

EMPATHY SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE

Software is more than source code. Empathy is more than a feeling. Similar to software, empathy has an underlying system architecture. These are interconnected skills that you can develop as a way to increase your capacity for accurately and compassionately understanding people.

SENSES

INPUT

How we collect information for our brain to interpret.

Tip: Expand your awareness to internal senses such as heart rate your breathing.

PERCEPTION

PROCESSING

Brains are prediction engines to regulate energy.

Tip: Fuel your body with healthy habits. How you feel affects what you perceive.

COMMUNICATION

OUTPUT

Verbal and nonverbal signals to share what we perceive.

Tip: Help others understand you by being expressive, direct, and clear.

PERSPECTIVES

DATA SCHEMAS

Patterns, categories, and relationships in our brains.

Tip: List attributes of your emotions. How is your schema different from others?

DECISIONS

ALGORITHMS

Heuristics and rulesets that reduce cognitive load.

Tip: Consider optimizing your internal algorithms to favor accuracy over speed.

BOUNDARIES

SECURITY

Encapsulation is critical to resilience and compassion.

Tip: Get clear about what's okay and what's not okay. Honor and share with others.

RELATIONSHIPS

NETWORKS

Topography that depicts how we connect to other people.

Tip: Consider connections that should become stronger, weaker, or even removed.

PROSOCIAL ACTION

PRODUCTION ENVIRONMENT

Intentions are for testing. Action makes empathy real.

Tip: Give generously without expecting reciprocity while honoring your boundaries.

ATTUNEMENT

SYNCHRONIZATION

The ability to accurately perceive other people.

Tip: Your perception of others' feelings is a guess. Ask about your speculations.

ARTIFACTS

STORAGE

Enables understanding across time and space.

Tip: Leave breadcrumbs of your thinking throughout your work (commits, naming, etc.)

ETHICS

FRAMEWORKS

Guidelines that help us make prosocial decisions faster.

Tip: Consider the impact of your actions. How you can help more and harm less?

COMPASSION

POWER SOURCE

The fuel required for effective empathy.

Tip: Adopt an attitude that everyone is doing their best (yourself included).