

# Practical empathy: an antidote to stigma

Tanya van de Water  
Clinical Psychologist  
13 August 2020



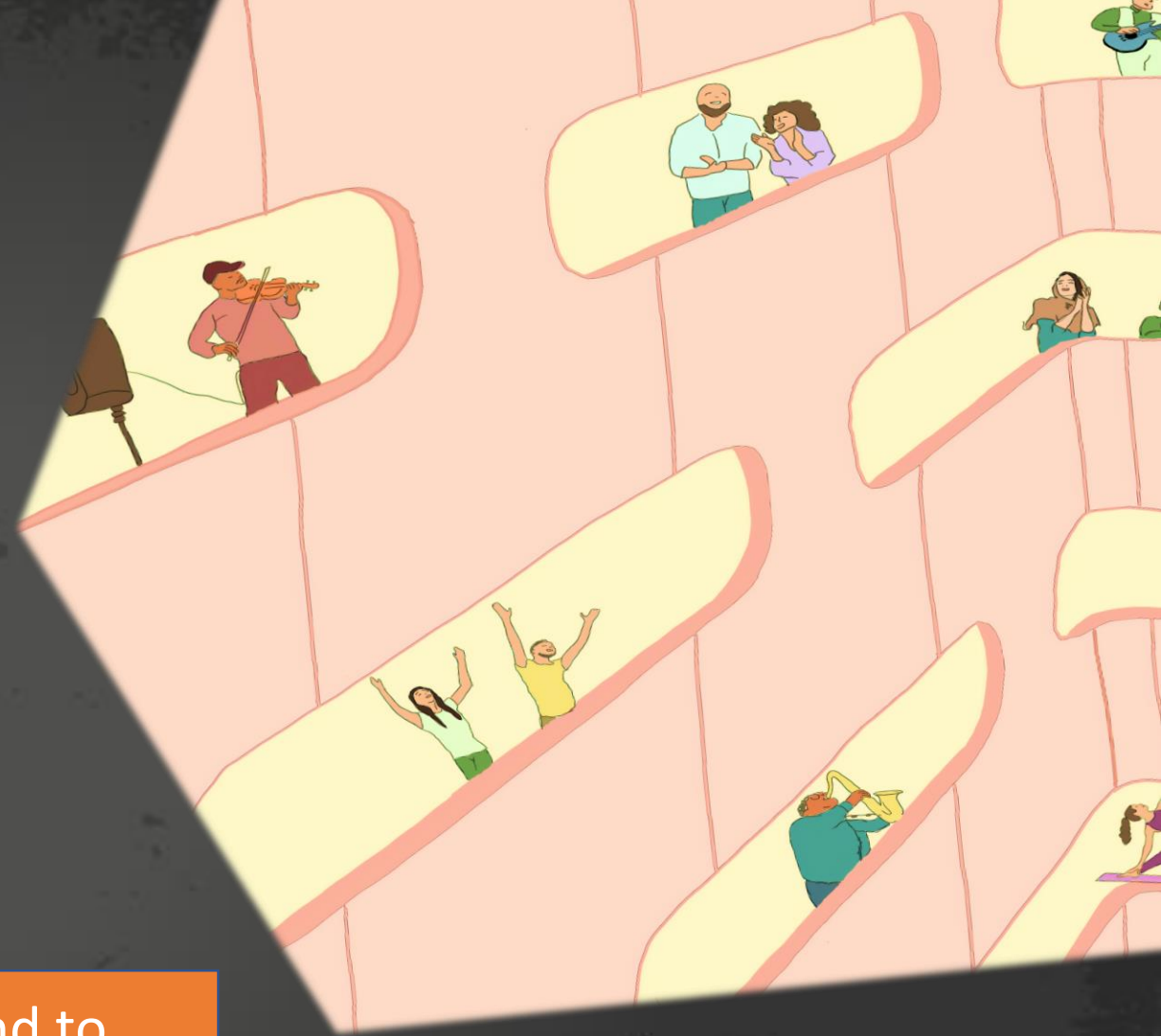
# The human experience during COVID-19



# Psychological First Aid

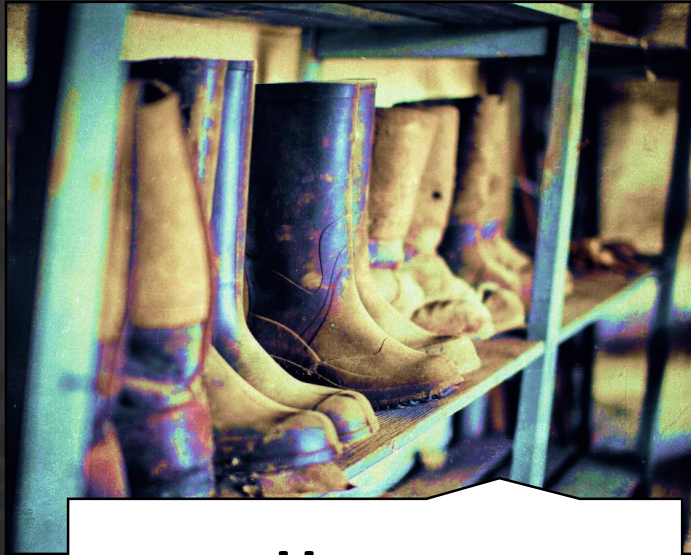
- Safe
  - Compassionate contact
  - Feeling safe at work (also emotionally)
- Calm
  - Breathing and other self-regulation
- Capable
  - Give back control
  - Current needs e.g. Place to stay/isolate
- Connected
  - Social support
  - Referrals
- Hopeful

How you respond to  
somebody's story can be  
more harmful than the  
experience itself

