

Applying Empathy Talents in Academics

These insights and action ideas can help you apply Empathy talents to achieve in various aspects of your academic life.

General Academic Life

- When studying a particular author, seek personal experiences and writings that help you identify with his or her thoughts and emotions.
- Whenever possible, write papers about people. This activity will engage your natural ability to pinpoint individual perspectives.
- Keep a journal in which you reflect on what you learned from other people and their passions, fears, joys, and other emotions.
- You will sense when friends are academically frustrated in courses you are taking. Let them know that you realize what they are feeling, and continue to encourage and support them.

Study Techniques

- As soon as you have an idea, write it down, including your feelings about it.
- When you read, identify how you can relate the emotions of the characters to your own or those of people you know. This will make the material come alive for you and help you remember it better.
- Ask yourself what the professor wants you to understand about the material, then try to master those aspects.
- When you're in a study group, be aware of the emotions of the other members. Help bring those feeling into the open so that others in the group can be aware of the feelings of others and you can keep your focus on the task ahead of you.

Relationships

- Discuss issues that are on your mind with your friends. You are usually there for them. Allow them, likewise, to be there for you. Share your feelings with them, because they may not be able to identify feelings as easily as you do.
- Use your Empathy talents when conflicts arise at work and other group settings.
- Be careful not to let those you support overwhelm you. Just as it is important you be there for your friends and family whenever they need you, it is crucial that you keep your academic goals a priority.

Class Selection

- Think about a major such as education or psychology, which could provide frequent opportunities to use your empathy in your future career.
- Choose professors who are known for their empathy as well as for their academic expertise.
- Classes that involve reading novels will provide you with an avenue to immerse yourself in the emotions of the characters and to learn from their approaches to situations.

Extracurricular Activities

- Become involved in activities, clubs, or organizations that will help you feel like you're making a difference with individuals through your empathy.
- Consider working with children to help them to better understand their own feelings and sort through their emotions.
- Position yourself as a confidante for one or two people. Many students feel overwhelmed at school; you'll understand and help them get through the difficulties they're facing.
- Because you're nonjudgmental and understand the feelings of individuals, you'll be a welcome addition to most groups.

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