[TITLE] HOW TO COMMUNICATE: EMPATHY TOWARD A STRUGGLING GROUP MEMBER

00:00 [ALEX is sitting on the couch in a study lounge looking at a tablet. PAUL enters the room and sits beside her.]

00:01 **PAUL**: Hi Alex.

00:03 **ALEX:** (hesitant) Oh, hi. Hey, um I meant to text you about . . .

00:09 **PAUL**: Yeah. I mean, we’ve missed you at the last couple of meetings. Have you been sick or something?

00:14 **ALEX**: (embarrassed) No. I'm sorry. I really didn't mean to. I just… well…there's a lot, I have a lot going on right now so…

00:21 **PAUL**: Okay. Look, you got a second to talk?

00:27 **ALEX**: Well, I've got class in twenty minutes, but okay. Sure. I really am sorry, Paul. Is everybody really mad at me?

[Paul sits down beside Alex. He smiles reassuringly.]

00:36 **PAUL**: (reassuringly) No, no, and we started on the idea that you had for visuals. But, I was worried when you didn't show up. Is everything okay?

00:46 [ALEX looks down and shakes her head.]

00:47 **ALEX**: Not really. It's not your problem though.

00:51 **PAUL**: Maybe not, but you know, that’s not the point. Is there anything I can do? I’m here to listen if you want to talk.

01:00 **ALEX**: That's so nice. I just overcommitted, you know? I've had some trouble with my boss changing hours on me and that messes up my daycare situation, and I'm pushing to get as many credits as I can this semester. I mean, (laughs sardonically) it all works out fine if I skip sleeping. I'm just completely stressed.

01:19 [PAUL shows surprise and takes a second to collect his thoughts.]

01:21 **PAUL**: I didn't realize that you were a mom.

01:23 **ALEX**: Yep, a little girl. Her name's Amy. She's three. She's great, but I'm a single mom, and working, and the sooner I get this degree the better. I was doing okay, but when my hours changed it got crazy.

01:38 **PAUL**: I couldn’t imagine dealing with everything that you have to deal with now and you know it’s totally fine for you to feel stressed, right? I’m sure this group project is just adding to everything.

01:49 **ALEX**: [sighs] Yeah. I just, I don't want to let the group down, thought. I just haven't figured out how I'm going to get the time for meetings.

01:57 [PAUL takes a moment to think.]

01:59 **PAUL**: Okay, well we do need you, because all those insights you had are awesome. We don’t want to lose you as a group member, so is there anything we can to help you out as a team?

02:14 **ALEX**: [thinks for a second before responding.] Well, if the group is willing, maybe we could meet at my house next time so that I can be home for Amy? My house isn't that far from campus.

02:24 **PAUL**: (encouraging) Yeah, that’s a great idea. I’ll check with the other members. I've got to get going and you've got class.

02:30: **ALEX**: Thanks, Paul.