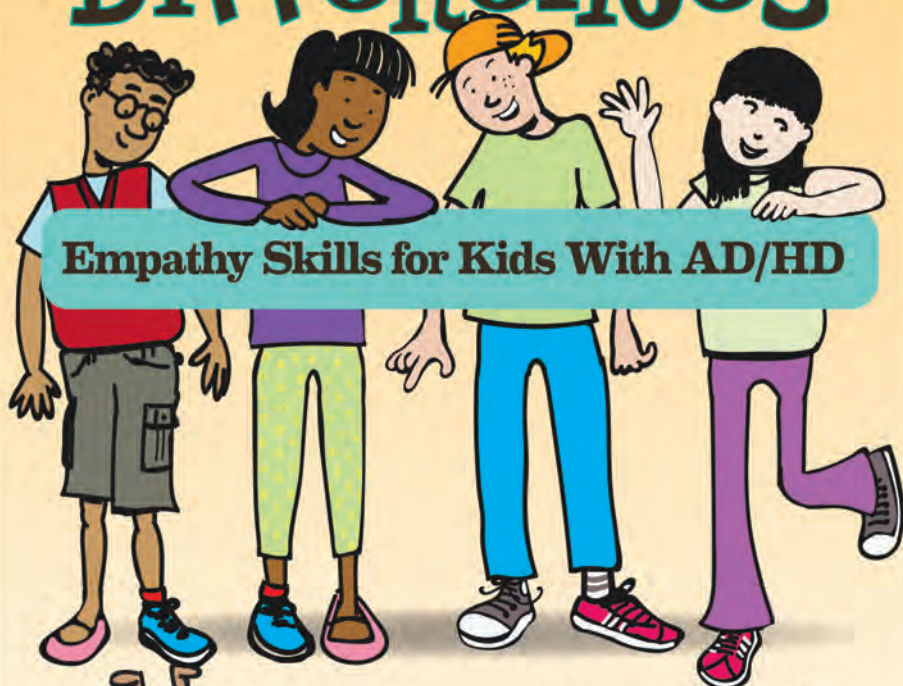


Learning to **Be Kind** and Understand Differences



Empathy Skills for Kids With AD/HD

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illustrated by Charles Beyl



What Is Empathy?



EMPATHY is the ability to understand how other people think and feel. It's a skill you can learn, and this book will help you. We will help you understand differences between you and other people and how your actions affect how others think and feel.

What Is Empathy All About?

Here's what empathy involves:

- E:** Everyone sees things differently.
- M:** My feelings—I can learn to recognize and label them.
- P:** Point of view—How I see things affects how I feel. How other people see things affects how they feel.
- A:** Ask yourself—What clues do I see or hear that show me how another person feels?
- T:** Treat others the way I want to be treated.
- H:** How I act affects how other people treat me and how I feel.
- Y:** Yes—I can put myself in someone else's shoes and understand how they think and feel!

THAT IS EMPATHY!

If you think about how other people think and feel, it can change how you act. In turn, how you act affects how others think and feel—and how they treat you. You will get along better with people when you show empathy.

Let’s look at the cartoon at the beginning of this chapter. Take a moment to think about what is happening in this cartoon and talk about it with a grown-up. What do you think the big sister is thinking and feeling?

What do you think the little sister is thinking and feeling?

Here are some ideas we thought of: Think about how each girl sees this situation. The big sister might want to protect her space. Maybe the little sister wants to spend some time with her big sister.

How do you think each girl is feeling? From their faces, it seems like the big sister is mad and the little sister is sad. Do you agree?

What do you think would have happened if the cartoon stopped right there? How do you think the girls would have gotten along for the rest of the day? How would the little sister think and feel about her big sister? How would she treat her?

But then, maybe the older sister looks at the little girl's face and sees that she is sad.

It looks like she thinks about things differently. She thinks to herself that maybe instead of trying to get into her room, her sister just wants to play with her. That changes how she feels. It looks like she is not mad anymore. Then she invites her little sister into her room and asks her to play.

Both of them end up smiling! Now, how do you think the girls will get along the rest of the day? How do you think the little sister will think and feel about her big sister? How will she treat her?

