

The Bear Cards[®]

Feelings



The Bear Cards - Feelings

Written & Illustrated by John Veeken
Published by Qcards

Dedicated to my parents Jacobus & Hendrika

The Bear Cards - Feelings

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Introduction

Welcome to The Bear Cards - Feelings.

The Bear Cards are 48 colourful, friendly bears. Their magic lies in the way they engage people, especially children, and help them to recognise, identify and talk about feelings.

The Bear Cards are unique in that they show a huge range of emotions using just facial expressions and body language, without any words. Many of the expressions can be interpreted in very different ways. The cards are suitable for any level of language or literacy skills.

The Bear Cards have become an essential resource for therapists, teachers and parents around the world.

Most people readily identify with the bear characters. They are cute, furry and free of gender, age or ethnicity.

This booklet will introduce some games and activities suitable for use with both individuals and groups. If you are a therapist, teacher, parent or someone who spends quality time with children, you may find just what you are looking for within these pages. If not, you can visit qcards.com.au and find more ideas in the 'More' and 'Explore!' pages.

The simplicity of The Bear Cards make them very flexible. Many people adapt ideas or invent their own ways to use them. We like to share new ideas. If you find a new way to use the cards we'd love to hear from you. If we put it on the web site, we'll send you a free set of cards.

The Bear Cards are published by Qcards. Each set comes with a special passkey that unlocks a large range of printable downloads available on the Qcards web site. The downloads include colour-ins, posters, blank bears, masks and a feelings dice.

Enjoy the Bear Cards. We hope you find them absorbing and useful for yourself and for those with whom you engage.

Using The Bear Cards



The Bear Cards are used in many different contexts. How they are put to work will be influenced by what you wish to achieve. They can be used informally as fun games or as part of more structured activities. Either way, encouraging children to regularly explore and talk about feelings has ongoing benefits.

Some of these benefits include:

- improving a child's **'feelings vocabulary'** and their **ability to describe feelings**;
- **talking about feelings**, even the difficult ones, becomes **easier**;
- improving a child's ability to **recognise, accept and express** their feelings in **healthy** ways;
- enhancing **empathy** and **interpersonal skills**; and
- improving individual and group **behaviours**.

Using The Bear Cards

The cards are numbered. The numbers do not represent any type of scale or score but make it easier to remember, compare or track changes of feelings over time. They are also useful for playing some of the games.

Good timing can be a major factor in ensuring good outcomes. It's best to talk about feelings with children when they are alert and receptive.

There are no set ways to use The Bear Cards, but there are **some basic rules** to follow:

- **Only you know how you feel** and that same principle applies to everyone else.
- **Feelings** are always **individual, personal and genuine**.
- **Feelings** are **never right or wrong** and there are none that a person should be feeling in any situation.

It's ok to make it up. Not everyone may want to share their true feelings, and this needs to be respected. Whatever the activity, always let the participants know they can 'pass' at any time or just make it up.

For some people, using The Bear Cards may elicit strong emotions. Just seeing a sad bear, for instance, may trigger an unpleasant memory and the associated feeling. It is important that these feelings are acknowledged and the person is given the opportunity to talk about them if they wish.

Qcards strongly advises that only qualified professional therapists use The Bear Cards for therapeutic purposes. Therapists can find more info at qcards.com.au/explore-ideas-for-therapists.

Games

Games provide fun and comfortable ways to talk about feelings using imaginary situations.

The games can increase a child's feelings vocabulary and their ability to recognise and describe different feelings.

Symbols used in the games:



- introduction



- instructions

A tip on shuffling The Bear Cards

Larger than regular playing cards, The Bear Cards are best shuffled by holding them vertically, as shown.

You can also just mix them up face-down on the table.



Cut the Deck, Me Hearties!



- This game encourages players to identify feelings and use imagination to explore how and why different feelings arise.



- Shuffle the cards.
- Players make up a pirate name and introduce themselves to the other players.
- Pirates take turns in 'cutting the deck' to select a card, placing it face up in front of them and returning the rest of the cards from their cut to the deck.
- Pirates are invited to **name the feeling** of the card they have chosen and make up a 'piratey' story about why they feel that way.
- Pirates cut the deck again and name the new feeling, telling what happened next in the story.
- If the pirates are enjoying themselves, they can keep cutting the deck and continue the stories.



