

## Thriving Teams in Palliative Care: Emotional Intelligence, Mental Strength & High Sensitivity in Action

**Eftelya Erbasli**

Trainer for Humancentered Transformation and Business

### Abstract

**Introduction:** Palliative Care confronts healthcare professionals with emotionally intense situations, ethical dilemmas, complex patient needs, and interdisciplinary coordination challenges. Beyond clinical expertise, personal competencies such as emotional regulation, self-reflection, and team resilience are essential for sustainable, high-quality care. Highly sensitive professionals, in particular, possess an enhanced ability to perceive subtle emotional cues which—when professionally integrated—can become a powerful resource for patient-centered care.

**Objectives:** The aim of this practice-oriented presentation is to demonstrate how high sensitivity in healthcare professionals working in palliative settings can be systematically transformed into emotional intelligence and mental strength in order to strengthen team dynamics, prevent burnout, and sustainably enhance patient-centered decision-making.

**Materials and Methods:** From the perspective of a human-centered transformation trainer, a structured reflection and transfer process is presented using a practical case example from a palliative ward. Guided reflective questions support participants in analyzing their own experiences and developing actionable strategies:

- How can subtle emotional cues from patients and families be accurately perceived and professionally interpreted within the team?
- Which methods help transform heightened sensitivity into regulated emotional intelligence without leading to overload or compassion fatigue?
- How can interdisciplinary teams leverage these competencies to improve collaboration and patient-centered decision-making?

The presentation introduces practical strategies to:

- Consciously regulate emotional activation in acute or high-stress situations
- Strengthen mental resilience under pressure
- Foster psychological safety within teams
- Use sensitivity to anticipate patient needs and navigate ethical tensions proactively

**Results:** The integration of sensitivity, emotional intelligence, and mental strength is presented as a coherent functional model: Sensitivity forms the perceptual foundation; emotional intelligence transforms perception into skilled, effective action; and mental strength stabilizes professional performance under stress. Teams that intentionally cultivate these competencies demonstrate improved empathic communication, more constructive interdisciplinary collaboration, and greater psychological resilience.

**Conclusion:** High sensitivity is not a weakness but a core professional resource in palliative practice. When combined with emotional intelligence and mental strength, it strengthens team functioning, workforce well-being, and patient-centered care in a sustainable manner. The intentional development of these competencies enables healthcare professionals to remain stable, empathic, and effective even in emotionally demanding environments.

### Keywords

Palliative Care, High Sensitivity, Emotional Intelligence, Mental Strength, Team Resilience, Patient-Centered Care, Interdisciplinary Collaboration, Human-Centered Leadership, Burnout Prevention, Healthcare Professional Well-being.