

## **EMPATHY**

It's difficult to identify a life situation that would not benefit from empathy. Consoling a grieving friend requires empathy. Comforting a scared child requires empathy. Being patient with a flustered cashier requires empathy. Helping a stranger, getting along with peers and colleagues, saving an animal, and compromising with an adversary all require empathy. But this powerful, unassuming trait does much more than benefit our relationship with others. "If there is one emotional intelligence skill that we would recommend developing, it's definitely empathy," explains Dr. Ilona Jerabek, president of PsychTests. "When we compared empathetic and non-empathetic people on 31 different factors related to emotional intelligence (EQ), the differences were statistically significant across the board. Empathetic people are happier, more self-aware, self-motivated, and optimistic. They cope better with stress, assert themselves when it is required, and are comfortable expressing their feelings. There was only one scale where non-empathetic people scored higher: Need For Approval. If you want to truly understand family, friends, colleagues, strangers, or even rivals, you have to put yourself in their shoes and see the world from their perspective. The ability to perceive other people's emotions starts with being able to identify and reflect on your own feelings. If you lack empathy, you're more likely to have trouble connecting and getting along with others. This can negatively impact self-esteem and life satisfaction, and without a supportive network of friends, coping with stress will also be much more difficult." (Source: PsychTests)

## **NO MAN'S LAND**

Coastsiders are unnerved to learn that the California Highway Patrol may have an unofficial gray zone at Devil's Slide, an amorphous gap in its jurisdictional coverage of this crucial coastal area, caught (or forgotten) in the bureaucratic blank spot between a northern district office and a southern district office.

## **GARBAGE PATCH**

The great Pacific Garbage Patch is growing, now considered 16 times wider than earlier thought, according to a three-year study by six universities using 30 boats and aerial surveys of the floating island of plastic refuse in the northern Pacific Ocean. (Source: earthweek.com)

## **WEEDS**

Roundup (glyphosate) herbicide is marketed as safe for humans, animals, and other plants, but scientists are far from certain. Many researchers consider Roundup to be carcinogenic. Until this is resolved, it is best to use a natural, nontoxic weed killer like vinegar, or just go old school and pull the weeds. The exercise won't hurt you.

### **DEATH RAYS?**

Google "electromagnetic radiation safety" for safe ways to use your cell phone and other electronic devices. Rule #1: Keep all wireless gadgets and gizmos away from your body, especially your head and reproductive organs. Use speakerphone mode and don't carry your phone in your front pocket.

### **SWAMI SEZ**

Scott McKellar wonders as he wanders: "Is drinking while four-wheel driving off-road a jeep thrill?"

### **GRAMMARJAMMER**

"The spelling rule is 'i' before 'e' except when you run a feisty heist on a weird beige foreign neighbor." (Tatiana Ayazo)

### **MAYBURRITOVILLE**

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