

Empathy at Home and at Work



**ALS Accreditation
and Equivalency Learning Material**

Bureau of Alternative Learning System
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



What Is This Module About?

Have you ever heard the saying “No man is an island”? What do you think this means? This means that no one lives in isolation. Everyone of us needs others to care for and interact with us. We need to belong to a group. We need to be in touch with other people. This interaction is a give-and-take relationship. It is a two-way process. Everything we do affects them and everything they do affects us. This is the reason why empathy is important.

Empathy is the ability to share, understand and feel another person’s feelings. You will learn more about this in this module.

This module is divided into three lessons:

Lesson 1 – *What Is Empathy?*

Lesson 2 – *Showing Empathy at Home*

Lesson 3 – *Showing Empathy at Work and in School or in the Learning Center*



What Will You Learn From This Module?

After studying this module, you should be able to:

- ◆ define what empathy is;
- ◆ enumerate ways to show empathy;
- ◆ practice empathy at home; and
- ◆ practice empathy at work and in school or in the learning center.



Let's See What You Already Know

Before you start studying this module, answer the questions below to find out what you already know about the topic. Write your answers in the space provided.

1. Define empathy.

2. Enumerate five ways to show empathy at home.

- a.

- b.

- c.

- d.

- e.

3. Enumerate four ways to show empathy at work or in school.

- a.

- b.

- c.

- d.

Well, how was it? Do you think you fared well? Compare your answers with those found in the *Answer Key* on page 24.

If all your answers are correct, very good! This shows that you already know much about the topics in this module. You may still study the module to review what you already know. Who knows, you might learn a few more things as well.

If you got a low score, don't feel bad. This shows that this module is for you. It will help you understand some important concepts that you can apply in your daily life. If you study this module carefully, you will learn the answers to all the items in the test and lot a more! Are you ready?

You may go to the next page to begin Lesson 1.

What Is Empathy?

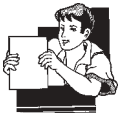
Have you ever heard the saying “It is easy to be human but it is hard to be humane”? Being **human** means having or showing the qualities and limitations of people, especially the weaknesses, as opposed to God, animals or machines. Being **humane**, on the other hand, means being kind and sympathetic. It is actually one step further than just being human. After all, hasn’t it been said time and time again that making mistakes is human? Well, it is, but we should always consider other people’s feelings too, right? And that’s where empathy and being humane come in.

This lesson will tell you what empathy is and a lot more. It will also tell you some ways to show empathy.



Let’s Think About This

Do you know what makes human beings different from animals? Aside from our ability to think, what other qualities do we have that most animals don’t have? Have you ever heard anybody call someone else an “animal”? How can you avoid being in a similar situation?



Let’s Learn

Human beings differ from animals because of their ability to empathize. This is the ability to share other people’s feelings. When somebody is told that he/she is acting like an animal, he/she is probably showing aggressiveness and lack of self-control. These are characteristics of animals who are governed by instinct alone. But human beings do not and should not live by instinct alone. They should not only live to survive but also to nurture relationships with other human beings.

Empathy is similar to putting one’s self in another’s shoes. It is thinking of consequences in another person’s point of view. The word **empathy** came from the Greek word *empathia* meaning “passion” or “affection.” It is related to the word **sympathy** which is an understanding of and feeling for the sadness or suffering of others, often shown in expressions of sorrow or pity. From their definitions, you can see that sympathy is closely related to pity while empathy is not.



Let's Review

Look at the following situation.



Does Karen demonstrate empathy in the situation above?