Example: At the first cut a player reveals a sad bear. Their story might go like this: "I feel lonely. Today we visited a small island. I fell asleep and when I woke up the other pirates had left me there all alone."

At the second cut, the same player reveals an angry bear. "Now I am very angry because they stole my money as well."

On the third cut, the player reveals a very happy bear.

"I was so angry that I threw my sword at the ground. It made a strange sound and I realised that it hit a buried chest full of treasure.

Now I am very happy."

Shopkeeper



- *Shopkeeper* is about the connection between expectations, events and feelings.



- Shuffle the cards and deal one to each player.
- The player with the highest number becomes Shopkeeper.
- Return the cards to the bottom of the deck.
- Shopkeeper holds the deck of cards and asks each player, "What would you like to buy?"
- The player asks for anything they want.
- When asked for an item Shopkeeper says "Yes, we have only one of those left and here it is" and places a card face down in front of the player.
- The players must not look at the cards.
- When each player has a card, the Shopkeeper asks each in turn "What happened when you took your (item) home?"
- Each player makes up a story about the item they bought.
- They then turn over their card for all to see.
- Shopkeeper then chooses the winner by deciding whose story best matches the feeling on their card.
- The winner becomes Shopkeeper for the next round.

Example: Player A asks Shopkeeper for a box of chocolates. Player B asks for a pet elephant. Shopkeeper then asks each player, "What happened when you took your box of chocolates/elephant home?" Player A says "The chocolates taste like soap." Player B says "I went for a long ride on the elephant." Player A turns over a happy bear and Player B turns over a frightened bear. Shopkeeper decides that a frightened elephant rider is more likely than a happy soap eater, and declares Player B to have the best match. Player B becomes Shopkeeper in the next round.

If played by only two players the Shopkeeper also 'buys' a card and the best match is determined by agreement.

Go Feel!



- *Go Feel!* is like '*Go Fish!*' - except it encourages players to name and describe feelings to win.



- Shuffle the pack and deal seven cards to each player.
- Players only get to see their own 'hand'.
- The rest of the cards are put in an unruly pile, face down, in the centre.
- The aim is to collect consecutive numbered cards and lay them face up on the table, in runs. For example; 24,25 or 6,7,8.
- Players can add single cards to other people's runs at any time.
- Each player, in turn, can ask any other player for a card that shows one of the following:
 - a **feeling** - such as "Ruby, do you have a very sad bear?"
 - or a **behaviour** - such as "Ruby, do have a crying bear?"
 - or an **experience** - such as "Ruby, do you have a bear that has lost its favourite toy?"
- They cannot ask for a card by number or colour.
- If Ruby has a bear that matches the request, she gives it to the player who asked for it.
- If the number on the card is consecutive to any cards in their hand, they can put them down as a 'run' and have another turn.
- If the number is not consecutive to any others, the card is kept by the player who asked for it.
- If, however, Ruby does not have a very sad bear, she says "*Go Feel!*" and the player chooses another card by 'feel' from anywhere in the centre pile.
- The player who runs out of cards first is the winner.



I Remember



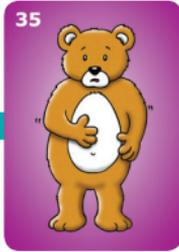
- *I Remember...* is a fun way to practice actively listening to, and acknowledging others' feelings.



- Shuffle the pack and deal four cards to each player, face down.
- Players look at their cards and then put them face down in a row .
- Each player, in turn, turns over one card for all to see.
- They name the feeling shown on the card and describe a real or imagined event that could trigger that feeling.
- The card is left face up.
- Other players need to listen carefully to remember the feeling and the event. For example, Josh turns over a smiling bear and says "Happy. This is how I feel when someone smiles at me."
- Continue until all the cards are face up.
- All players now turn their cards face down without changing their order.
- Players take turns choosing another player's card. They turn it over, name the feeling and describe the event as told by the card's 'owner'. For example "Josh feels happy when other people smile at him".
- If they can remember and repeat the story well enough, they take the card and keep it.
- If they can't remember the feeling or the event, the 'owner' of the card gets to keep it.
- Continue until no cards are left. The player with the most cards wins. If two players have the same number of cards – they both win!



