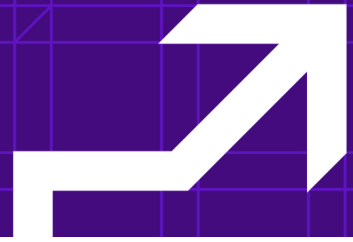


Restore and Connect with Empathy



People are complicated - and sometimes, it can be hard to understand *why* other people say what they say or do what they do. We each bring a unique perspective to shared spaces, and while it's our differences that make our collaboration so fruitful, those same differences can also present challenges.

However, if there is anything that we have learned from the challenges of the past school year of isolation and loss, it's that our **relationships with each other are invaluable**. Together, we empower each other to learn, grow, and discover in ways that we never could on our own. [Bravery](#) helped us endure hardship, and [patience](#) carried us through uncertain times – now, it's time to restore our relationships and celebrate connections with *empathy*.

Empathy can be defined as the ability to sense, understand, or detect other people's emotions and the capacity to consider what other people might be feeling. It is different from *sympathy* in that it requires us to truly step outside of ourselves and take on the perspective of another person—the proverbial “walking a mile in someone else's shoes.” Empathy can lead to *compassion*, when our understanding of another person's feelings and experiences inspires us to help them.

Children develop empathy as they grow, largely by observing it in action in the adults around them. Scientists tell us that while neurological differences change the way people experience empathy, [empathy can be fostered and encouraged](#). Even adults who might not practice empathy often can learn to be more empathetic. In the classroom and at home, practicing empathy can help children exercise kindness in their interactions with peers, the world around them, and even with themselves. Empathy is often naturally integrated into academic instruction, especially through reading and social studies, and can be explored through social and emotional instruction.

We hope that completing the activities in this care package — and spending time developing and practicing empathy — helps children and adults foster stronger relationships, navigate their communities with compassion, and step into their futures, however complex they may be, with deeper consideration of how their decisions and words impact the world.

Sincerely,

Your Friends at McGraw Hill