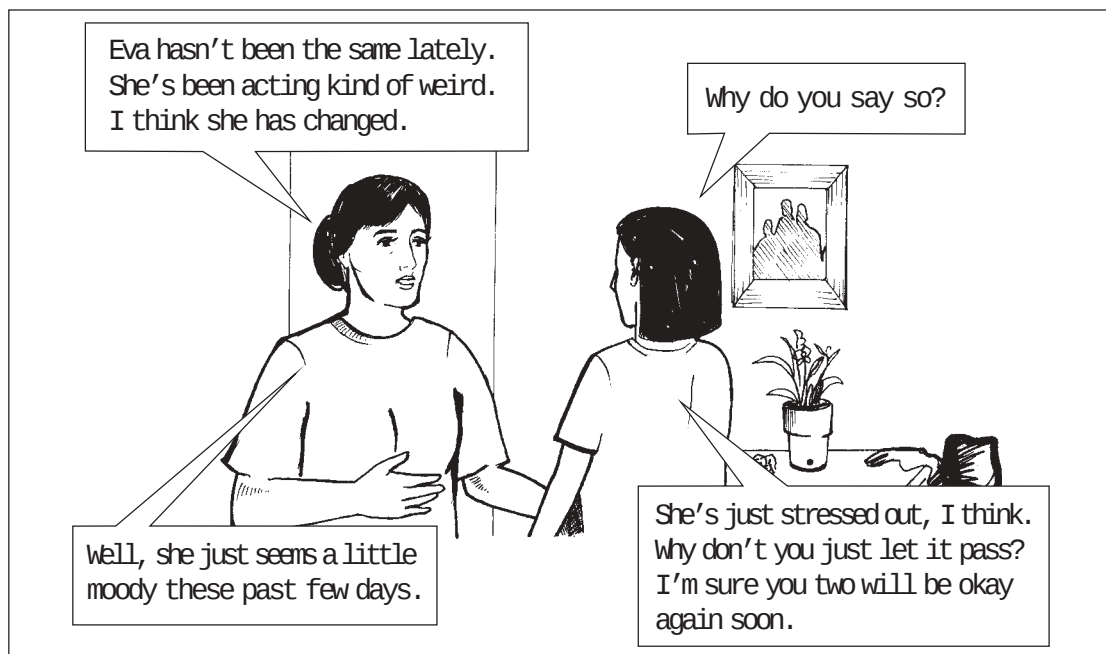
Yes, she does. She can relate to how her friend Lisa feels but knows she can handle it, thereby not feeling sorry for her.



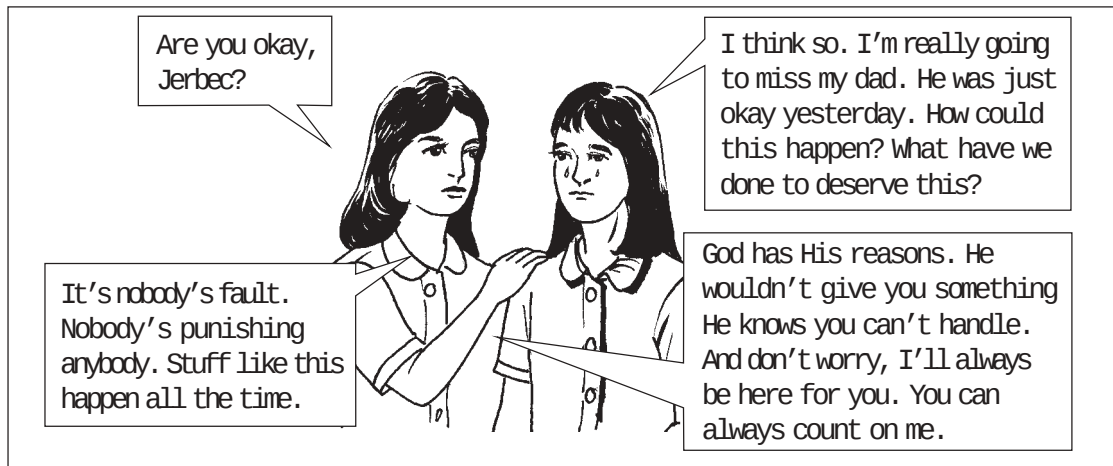
Let's Study and Analyze

Look at the situations below and tell which demonstrates empathy and which demonstrates sympathy.

Situation 1



Situation 2



The situations presented beforehand showed the difference between empathy and sympathy. The first situation demonstrated empathy. The girl at the right was putting herself in the shoes of Eva (the two girls' common friend) so that the girl at the left would understand why Eva has been acting weird lately. Because of this, a possible conflict among them was avoided.

The second situation, on the other hand, showed sympathy at work. The girl at the left was sympathizing with her friend over the death of a loved one. The girl at the left clearly showed pity toward her friend, thereby transforming what would have been just empathy to sympathy.



Let's Try This

Below are pairs of possible reactions to certain situations. In each pair put a check (4) in the box if it demonstrates empathy and a cross sign (8) if it does not.

