

TURN EMPATHY INTO ACTION

Empathy isn't just a feeling; it involves actively showing compassion to others. Here are some ways to get started:

- **Shop cruelty-free.** Buy personal-care products and cleaners that aren't tested on animals. Download and share PETA's Beauty Without Bunnies app for a list of kind companies.
- **Choose vegan meals.** Just by going vegan, you can prevent nearly 200 individual animals each year from enduring a painful, terrifying death.
- **Clean out your closet.** Choose clothing and accessories made without animals' body parts, such as wool-free sweaters and boots made of vegan leather.
- **Choose kind entertainment,** such as circuses that use only human performers, sporting events that don't include animals, and movies that use computer-generated imagery instead of exploiting animals. Avoid events that force animals to perform.
- **Volunteer at a shelter** for animals or humans. Donate vegan items to a local food pantry.
- **Give to charities** that never test on animals. See [PETA.org/Charities](https://peta.org/Charities) for a list.
- **Speak up** when someone makes a racist, ableist, speciesist, or otherwise disparaging comment.



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SEE THE INDIVIDUAL

Empathy doesn't require us to see eye to eye with everyone. It simply asks us to look into another's eyes, see the individual, and respond with compassion. All individuals deserve empathy—not because they have characteristics that we admire in ourselves but because they're living, feeling beings. We can all feel joy, love, fear, and pain. When it comes to what matters, we are all the same. **Every animal is someone.**

PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL TREATMENT OF ANIMALS

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EVERY ANIMAL IS SOMEONE

And everyone deserves empathy.

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BUT WHAT IS EMPATHY?

Simply put, it's the ability to understand and share the feelings of another.

Consider the monkey who, in a crude experiment, starved himself for nearly two weeks when the only way to get food was to shock a fellow monkey. Or the 6-year-old boy in India who rushed an injured chick to a hospital with only a coin in his pocket, begging staff to help the bird. Or the blowfish who bravely remained by the side of a companion caught in plastic trash, while a diver freed the trapped fish.

We recognize empathy when we see it. But how can we develop and practice it? This booklet can help.

WHY EMPATHY MATTERS

Empathy is a powerful antidote to anger, hate, and violence. If we empathize with someone—if we understand their experiences, share their feelings, and put ourselves in their place—it's *impossible* to intentionally cause them harm. Empathy makes us want to help others and show them kindness—whatever their nationality, political views, religion, race, gender, or species.

If we could all develop empathy, there would be fewer wars, other violent conflicts, and mass shootings. We would be able to work together far better to address problems like the climate catastrophe. Cruelty to animals in its many forms—from factory farming to dogfighting—would disappear, as having empathy for animals means seeing them for who they are: *someone like ourselves*, with feelings, interests, and desires, not *something*.

BUILDING EMPATHY

Empathy is like a muscle—it grows stronger with use. Proven ways to build empathy for others include focusing on our similarities, putting aside our differences, being curious, and imagining how we would feel if we had to endure the same conditions and experiences as others.

TRY THESE IDEAS:

- **Write down a list** of traits you have in common with someone of a different race, age, religion, or species, such as “We both feel hunger and pain, we both love our families, and we both want to be free of oppression.”
- **Let go of assumptions.** Look for what might be surprising about the individual you're interacting with. (Maybe *this* cat enjoys playing in the water or *this* grandmother prefers rock music over classical.)
- **Read books about *who* animals are** (such as *Animalkind* by Ingrid Newkirk and Gene Stone or *The Animals' Agenda* by Marc Bekoff and Jessica Pierce), or watch respectfully filmed (unintrusive) nature documentaries.
- **Observe animals in their natural habitats.** For example, watch birds and squirrels outside your window.
- **Learn about the hidden lives of animals at PETA.org.**

