**Skill Module:** Empathy

# **Activity Name: Decoding Unspoken Needs**

**Objective:** To practice being sensitive to and aware of the vicarious experience of others without explicit communication.

**Materials Needed:**

* Scenario Cards (describing workplace conflicts or client frustrations *without* detailing the feelings involved).

### **Instructions**

**Step 1: The Scenario Analysis** Participants are given a scenario card describing a conflict or a frustrating event.

* *Example:* "A customer returns a product aggressively, shouting that it doesn't work, even though it clearly does."
* Participants must analyze the facts of the event first.

**Step 2: Vicarious Experience (The Discussion)** In pairs, participants discuss the **implicit (unspoken)** layer of the scenario. They must answer:

* What is this person feeling *beneath* the anger/silence? (e.g., embarrassment, fear of losing money, pressure from a boss).
* What are their thoughts that they are not saying out loud?

**Step 3: Strategy Development** The pair develops a response strategy based **purely** on this empathetic understanding, rather than reacting to the surface-level behavior.

* *Task:* Write down one sentence you would say to this person to de-escalate the situation using empathy.

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### **Debrief & Reflection**

*(Participants can answer these questions individually or discuss as a group)*

1. **What non-explicit clues (context, body language described) guided your understanding of the other person's experience?**
2. **How does this deep level of understanding change the way you would respond compared to reacting to just the explicit message?**