Set 1

A



B

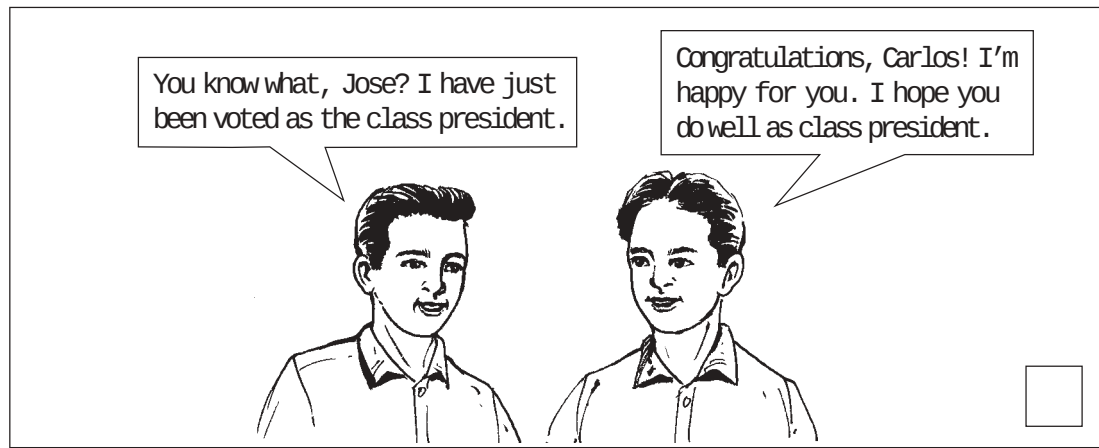


Set 2

A



B



Set 3

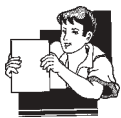
A



B



Compare your answers with those in the *Answer Key* on page 24. How well did you do?



Let's Learn

Empathy is not only shown verbally. At times, it is even more effective when manifested nonverbally. Thus the saying, "Actions speak louder than words."

Empathy is communicated by specific behavioral traits such as listening attentively without interrupting (which communicates receptiveness), saying things like "I'm with you" (which communicates rapport) or paraphrasing (which communicates understanding). Nonverbal behaviors such as tone of voice, facial expression, head nodding and posture also affect impressions of empathy.

But what are the thoughts and feelings behind these behaviors? In the case of empathic behavior, the motive is a desire to help other people. Empathic people have the ability to help other people in solving their problems. They also show empathy by listening, showing rapport, paraphrasing, reflecting and nodding their heads. These gestures demonstrate their interest and willingness to help other people confronted with problems.



Let's Review

Check the situations that show empathy and cross out those that do not. Write your answers in the blanks before the numbers.

- _____ 1. Not ordering a lot of food for yourself when you are in a restaurant with somebody who cannot afford to buy even a piece of bread
- _____ 2. Turning down the volume of your cassette player to avoid disturbing your neighbors
- _____ 3. Lending money to a friend who is in need
- _____ 4. Not waiting in line to use a public telephone
- _____ 5. Helping an old lady cross the street
- _____ 6. Buying extravagant clothes despite your mother's request for you to save money

Compare your answers with those in the *Answer Key* on page 25. Did you get all the correct answers? If you did, that's very good. If you didn't, don't worry. Just review the lesson before going to the next part.



Let's Try This

List down five other ways to show empathy. Use the space below for your answers.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Request your Instructional Manager or Facilitator to check your answers.



Let's See What You Have Learned

Encircle the numbers of the statements that show empathy.

1. Crying whenever you see a friend or loved one cry
2. Congratulating a person upon his/her success
3. Not laughing when with someone who feels very sad
4. Helping a sick classmate with his/her project
5. Lending a classmate your books
6. Laughing at someone who committed a mistake
7. Forcing a person to have a similar opinion to yours
8. Smiling at a friend to show that you care
9. Greeting somebody on his/her birthday
10. Sharing your lunch with a hungry classmate

Compare your answers with those in the *Answer Key* on page 25. Did you get a perfect score? If you did, that's very good. If you didn't, don't worry. You just need to reread the lesson to better understand it.



