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sym·pa·thy  (sĭm pə-thē)

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n. pl. **sym·pa·thies**

1.

a. A feeling of pity or sorrow for the distress of another; commiseration. See Synonyms at [pity](#).

b. often **sympathies** An expression of such feeling: *offered her sympathies to the mourning family*.

2.

a. Mutual understanding or feeling between people: *"Like two frightened children, we sought at the same time to comfort one another, so quick was the sympathy between us" (Nicholas Meyer)*.

b. Agreement with or support for an opinion or position: *The mayor is in sympathy with the proposal*.

c. often **sympathies** A tendency to support a position or opinion: *a politician of conservative sympathies*.

3.

a. A relationship or affinity between things in which whatever affects one correspondingly affects the other: *"Continuous measurements of ionospheric densities ... showed a variation of noon ionization in sympathy with sunspot activity" (E.V. Appelton)*.

b. Physics A relation between bodies such that vibrations in one body cause sympathetic vibrations in another.

c. Physiology A relation between parts or organs by which a disease or disorder in one induces an effect in the other.

[Latin *sympathīa*, natural affinity, fellow feeling, from Greek *sumpatheia*, from *sumpathēs*, affected by like feelings : *sun-*, *syn-* + *pathos*, emotion; see **k^went(h)-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

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