



A SENSITIVITY EXERCISE

LEARNING FROM OUR OWN EXPERIENCE

When we want to support someone or have a tough conversation, it's essential to remind ourselves that while our personal experiences are important, they don't automatically apply to the other person's situation.

A helpful mindset to keep is: "It's not about me!" This serves as a reminder to keep our focus on the person we're supporting, rather than bringing our own stories or feelings into the conversation.

Every individual experiences challenges in their own way, and it's important not to assume that what helped us will automatically help them. While our personal experiences—no matter how intense—don't give us complete "understanding" of someone else's struggle, they do provide a foundation for empathy and how we can best support someone else.

Reflection Exercise: *Think back to a time in the past when you were in crisis—when you felt overwhelmed and as though things wouldn't get better. Staying within your comfort zone, reflect on how you felt during that time and consider the following questions.*

- How did your crisis affect you physically and emotionally?
- What thoughts or feelings made it difficult for you to function daily?
- What challenges did you face in opening up to others about your problems?
- When you reached out for help, what responses made you feel dismissed or discouraged?
- What did people say or do that made you regret seeking their support?