

1. What is empathy?

Empathy is when you are able to understand how someone else might be thinking or feeling about a situation. In other words, “putting yourself in their shoes” and imagining what they might be going through. So it’s not about you, but all about the other person! It is not only figuring out how others might be feeling, but also caring enough to do something about it.

2. Why is empathy important?

It is important because it helps you know how to best respond to other people: what to do or say that might be helpful. It makes you a more caring person and a better friend.

3. How can you practice empathy with others?

- Pay attention to other people’s feelings. Watch their faces and body language, listen to the words and tone of their voice! Or, just ask: “How are you feeling right now?”
- Think before you speak or act. Ask yourself before you do or say something: “How will I make this person feel through my words or acts?”
- Realize that everyone is different. Just because something is not a big deal to you, doesn’t mean it’s not a big deal to someone else! Everyone feels different about certain situations and that’s OK.
- Stand up for others! For example, you might see another kid getting bullied at school. Instead of staying out of it, you can use empathy to imagine how he might be feeling, and then you can do something about it and help stand up to the bullies.