Let's Remember

- ◆ **Empathy** is the ability to share, understand and feel another person's feelings.
- ◆ Being human means having or showing the qualities and limitations of people, especially the weaknesses, as opposed to God, animals or machines.
- ◆ Being humane means being kind and sympathetic.
- ◆ The word **empathy** came from the Greek word *empathia* meaning "passion" or "affection."
- ◆ **Sympathy** is an understanding of and feeling for the sadness or suffering of others, often shown in expressions of sorrow or pity.
- ◆ Empathy is communicated by specific behavioral traits such as listening attentively without interrupting, saying things like "I'm with you" or paraphrasing.
- ◆ Nonverbal behaviors such as tone of voice, facial expression, head nodding and posture also affect impressions of empathy.

Showing Empathy at Home

In Lesson 1, you learned what empathy is and how it is shown. In this lesson, you will learn how to show empathy toward the members of your family. You will also learn why you should empathize with them and how important empathy is to strengthening family relationships.



Let's Think About This

Why do you think you need to show empathy to the members of your family? Make a list for each member. My own list is shown below as an example.

Family Member	Why He/She Deserves My Empathy
Father	He provides for our needs. He helps me make important decisions. He is a very dependable and loving person.
Mother	She takes care of us very well. She encourages me to study well. She makes sure that my things are orderly.
Sister	She listens to my problems. She keeps my secrets.

The example above shows that empathy is bestowed on one's family because of the goodness that they show a person. However, everyone deserves empathy whether he/she has been good to you or not. Empathy is not only given to a person who is close to you but to anybody who is in need of your help and assistance.



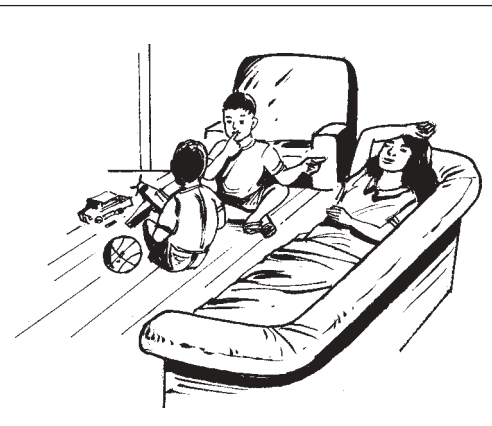
Let's Study and Analyze

Situation 1

Your mother grew very tired from washing all of your clothes. It will soon be time for dinner. How can you and the rest of your family show empathy toward her?



You can do or say a lot of things to show her that you empathize with her. Below are some examples.



Situation 2

Your father called you inside his study room to tell you something. Reflect on what he said.



How can you show that you empathize with your father? Below are some ways:

1. Since empathy involves being able to feel another person's feelings, you should understand that it must have been very hard for your father to ask you to save money for your needs just because he has trouble at work. Do not make it harder for him by showing uncontrolled temper, throwing tantrums, getting angry or sulking.
2. Tell him that you know and understand how he feels and that you will do your part to help him.



3. In cases like this, always remember that obedience means showing empathy toward your father.



Situation 3

Your sister has an important exam tomorrow and she has to study. But she was assigned to wash the dishes tonight. What will you do to show you empathize with her?



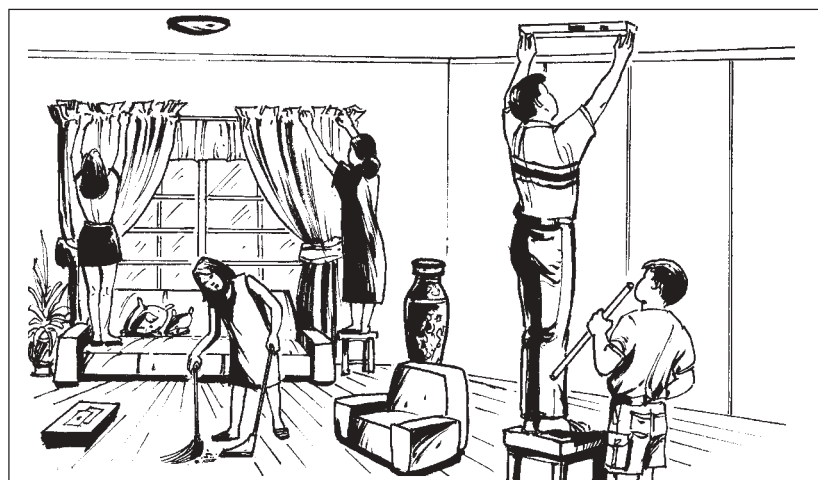
How do you think your sister would feel if you offered to help her wash the dishes? If you were in your sister's place, how would you feel? If I were in her place I would feel very grateful.