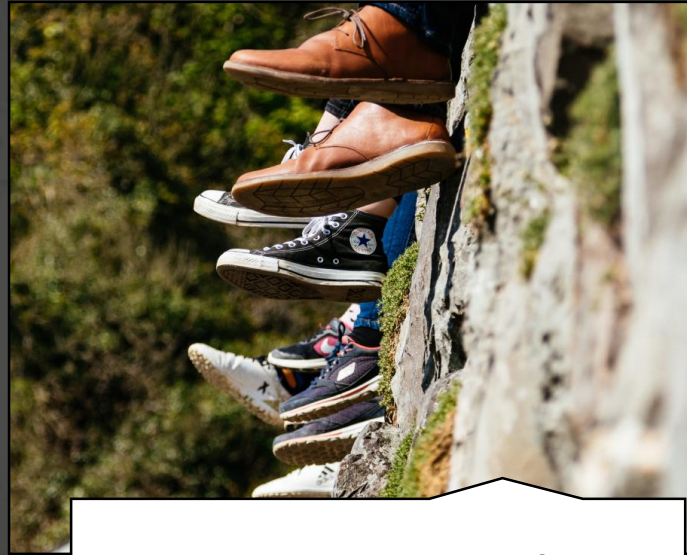


MANZINI  
Health

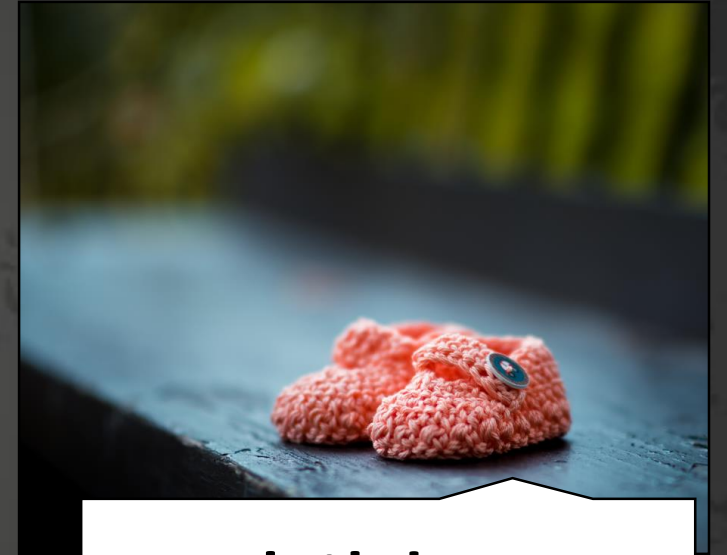
# Practical Empathy: In their shoes



Colleague



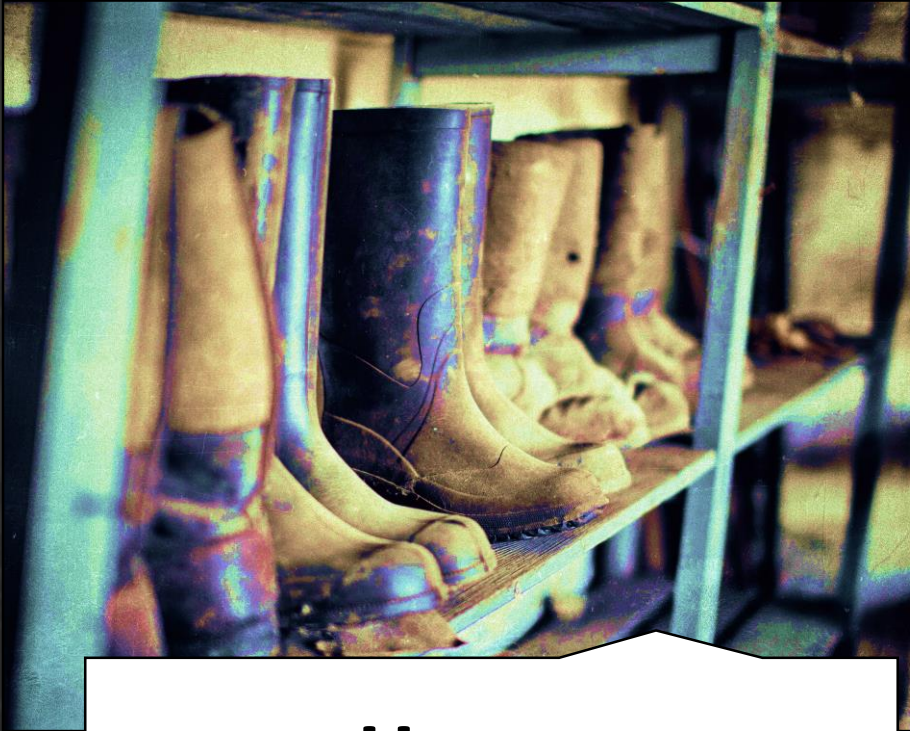
Community



Children



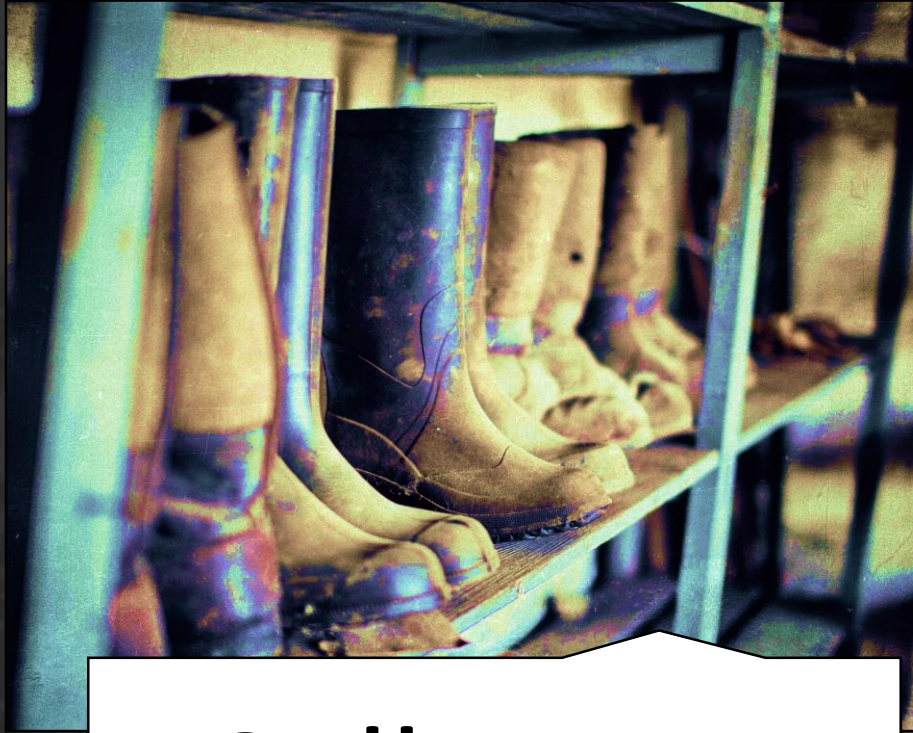
# Empathy as a colleague



Colleague

- Upon diagnosis:
  - You vs we
  - Check in
  - Whatsapp group