Why Is Empathy Important?

Let's think about the cartoon and the word *empathy*. What are the hidden steps that went on in this cartoon?

E: *Everyone sees things differently.*

The big sister had to understand that her little sister might see the situation differently.

M: *My Feelings—I can learn to recognize and label them.*

The big sister had to understand and label how she was feeling.

P: *Point of view—How I see things affects how I feel. How other people see things affects how they feel.*

The big sister had to put herself in her sister's shoes and think about how she might see the situation differently.

A: *Ask yourself—What clues do I see or hear that show me how another person feels?*

The big sister then had to ask herself about what clues she had about how her sister might be feeling. She may have realized from looking at her sister's face that she felt sad.

T: *Treat others the way I want to be treated.*

Maybe the big sister realized she might not like it if someone talked to her the way she had talked to her sister.

H: *How I act affects how other people treat me and how I feel.*

By inviting her sister to play, her sister probably felt good, and they both had fun instead of being upset.

Y: *Yes—I can put myself in someone else's shoes and understand how they think and feel!*

This big sister did a great job of understanding that her sister saw the situation differently. The sister changed how she thought about it and felt and acted with kindness. I bet they got along better for the rest of the day!

In the cartoon, the big sister thought about the situation one way. Then, she was able to see that her sister might think about it differently. Being aware of how her sister was thinking and feeling helped her stop feeling mad. Having empathy helped her calm down and figure out a solution that worked for both of them.

But not everyone can understand others' feelings so easily. Just as some people seem to have been born with the ability to be amazing athletes or wonderful musicians, other people are naturally more able to understand how other people think and feel. Some people, though, need to work hard to figure this out. In the rest of this book, we are going to help you learn more about empathy.

Having empathy can help you:

- feel better;
- manage your feelings when you are upset;
- get along better with your friends and family;
and
- get along better with everyone you know.

Once you practice the exercises in this book, we are sure you will get really good at understanding differences. We hope you will treat other people with kindness and they will treat you with kindness too.

Time for a Break!

Can you find the words that are hidden in the word search below?



ACTIONS
CLUES
DIFFERENT
EMPATHY

FEEL
THINK
UNDERSTAND



Learning to Be Kind and Understand Differences

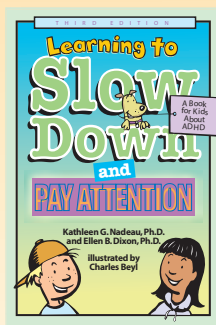
ADD/ADHD/Emotions
Ages 8–12

Every day, you are learning all kinds of new skills, such as reading, riding a bike, or playing an instrument. You can also learn skills to understand how other people think and feel—that's called *empathy*. As you develop your empathy skills, you will get along better with other people—and you will feel good about yourself, too!

Packed with exercises, pointers, and fun activities, this book will help you:

- ✓ See different points of view
- ✓ Understand that everyone shows their feelings differently
- ✓ Pay attention to your feelings
- ✓ Look for clues about what others are feeling
- ✓ Learn the connection between thoughts and feelings
- ✓ Brainstorm about why other people feel the way they do

This book is meant to be used by kids with parents or other caring adults. *Learning to Be Kind and Understand Differences* includes a note and additional resources that adults will find especially helpful.

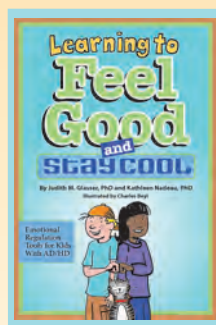


PRAISE FOR *Learning to Slow Down and Pay Attention*:

"This book is positive and upbeat...written in a straightforward style that young people can understand."
—Barbara D. Ingersoll, PhD, author of *Your Hyperactive Child*
"A very practical and useful tool." —Harvey Parker, PhD

PRAISE FOR *Learning to Feel Good and Stay Cool*:

"An amazingly clear, helpful, and non-judgmental resource."
—Pat Harvey, LCSW-C, coauthor of *Parenting a Child Who Has Intense Emotions*



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