Let's Try This

Ask the members of your family how they feel when you empathize with them. Note down their feelings and compare these with yours. Do you now realize how important empathy is? Remember, empathy leads to better relationships inside the home. Empathy begets empathy.



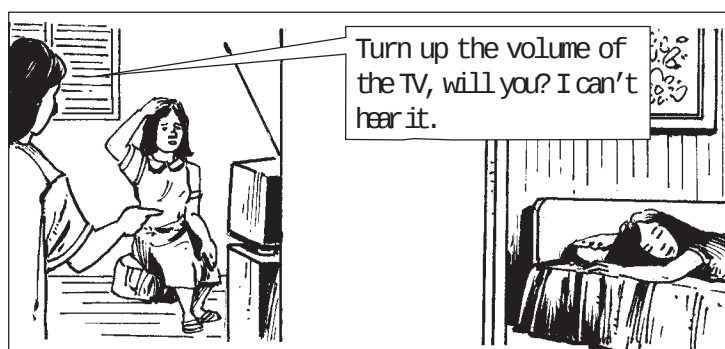
Let's See What You Have Learned

Study the comic strip below. Convert the nonempathic responses to empathic ones. Write your answers down in the spaces provided.

Situation 1



Situation 2



Situation 3



Compare your answers with the samples in the *Answer Key* on page 25. Your answers may not be exactly the same as the ones given. What's important is that you understand how empathy is shown at home.



Let's Remember

- ◆ Empathy can be shown through actions and words that convey understanding and concern.
- ◆ Your family deserves empathy from you not only because they do you a lot of favors but because they are human beings.
- ◆ Showing empathy to others may lead to receiving empathy from them, too.

Showing Empathy at Work and in School or in the Learning Center

Empathy can be shown not only at home but in other places as well. Since we spend most of our time either in school/learning center or at work, it is very important for us to show empathy in these places, too.

This lesson will tell you how to show empathy at work and in school/learning center. It will give you ideas on how to empathize with your fellow workers or classmates/co-learners. Are you ready to find out more about how you can empathize with people outside your home? Read on to know more.



Let's Think About This

Why do you think we need to empathize with people outside our homes, too? Think of classmates/co-learners or people you have worked with who are empathic to you. How do you feel toward them? How about people who are not as empathic as you are? How do you feel toward them?



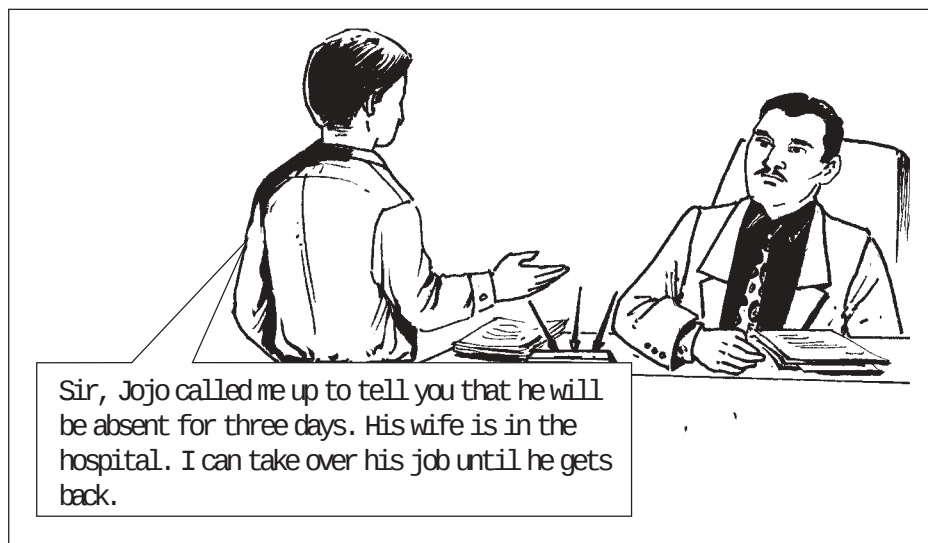
Let's Study and Analyze

Just like the people at home, your classmates/co-learners and co-workers need empathy, too, not because they have been kind to you but because they are human. Study the example given below.