The 48 Bears





Activities

Feelings activities reinforce the message that it is ok to talk about and express feelings. The activities differ from the games in that they encourage the participants to think more about their own feelings.

Most of these activities can be done with just 2 people or adapted to any size group by simply taking turns. Remind participants that it is ok to 'pass' at any time or to make it up if they feel uncomfortable.

When introducing a new feelings activity to younger children it may be useful to initially limit the number of cards to portray just the basic feelings such as happy, sad, angry, worried, afraid and surprised. More cards can be introduced as the children become more familiar with the activity.

Using a hand-held mirror with some of the activities gives children an opportunity to see what they look like when imitating the feelings.

Symbols used in the activities:



- introduction



- instructions



- questions / conversation starters



Yesterday



Reflecting on recent feelings can reinforce that the transitory nature of feelings is a normal part of life.



- Spread out the cards, face up
- Choose a card that reflects a feeling you remember clearly from the day before.
- Name the feeling and say why you felt that way.



What did you do when you felt that way?

How long did the feeling last?

Is the feeling very different from today?

If so, what has changed?

Mild to Wild



The intensity of feelings can be seen as following a continuum from mild to severe. Part of developing a good feelings vocabulary is being able to describe particular feelings more accurately.



- Choose four bears that you think look angry.
- Arrange them in a row from least angry to most angry.
- Use a different word or phrase to describe each bear.



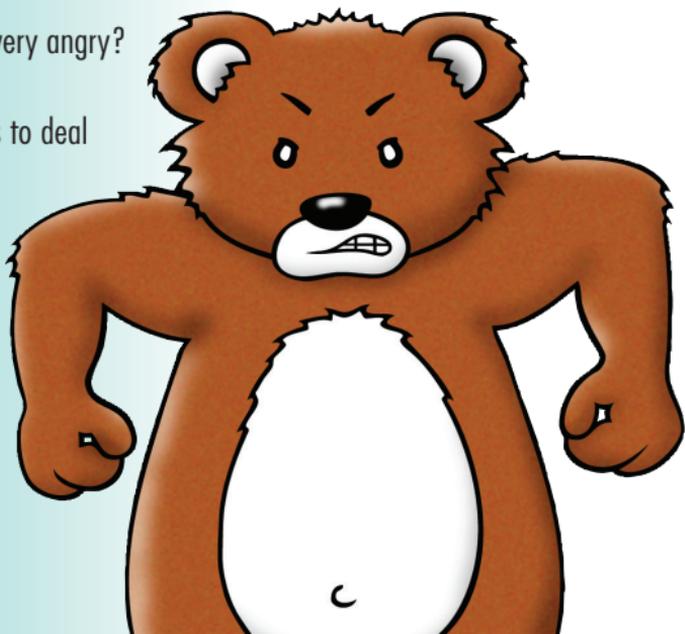
Can you think of more words or phrases for angry?

What makes you feel a little angry?

What makes you feel very angry?

What are healthy ways to deal with angry feelings?

Variation — repeat the activity for sad, happy and afraid



What, When and Where?



Memories are often of events or situations that had a significant emotional effect at the time, either pleasant or unpleasant. This activity encourages people to talk about feelings from their own perspective.

