

# Empathy and Compassion

Do you know how a plant grows? With water and sunlight. Think of empathy as water, compassion as sunlight, and society as the plant. Before I explain the societal significance of empathy and compassion, let me tell you why they matter to me. We all experience growth in our lives, both physically and mentally. Although growth comes from within ourselves, we can't grow without support from the outside, just like how a plant can't grow without sunlight or water. Support can mean many things. On our bad days, we have people or things that become our support, like our family, friends, or even just taking a walk outside. My support came from the empathy and compassion of others.

When I entered my freshman year of high school, I had no identity. I dressed, did my hair, and behaved like everyone else around me, yet I didn't like who I was. Who was I? I can't tell you that I suddenly discovered my identity. It was a process. I lost friends, made mistakes, and lost motivation, but because of the empathy and compassion of the people around me, I never gave up. I surrounded myself with people who would help me get to where I wanted to be in life, people who understood why I needed to discover myself and believed in my potential. I would never have gotten to this point without the empathy and compassion of the people who love me the most - my friends and my family.

Lastly, let me tell you why empathy and compassion are necessary for our society. Just like how I used empathy and compassion to grow, society does the same. Whenever there is injustice, corruption, or cruelty in our world, we as humans feel empathy and compassion for one another. This is how we change and grow as a society. We come together to stand up and fight. Our biggest inspiration should be Martin Luther King Jr, as he used peaceful protests to change the United States. His empathy and compassion changed our country.