Jojo works with you. He called you at home to tell you that his wife was in the hospital and that he would be absent for three days. How would you empathize with him?



You can show empathy to a co-worker by taking over his/her job or taking care of things while he/she is absent. As long as he/she has a valid reason, it is okay to empathize with him/her. How can this affect Jojo's work?



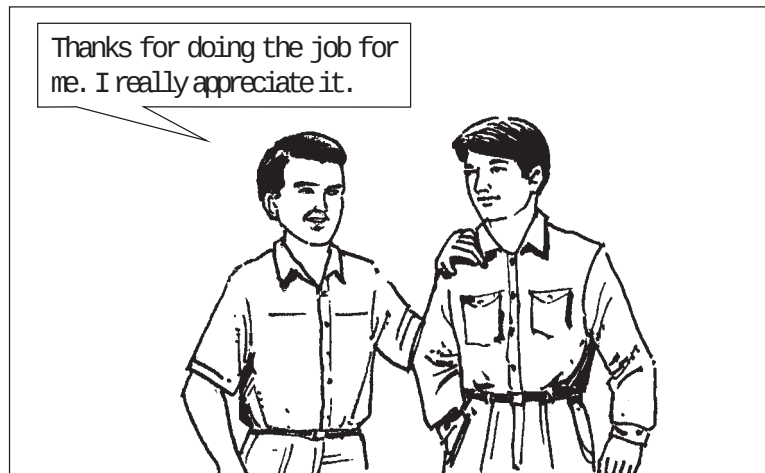
Is this the proper thing to do? Of course, because it's the humane thing to do. You would want your co-worker to do the same thing for you, wouldn't you?

What do you think would happen otherwise?



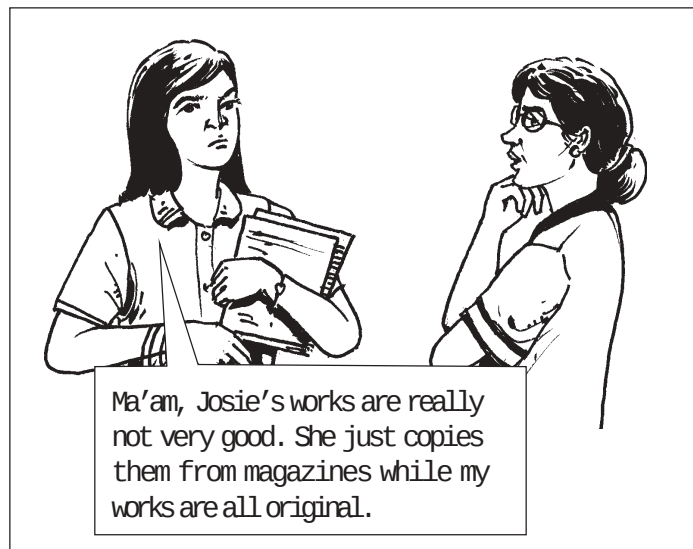
Always remember that for every action there is a reaction. Your actions always have an impact on the people around you. This effect is usually predictable. To a certain extent, an empathic person will help out his/her absent co-worker in the best way he/she can. So before you make your decision, bear in mind the consequences of your actions.

When Jojo returns, how do you think he would feel? How would his reaction affect your own feelings?



Empathy should also be practiced in school or in the learning center. This may involve respecting other people's skills and capabilities. Study the example below.

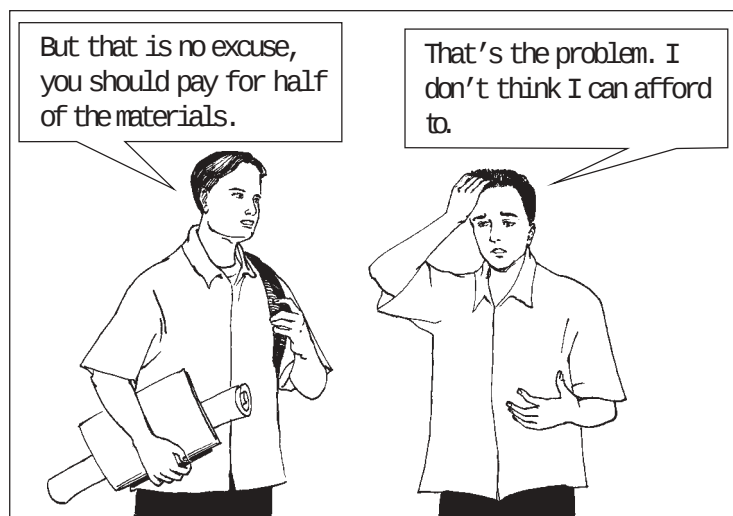
Josie is the best artist in your class. She always gets the highest grade from your art teacher. Because of this, Carla envied her. When the teacher announced that there will be an art contest and a representative shall be chosen from the class, Carla decided to talk to her teacher in private. Here's what she said.



