BADGE INSTRUCTIONS
1.5 Write an Empathy Story

DETAILS

- **Time:** 1 hour (or more if you want!)
- **Materials/Equipment:**
  - Pen or pencil, piece of paper

WHAT WE BELIEVE (norms & values)

- All emotions are important (there are no “good” or “bad” emotions)
- Empathy means understanding how someone else is feeling, or understanding the situation they are in.
- Music is a form of storytelling

WHAT YOU WILL GET OUT OF THIS (objectives)

- Increased understanding of how to practice empathy
- Increased sense of connection to your community during this isolating time

ACTIVITY

Introduction
To earn this badge, you will write a story about “empathy”. First, we are going to talk about what that means. Empathy is understanding how someone else is feeling, or understanding the situation they are in. Sometimes people say empathy is like “walking in someone else’s shoes”. It means you are able to feel what someone else might be feeling, even if you are not in the same situation. When someone shows empathy, we say they are “empathetic”.

Step 1 - Learn the Three Beats of Empathy
At Amani Project, we say there are three beats to practicing empathy:

**Beat 1**
**Observe.** To understand how someone else is feeling, it is important to look at their body language and think about the situation they are in. For example: “His eyes are closed and he looks sad. Maybe he got bad grades in his exam?” or “She is walking slowly with her head down and she looks worried. Maybe she missed her bus to school?”

**Beat 2**
**Imagine.** Try to imagine what it might feel like to be in that situation, even if you are not feeling the same way. Sometimes it helps to imagine you are wearing their shoes and walking for a long time. What would that feel like to “walk in someone else’s shoes?” Even though it may seem silly to imagine walking with someone else’s shoes on, it helps us practice imagining what someone else might feel.

**Beat 3**
**Take Action.** Sometimes just asking someone how they are feeling is an empathetic action. When we imagine what someone else is feeling, we might be on the right track, or we might be on the wrong track. So it is important to also ask the person questions to make sure we understand the situation. For example: “You seem sad to me, are you feeling sad?” If they just give an answer like, “Yes, I’m sad,” then ask them why they are feeling sad. This will help you better understand their situation. It is also best to ask if you can help and what you can do to help. Sometimes, just showing support by sitting with them is showing empathy.
Step 2 - Find the Three Beats
Read the story below and try to identify the three steps for showing empathy. Underline or circle the parts where someone is practicing one or all of the 3 Beats of Empathy.

A sister and her older brother were walking home from school one day when they noticed an elderly woman ahead of them. She was carrying four large bags of groceries, and walking towards a busy street where fast cars were whizzing by.

“Look over there! Do you see that woman?” asked the sister.

“Yes, I see her. So what?” scoffed the older brother.

“It looks like she is carrying heavy bags, and she is about to cross that busy street!” said the sister. “I know what it feels like to carry heavy bags! It makes me feel so tired. It also makes me feel scared that I might drop something – especially if I have to move quickly.”

“Those bags do not look heavy to me,” replied the brother, “but I know what it’s like to feel tired and scared. Let’s ask her if she needs any help.”

They approached the woman. “Excuse me ma’am, those bags look heavy. Can we help you carry them?” the sister asked.

The woman smiled at them. “Yes! That would make me very happy. I am almost home, but my shoulders are tired. And I was worried I might fall crossing the road. Thank you for noticing and offering to help! My name is Mrs K.”

They took Mrs K’s bags, and when there was a break in the traffic, they carefully helped her across the street and to her house.

Step 3 - Write Your Empathy Story
To start writing your empathy story, think about a time when someone has shown you empathy or you have shown empathy to someone else. It doesn’t have to be about doing something to help someone, like in the story. It can be a time a friend was feeling upset or sad and you made an effort to understand how they were feeling. Can you think of someone who is feeling bad about the corona virus? Maybe a friend, brother or sister, or a parent? Jot down your story ideas on a piece of paper and choose which one you want to write about. You can interview someone in your house about how the virus makes them feel. Make sure you include the three steps for showing empathy in your story: observe, imagine, and take action. You can also draw pictures to tell the story.

Find someone you can read/perform your story to. It can be someone in your house, or a friend or family member on video chat or phone. After you read your story to them, ask them to give you helpful feedback. Helpful feedback means that they do not just say, “I liked it,” or, “I did not like it.” They need to use the word “because” to explain why they like or dislike something. This helps you learn what you did well, and what can be improved. For example, “I liked your story because I’ve been in that situation before – it was relatable.” Once you have finished, you have earned this badge! Make sure to save your story somewhere safe. You’ll be using it to make a song in the next badge.

Hey Adults! Do you have a suggestion for how to improve this activity? Or just want to tell us how much you liked it? Click here.
INSTRUCTIONS: Use this rubric to make sure the young person has completed all required steps in this project. If they did not complete each step, explain what is missing and what they will need to work on in order to get a badge. Ask the young person to come back for reassessment once they have completed each step as instructed. Once they successfully complete all required steps of this project, congratulate them and give them the appropriate badge to glue onto their Amani Project @ Home Badge Card.

Objectives:
1) Identify the three steps of practicing empathy within the story.
2) Write a new story that illustrates the concept of empathy and how it is practiced.
3) Read or perform a written empathy story in front of someone.

You must be able to answer “YES” to all questions below in order to award the badge. If you answer “NO” to any question, kindly inform the young person which step is incomplete. Offer feedback and support, but do not award the badge (sticker).

1. Did they write an Empathy Story?
   - Yes    - No

2. Did they include Step 1 (OBSERVE) in their story? To understand how someone else is feeling, it is important to pay attention to their body language and the situation they are in.
   - Yes    - No

3. Did they include Step 2 (IMAGINE) in their story? Try to imagine what it might feel like to be in that situation, even if you are not feeling the same way. Try “putting yourself in their shoes”. This is called perspective taking.
   - Yes    - No

4. Did they include Step 3 (TAKE ACTION) in their story? It is important to also ask questions to make sure we are correctly understanding the situation. Sometimes even just asking someone how they are doing is an empathetic action.
   - Yes    - No

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