

***This is a draft version of the workbook
and is subject to further change.
Please do not circulate beyond your
team.***



Compassionate Employers

CHAPTER 1- Worksheet: individual reflection

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Draft issued 8th July 2026

Worksheet: individual reflection

Responding to your team's needs

Our teams often come to us wanting a response to the challenges they are facing. In busy environments, while we really want to be helpful, we can accidentally jump to conclusions about the type of response they need in that moment. For example, we might look to action when our colleague needs emotional support or respond with empathy when they want us to listen without any input.

For us to be compassionate and supportive managers, we need to understand what they need from the very start of the conversation.

Duhigg's work on Supercommunicators¹ suggests clearly framing conversations as 'help, hear, hug' to effectively get to the centre of the problem.

This framing can be particularly useful in one-to-one discussion or when time is restricted and you need to understand how you can support quickly

Important note!

Individual reflection guidance

- You do not need to answer any questions that feel too personal, unsafe or difficult.
- Pause at any point.
- If this content brings up distress, speak to someone you trust and access your organisation's support routes, such as your manager, supervision, occupational health, Employee Assistance Programme, HR, GP or urgent support if needed.

Be kind to yourself! These are some ideas of things you to reflect on.

At the start of an interaction ask:

Titles adapted from Duhigg¹

Help  Do you need my help? This is asking whether they would like you to problem solve. <i>E.g. Practical, solution-oriented conversation.</i>	Hear  Do you need to be heard? This is asking whether they would like you to listen without input. <i>E.g. Social, 'venting about a challenge' conversation.</i>	Hug  Do you need emotional support? This is not a literal hug but asking if they need your compassion and empathy. <i>E.g. Reassuring, supportive conversation.</i>
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Individual reflection: People need different things from an interaction. Reflect on an example of each type of conversation:

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References

1. Duhigg C. Supercommunicators: how to unlock the secret language of connection. New York: Random House; 2024.

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