Was Carla empathic toward Josie? In the example above, Carla clearly wasn't empathic. If she was empathic she would have appreciated Josie's talent instead of becoming envious of her.

Look at another example on the next page.

Joey and Tim were group mates in a project. Tim's family was more well off than Joey's family. Tim could afford to buy the materials needed for the project while Joey couldn't. As a result, Joey felt unhappy about the situation.



In the example above, was Tim empathic toward Joey? What would be a more empathic reaction?

Tim could show empathy by paying for all the materials himself. Then he can just ask Joey to put more effort into the project. This way, none of them would feel indebted to the other.



Let's See What You Have Learned

Answer the following questions briefly.

1. Give three examples of showing empathy at work.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
2. Give three examples of showing empathy in school or in the learning center.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____

3. Why is empathy needed even outside the home?

Compare your answers with the samples in the *Answer Key* on page 25. Your answers may not be exactly the same as the ones given there. If you are not sure of your answers just ask your Instructional Manager or Facilitator to check your work.



Let's Remember

- ♦ Empathy can be manifested outside the home, too—at work and in school/learning center.
- ♦ Being empathic can be shown by taking on a person's job when asked with reason, appreciating other people's talents and understanding others' shortcomings and incapacities.

Well, this is the end of the module. Congratulations for finishing it! Did you like it? Did you learn anything useful from it? A summary of its main points is given below to help you remember them better.



Let's Sum Up

This module tells us that:

- ♦ **Empathy** is the ability to share, understand and feel another person's feelings.
- ♦ Being human means having or showing the qualities and limitations of people, especially the weaknesses, as opposed to God, animals or machines.
- ♦ Being humane means being kind and sympathetic.
- ♦ The word **empathy** came from the Greek word *empathia* meaning "passion" or "affection."
- ♦ **Sympathy** is an understanding of and feeling for the sadness or suffering of others, often shown in expressions of sorrow or pity.
- ♦ Empathy is communicated by specific behavioral traits such as listening attentively without interrupting, saying things like "I'm with you" and paraphrasing.

- ◆ Nonverbal behaviors such as tone of voice, facial expression, head nodding and posture also affect impressions of empathy.
- ◆ Empathy can be shown through actions and words that convey understanding and concern.
- ◆ Your family deserves empathy from you not only because they do you a lot of favors but because they are human beings.
- ◆ Showing empathy to others leads to receiving empathy from them, too.
- ◆ Empathy can be manifested outside the home, too—at work and in school/ learning center.
- ◆ Being empathic can be shown by taking on a person's job when he/she is not around because of valid reason, appreciating other people's talents and understanding others' shortcomings and incapacabilities.



What Have You Learned?

A. Read the situations described below. Check the situations that demonstrate empathy.

- _____ 1. Gina's mother is sick. Gina cooked her a special dinner so she'll get well soon.
- _____ 2. Paulo is always late which affects not only his work but his officemates' as well.
- _____ 3. Diana bought flowers for her teacher's birthday.
- _____ 4. Carlo lent his notes to his classmate/co-learner who was absent because he got sick.
- _____ 5. Miguel borrowed books from the library and put marks on them which made the words very hard to read.
- _____ 6. Dennis always teases Carla for wearing torn clothes.
- _____ 7. Jopet always helps his teacher arrange the chairs inside their classroom before going home.
- _____ 8. Lisa always takes good care of the books/modules she borrows from the library.
- _____ 9. Peter never falls in line in the canteen.
- _____ 10. Manuel congratulated his friend for winning the dance contest that he, too, joined even if Manuel himself lost.

B. Take the following test to check how much you have learned so far about empathy. Each of the choices have corresponding scores. The scores range from 1 to 5 depending on your level of empathy. The higher your score is, the more emotionally intelligent you are and therefore, the more empathic.

