Empathy Builders is a cooperative game about building a tower and building empathy.

- 4-6 players
- 15-20 Minutes

### Components

- 18 wooden blocks - 3 yellow, 3 blue, 3 purple, 3 red, 3 green, 3 orange
- 7 role cards
- Lunch bags for drawing blocks

### Setting Up the Game

- Place all the blocks in the lunch bag
- Each player blindly draws two blocks from the bag to form her/his hand
- Shuffle the role cards and deal one card, face down, to each player.
- Place any extra role cards face up in the play area so that all players can see and read them
- Players should read their individual role cards as well as the extra role cards displayed in the play area
- Remove any advanced role cards or other additional components from the play area

### Object of the Game

The object of the game is to build a tower using all 18 blocks that satisfies each of the win conditions on all of the role cards (the card in each player’s hand and the cards on the table).

All players share the victory if the tower is completed before the end of the game. The game ends in defeat if the tower is not completed before the end of the game.
**THE GAME TURN**

The player who woke up earliest that morning goes first. Play then proceeds clockwise around the table, each player taking one turn at a time until the game ends. On her/his turn, a player must perform one (and only one) of the following three actions:

- Put a block from her/his hand into play by placing it in the play area or on top of another block already in play
- Draw one block blindly from the bag. If there are no blocks in the bag, players may not choose this action.
- Remove a block or blocks from the play area and return them to the bag. A player may remove any block from play or from the tower, but any blocks on top of a removed blocks are also removed and returned to the bag. (Note: this is the only way to change the arrangement of blocks in play or in the tower)

**END OF ROUND ROLE EXCHANGE**

Once each player has taken a turn and it is the starting player’s turn again, the round ends and players pass their role cards to the left. Players read their new role cards and play continues as before.

Players must count the number rounds played. When the number of rounds completed equals the number of players minus one, the game ends. (Another way to identify the end of the game is if players are passed their original role cards.)

**GAME ENDS**

The game ends in a shared victory when all 18 blocks are placed in the tower in an arrangement that satisfies all of the role cards in play (both role cards assigned to players and role cards in the center of the play area). The game ends in defeat when the number of rounds completed equals the number of players minus one without a complete tower.
The gameplay of Empathy Builders can be used to facilitate discussions and debates about current events, historical debates, or issues that have multiple perspectives. Use the included Advanced Scenarios or develop custom questions and role cards.

- 4-6 players
- 15-20 Minutes

**COMPONENTS**

- Chosen Scenario Card with Question and Perspectives
- Corresponding Role cards matching the Scenario Card
- Optional - identical sets of three voting tokens for each player (blocks, counters, marbles)
  - Players may use any method to vote (holding out 1, 2, or 3 fingers, writing their vote on a piece of paper, etc...)

**SETTING UP THE GAME**

- Read aloud the chosen Scenario Card including the Question and Perspectives. Place the card face up in the center of the play area.
- Shuffle the role cards and deal one card, face down, to each player.
- Remove any additional role cards or components from the play area

**OBJECT OF THE GAME**

The object of the game is to build a tower using all 18 blocks that satisfies each of the win conditions on all of the role cards (the card in each player’s hand and the cards on the table).

All players share the victory if the tower is completed before the end of the game.

The game ends in defeat if the tower is not completed before the end of the game.
The player who went last during the basic game goes first. Play then proceeds clockwise around the table, each player taking one turn at a time until the game ends.

Each Round has two phases -

**Phase 1  Making Statements**

On her/his turn, a player must:

- State an opinion in answer to the question on the Scenario Card
- That opinion should align in some way with the role the player has been given.

A player may not

- State what her/his role is
- Make a misleading statement that is not in alignment with her/his role

Players should use their best judgment in stating opinions and support other players in their statements.

For example: A Scenario Card has a question that says, “What should we eat for lunch?” and the perspectives were 1. Eat fast food, 2. Eat at a nice restaurant or 3. Eat at home. Barbara’s role card says: “You are a vegetarian.” Barbara may state an opinion such as, “I would really like to eat something fresh.” or “I don’t like a lot of preservatives in my food.” She could even simply state, “I want to eat at home.” though this answer does not give a lot of information about her specific role. Barbara most likely would not make a statement like, “I don’t eat meat.” or “I’m a vegetarian.” as these statements give away her role.

**Phase 2  Asking Questions**

Play continues around the table once more, each player asking a “Yes or No” question of another player at the table.

- Questions must be answered with either “yes” or “no”
- Players may skip this part and not ask a question
END OF ROUND ROLE EXCHANGE

Once each player has taken a turn and it is the starting player’s turn again, the round ends and players pass their role cards to the left. Players read their new role cards and play continues as before.

Players must count the number rounds played. When the number of rounds completed equals the number of players minus one, the game ends. (Another way to identify the end of the game is if players are passed their original role cards.)

GAME ENDS

When the number of rounds equals the number of players minus two, the final Identification round begins. Starting with the first player, each player attempts to identify the role of the player to her/his right. This will be the only role card the identifying player has not seen during the game. Players decide together whether the player making the guess is correct or not.

Players may celebrate their victory or defeat according to the following scale:

- All roles correctly identified – Perfect Score! You are a truly empathetic team!
- One role misidentified – You understand very well. You can accomplish much together
- Two roles misidentified – You probably only have part of the story. Keep listening!
- Three or more roles misidentified – Ask more questions, seek to understand more.