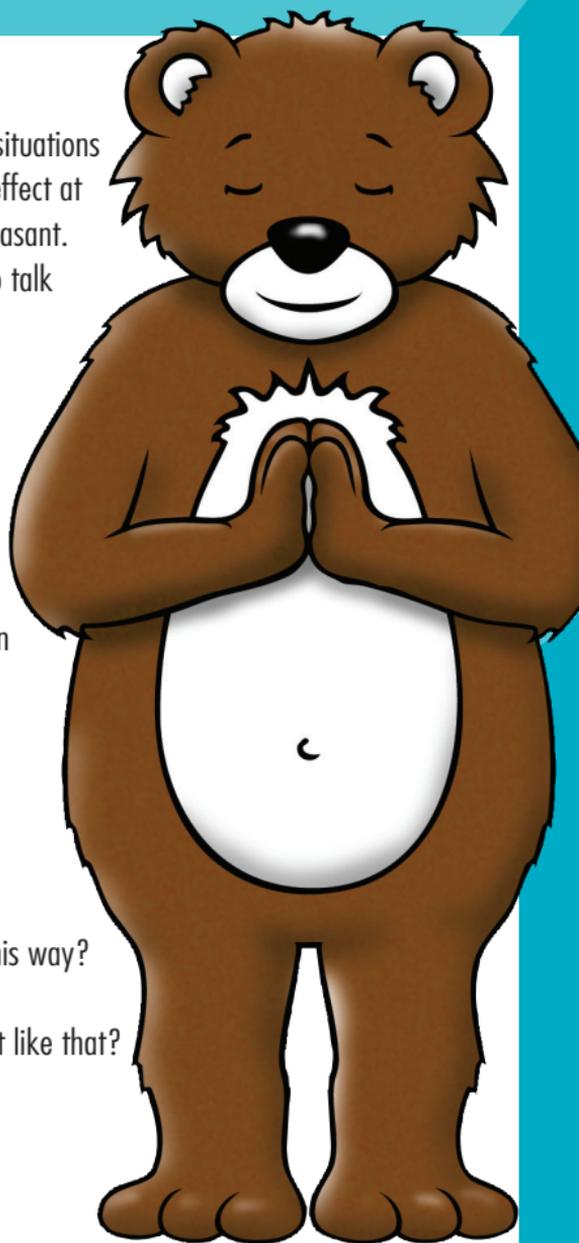


- Choose a card.
- Look at it and name the feeling.
- Describe a time and place when you have felt like that
OR
Describe a situation that would make you feel like that.



What do you do when you feel this way?

What would you do if a friend felt like that?



Once Upon A Time...



Stories encourage the reader and audience to become emotionally involved in a situation yet remain safe. They are useful in learning empathy and discovering the connections between feelings, thoughts and actions.



- Spread out the cards, face up.
- Read or recite a short story (fairy tales like Little Red Riding Hood are good), stopping along the way to choose cards that show how the characters are feeling. You can focus on just one character if you wish.
- As the story continues you can make a storyboard of feelings.



How would you feel if you were in the same situation as the character?

Would you have acted in the same way as the character?



Ape that Bear



Role playing feelings can increase awareness of how emotions affect the physical body. Tense muscles, increased heart rate, blushing, tremors and 'butterflies' in the stomach are just some physical responses to feelings. An awareness of these sensations helps to more easily recognise the accompanying feeling as it arises. Just by taking a moment to acknowledge a sensation and name the feeling, one can instantly lessen its effects.



- Choose a card.
- Name or describe the feeling.
- Think of a situation that would make you feel like that.
- Imitate the facial expression and body language of the bear.
- Hold the pose, close your eyes and think about what parts of your body are influenced by the feeling.



Where in your body did you feel it most?

How strong was the sensation?

Have you felt that sensation before?



Ups and Downs



Conversations about both pleasant and unpleasant feelings reinforce the fact that having highs and lows is perfectly normal and healthy. Simply being aware that unpleasant feelings do occur, helps to keep them in perspective and makes situations easier to deal with.



- Spread out The Bear Cards.
- Think of the **worst** thing that happened during the day (or week) and choose a bear that best shows how you felt about it at the time.
- Now think about the **best** thing that happened during the day (or week) and choose a bear that best shows how you felt about it at the time.
- Describe the situations which evoked both feelings.



Why did you feel like that at that time?

Was your worst time an isolated incident or something that is likely to happen again?

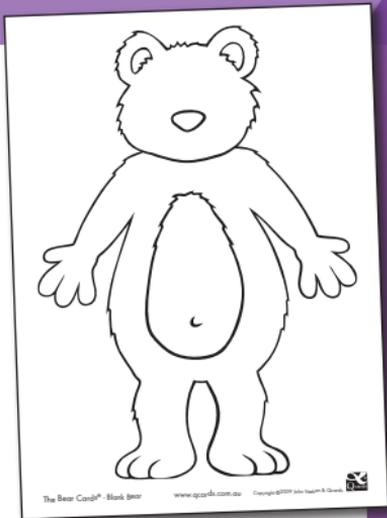
What could you do to make the unpleasant times better in the future?