  - Medication assistance
  - Fresh produce
- Return to work:
  - “Welcome committee”
  - Letter of thanks to family

# Empathy as a colleague



Colleague

R

- Recognize

E

- Engage

A

- Actively listen

C

- Check risk

T

- To give specific plan

MANZINI  
Health

# Activating practical support

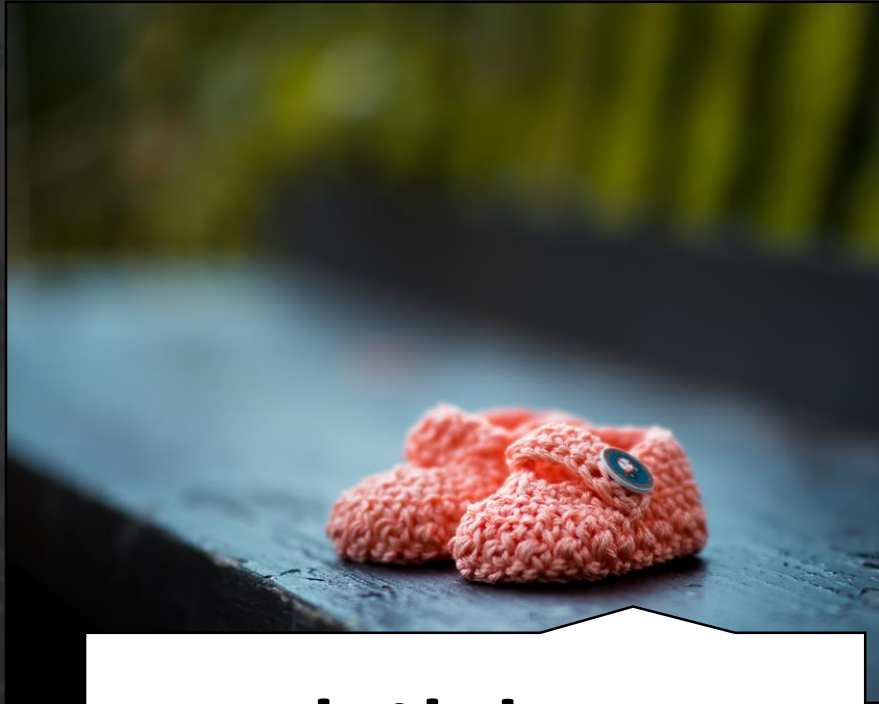


Community

- Appreciate essential services (letters, songs, etc)
- Focus on what you can do to help
- Connect with resources
- Don't pour from an empty cup
- Promote shame free narrative



# Activating practical support



Children

- Resilience
- Talk about it
- Alternative connection
- Common fears:
  - My fault
  - Parents will die
  - I'll die
- Set the tone