

Resources

The Human Engine Resources and Readings

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Topic: Why Empathy is the Core of Equity (in Healthcare)

I. The Language of Equity

- **Brené Brown, Ph.D.:** *Atlas of the Heart* (2021). A comprehensive guide to the nuances of human emotion, specifically defining the difference between empathy (connection) and sympathy (pity/distance).
- **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF):** *Visualizing Health Equity*. A foundational resource for understanding the structural differences between equality (sameness) and equity (fairness and access based on need).

II. Emotional Intelligence (EQ) & Self-Awareness

- **Daniel Goleman:** *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ* (1995). The gold standard framework for self-awareness as a critical professional tool for regulation and social skill.
- **Harvard University:** *Project Implicit*. A collection of research-based tools and tests to help individuals identify their own unconscious biases, providing the "internal data" needed to interrupt them.

III. Clinical Impact & Nursing Outcomes

- **Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI):** *The Quadruple Aim: Care, Health, Cost, and Meaning in Work*. A framework that proves patient empathy and clinician well-being are not "perks," but requirements for high-functioning healthcare systems.
- **The Joint Commission (TJC):** *Advancing Effective Communication and Cultural Competency*. Clinical standards demonstrating how empathy-centered communication reduces medical errors, prevents sentinel events, and builds patient trust.
- **Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ):** Research on *Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)*. Provides the evidence base for how addressing non-clinical barriers (transportation, language, housing) directly lowers readmission rates.

IV. Leadership & Board Sustainability

- **BoardSource:** *Leading with Intent*. Crucial insights for leaders on why equity must be woven into the fabric of board governance, specifically regarding long-term planning and leadership succession.

Key Reflection Questions for the Drive Home:

1. **The Diagnostic Pause:** Before I entered my last patient room or meeting, was I self-aware of my current emotional state?
 2. **Equity vs. Equality:** Did I provide a "standard" solution today, or did I provide what was actually needed for a successful outcome?
 3. **The Human Engine:** How can I use empathy tomorrow to identify a barrier that I previously missed?
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