1. I'm aware of even subtle feelings as I have them.
☐ Always ☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never
2. I find myself using my feelings to help make big decisions in my life.
☐ Always ☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never
3. Bad moods overwhelm me.
☐ Always ☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never
4. When I'm angry, I blow my top or fume in silence.
☐ Always ☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never
5. I can delay gratification in pursuit of my goals instead of getting carried away by impulses.
☐ Always ☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never
6. When I'm anxious about a challenge, such as a test or public talk, I find it difficult to prepare well.
☐ Always ☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never
7. Instead of giving up in the face of setbacks or disappointments, I stay hopeful and optimistic.
☐ Always ☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never
8. People don't have to tell me what they feel—I can sense it.
☐ Always ☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never
9. My keen sense of others' feelings makes me compassionate about their plight.
☐ Always ☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never
10. I have trouble handling conflict and emotional upsets in relationships.
☐ Always ☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never

11. I can sense the pulse of a group or a relationship and state unspoken feelings.
- ☐ Always ☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never
12. I can soothe or contain distressing feelings so they don't keep me from doing things I need to do.
- ☐ Always ☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never

Compare your answers with those in the *Answer Key* on page 26. Did you get a perfect score? If you did, that's very good. If you didn't, don't worry. Just reread the parts of the module you found difficult and you'll soon be on your way to becoming a more empathic person.



Answer Key

A. Let's See What You Already Know *(page 2)*

1. Empathy is the ability to share, understand and feel another person's feelings.
2. The answers to this may vary. Below are some sample answers.
 - a. Helping your mother with household chores
 - b. Being quiet when your sister is busy doing her assignments
 - c. Asking permission before using your brother's personal belongings
 - d. Saving money to help your father solve his problem
 - e. Turning off the lights before going to bed to help save electricity
3. The answers to this may vary. Below are given sample answers.
 - a. Covering for your co-worker when he is absent
 - b. Helping your classmate with her homework
 - c. Carrying your teacher's things when you see her in school
 - d. Keeping quiet when another classmate/co-learner is reciting in class

Let's Try This (pages 5–6)

Set 1

- A. 6
- B. 4

Set 2

- A. 6
- B. 4

Set 3

- A. 6
- B. 4

Let's Review (page 7)

1. 4
2. 4
3. 4
4. 6
5. 4
6. 6

Let's See What You Have Learned (page 8)

Encircle the following numbers: 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9 and 10.

B. Lesson 2

Let's See What You Have Learned (pages 14–15)

The answers to this activity may vary. Given below are sample answers.

1. I know you are very tired but I'm really hungry. Could you please prepare dinner for me?
2. Can you please keep the volume of the TV down? Somebody is sleeping.
3. I have to call my brother first so I can borrow his shirt.

C. Lesson 3

Let's See What You Have Learned (pages 19–20)

The answers to this may vary. Below are given sample answers.

1.
 - a. Covering for a co-worker when he is sick
 - b. Listening to an officemate's problems
 - c. Arriving at work on time
2.
 - a. Congratulating a classmate for a job well done
 - b. Helping a classmate who was absent catch up with the lessons
 - c. Helping your teacher carry her things
3. Empathy promotes better relations between people, hence the need for it even when outside the home.

D. What Have You Learned? (*pages 21–23*)

- A. Check the following numbers: 1, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 10.
- B. Look at the given scales below to get your final scores.

Use the following scale for numbers 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, and 12:

Always	—	5
Usually	—	4
Sometimes	—	3
Rarely	—	2
Never	—	1

Use the following scale for numbers 3, 4, 6 and 10:

Never	—	5
Rarely	—	4
Sometimes	—	3
Usually	—	2
Always	—	1

If you got a score of:

- 49 – 60 — You are a very empathic person.
- 37 – 48 — You are an empathic person but still need some improvement.
- 25 – 36 — You are empathic but at times you become insensitive to those around you.
- 13 – 24 — You are a bit insensitive to the people around you and need to improve on your interpersonal skills.
- 1 – 12 — You need to learn to feel for others, not just yourself.

Remember though that this quiz is not foolproof. It will just give you an idea on how empathic you are.



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Empathy at Home and at Work

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3/F Mabini Bldg., DepEd Complex
Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, Philippines
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