What could you do to make the pleasant times more frequent?

Using The Bear Cards Downloads

With every set of The Bear Cards comes a **Special 6 Digit Passkey** which you can use to access all the downloads for free. Visit qcards.com.au/special-passkey

The Bear Cards Downloads can extend the games and activities. You will find high quality, black and white A4 posters of all the bear characters that can be printed, copied and re sized. There are also masks and a feelings dice.



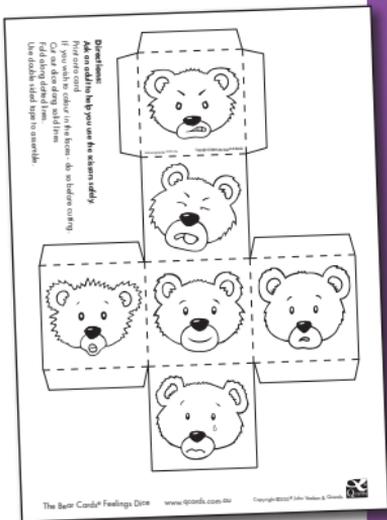
You can use The Bear Cards Downloads for the following activities:

Colouring

Think about what colours match the mood of the bear. Colour the parts of the body where you can notice changes when you feel this way.

Drawing

Think about what shapes you could draw around the bear to match its mood. Draw a background scene to match the feeling. Use the Blank Bear to draw your own feelings.



Using The Bear Cards Downloads

Writing

Write words on or around the bear that describe how it is feeling. Write the things that make you feel that way.

Playing

Use the Bear Masks to act out the feelings.

Use the Feelings Dice to incorporate a random element into games and activities.

Use the All 48 Bears — 8 per page to make Bear Bingo play sheets.

Showing

Put up a poster of the bear you want to be. Put up posters of the feelings being discussed in the group.

About Qcards

Qcards aims to provide the best card sets available for promoting social and emotional well being. Our cards are easy and fun to use by anyone. They require no expert knowledge and instructions are written in plain English. The Bear Cards is our first title.

The cards are supported by an extensive and expanding range of information and resources available to download at qcards.com.au, where specialists in welfare, health and education will find more detailed information particular to their area of expertise. The site also includes links to other web sites providing further useful information.

About Qcards

Qcards acknowledges your wisdom and creativity and gratefully accepts any feedback or ideas on how to use the cards in different ways.

We publish the best ideas on our web site and will send a free set of cards to anyone who submits an idea that appears on the site.

Qcards was established by John Veeken. John has over 25 years of professional experience in community based mental health care. He has also illustrated many children's books and health and well-being publications. John illustrated the original Bear Cards, Strength Cards, Strength Cards for Kids, Views from the Verandah, Strengths in Teams and The I Can Monster card sets for St Luke's Innovative Resources. He also illustrates mental health, reproductive health and family law information kits.

John runs a graphic design service and, when he gets the chance, he loves to make beautiful things with rusty barbed wire.

Qcards relies on the contributions and expert advice of many talented people. Significant contributors to The Bear Cards were Sandy Harman and Jan Dooley. Sandy co authored the first booklet and provided a wealth of creative ideas. Jan, a social worker and counsellor, has shared her wisdom with these bears since they were cubs.



About your Passkey

The special passkey on the enclosed sticker sheet gives you access to **The Bear Cards Downloads** - a range of printable resources *free* to purchasers of The Bear Cards. Just visit qcards.com.au and follow the links to use your 6 digit passkey code.

The Bear Cards Downloads includes a poster version of every card and a 'blank' bear to draw on and colour in, game and activity accessories, 'feelings' dice, masks and more.



The Bear Cards® Feelings STICKER BOOK



For rewards, reminders, motivators, games, activities or just great decorations, **The Bear Cards Feelings Sticker Book** is a fun way to explore and share feelings.

This handy book includes 4 sets of all 48 original Bear Cards characters plus 4 sets of 12 unique happy bear faces. That's a total of **240 Stickers**.

Express yourself, send a message or just have some fun!

Available Now at www.qcards.com.au



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