with others' emotions.
- Combat inequality: Research has shown that attaining higher socioeconomic status diminishes empathy, perhaps because people of high SES have less of a need to connect with, rely on, or cooperate with others. As the gap widens between the haves and have-nots, we risk facing an empathy gap as well. This doesn't mean money is evil, but if you have a lot of it, you might need to be more intentional about maintaining your own empathy toward others.