



**Time for a little spring cleaning?
Ready for some fresh spring growth?
Why, it's September and we're springing
into Spring at Innovative Resources!**

In this month's Ideas Bank, take a look at a leafy perennial, *Growing Well*. Discover ways to notice change and monitor growth with this resource which borrows the timeless metaphor of a seed becoming a tree.

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The virtue of versatility

Psychologist Sue Roffey explains why she loves using the *Symbols* cards and marvels at the potent reflections they unlock.



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Strength in Circles

Teachers and educators: this one's for you! Get ready for a peppy card set that harnesses the power of Circle Solutions.



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Meet our giveaway winner

When Sue Stergo won July's SOON giveaway, she sent us a gift in kind. Check out her deeply expressive imagery created with the help of *The Bears*.



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Growing Well

Growing Well features 50 statements that can be used as indicators of well-being. Each statement is accompanied by a scale showing the six stages of a seed growing from a seedling into a tree. Use these cards to notice, describe and celebrate personal change and growth—even when words seem inadequate.

Supporting elite and gifted individuals

When young people or adults possess unique abilities in a specialist field, such as mathematics, music or sport, there may be times when the development of those gifts cuts across the development of other important life skills. *Growing Well* can be used by psychologists, coaches or individuals themselves to reflect on aspects of personal well-being that may be neglected or need more attention:

- Which cards do you rate well on?
- Which ones do you have most trouble with?
- Which statements suggest additional skills you'd like to develop?
- Can you develop these additional skills by yourself or could you use some help?
- What skills/statements would you like to make priorities?
- Do any of the cards suggest skills that are important to develop, even though you may prefer to focus your energies elsewhere?

Monitoring and recording mental health

The *Growing Well* scale can be filled in by clients, or by clients and workers together, to provide a record of how a person is travelling. This can be tested against the perceptions of others. It can also be compared to snapshots taken at other times to note changes.

- Which cards are the important considerations for you?
- Are some cards a problem now? Have some cards been a problem in the past? Have some cards never been a problem?
- Which of the cards do you do really well? Might these give some clues about how to tackle the cards you find more difficult?
- Using the scaling boxes, how might your responses now differ to your responses a week, month or six months ago?
- Which statements show the greatest change? What contributed to that change? Does this change suggest strengths you might draw on in the future?

Evaluating service performance

Facilities that provide permanent care or support for clients can adapt *Growing Well* to capture feedback and identify areas where services may need improvement. A selection of cards may be used to check how effectively the organisation is helping people to stay healthy, active and connected.

- Which statements are important for clients' welfare?
- Which cards would your clients consider most important?
- Invite clients to respond to statements using the scale on each card. Which statements attract lower ratings? Which ones attract higher ratings?
- Which aspects of service delivery do people's responses suggest might need improvement?



Creative therapies with *Growing Well*

The image of a seed growing into a tree offers a timeless metaphor for growth and change. For professionals or individuals interested in art therapy, journaling or creative expression, *Growing Well* can be used for a range of activities that explore the journey through life and what it takes to stay healthy.

- Take a statement from one of the cards that you think is important (e.g. 'I stay healthy by eating well') and create a collage of images from magazines and newspapers.
- What does well-being look like to you? Draw your own tree representing your vision for well-being. Does your tree provide shelter for others? What extraordinary flowers or seedpods might it produce? What natural forces can it withstand? How might you decorate your tree for a celebration?
- Are any of the statements on the cards very significant for you? Write one of these statements in your journal and use it as a prompt for writing.
- Like people, trees are shaped by their experiences: by wind and storms, pruning, confined spaces—even carved graffiti! Using a camera, collect images of resilient trees from around your neighborhood. What strengths do they show? Do they suggest any strengths you might also draw on?

Growing Well can be used by psychologists, coaches or individuals themselves to reflect on aspects of personal well-being that may be neglected or need more attention.



GROWING WELL KIT

Booklet author: Russell Deal
 Designer: Tim Lane
 The kit contains 50 laminated cards
 140mm x 140mm (in polypropylene box),
 32-page booklet and five A4 scaling pads
 of 25 sheets each (vacuum-wrapped).

Product Code: 4300 \$75.00 inc. GST

In the Spotlight

The virtue of versatility



Meet Sue Roffey. She's a psychologist, author and activist. She's the Director of Wellbeing Australia, an Adjunct Associate Professor at the University of Western Sydney, an Affiliate of the Wellbeing Institute at Cambridge University, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and... Well, let's just say, she's a dynamo who juggles a lot of hats!

What really matters is that Sue is also the creator of *Strengths in Circles*, a brand new card set coming soon to Innovative Resources. And besides that, she's also a fan of the *Symbols* cards as she reveals below...

Of all the wonderful tools created by Innovative Resources, I find that the *Symbols* cards have the most versatility. I have used them in many ways in multiple contexts and they have invariably sparked rich conversations.

Here are just a few of these.

I run a Changing Behaviour course and ask participants to choose two *Symbols* cards—one that represents where they are with a student now, and one that represents just one change they would like to see. Then they discuss their choices with a partner and during this conversation each person devises three steps they might take to get from card one to card two. Often these steps are simple, such as:

- I will smile more at this student,
- I will give them time to calm down when they display high levels of emotion,
- I will find out something that interests them so I can have a conversation that is not just about how they are doing at school.

I have used the cards in a similar way in the Circle Solutions trainer program designed for schools and community groups. For example, I might ask 'Which symbol represents where your school is at now and which represents your ideal?' It probably takes more than just three steps to get anywhere near the vision in this case, but once you know where you are heading you can make plans to go in the right direction.

On another occasion, *Symbols* was a real help with work I was doing as a researcher with Respect4Us, a specialist UK organisation that supports young people who are struggling with mainstream schooling. I wanted to have conversations with some secondary age students, who were out of school on account of their 'unmanageable



behaviour'. I used the *Symbols* cards inviting them to start the interviews, spreading the cards out and inviting them to 'Choose a card that makes you think of your old school and the relationships you had there, and one that represents what happens here.'

One girl looked at all the cards and said 'Where's the pile of shit?!' We decided that the image which looked like a cloud would do! She didn't think much of her old school and had clearly not been too popular with her teachers. She then picked one for Respect4Us. It was a heart and when I asked her why she had chosen it she said, 'They love you here, the teachers really care about you'. Powerful words.

The same cloud card was chosen by a teacher in a workshop in Denmark last May when we were exploring what we meant by 'shared humanity'. For her it was an indication that 'we all lived under the same blue sky'. Another chose a tree: our roots are in the same ground but we branch out in different ways. On our table the conversation was vibrant: 'How can we help our students learn to honour and respect both our uniqueness and our differences? And, most importantly, seek the commonalities we all share?'

For me it's the thread of shared humanity that binds us—for when we break it we are all undone. Shapes, squiggles and signs producing a wealth of creativity and reflection. Who'd have thought it?

Sue Roffey

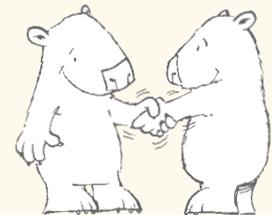
Strength in Circles

New Card Set For Schools!



COMING IN OCTOBER

Educators and facilitators: Help groups build environments where everyone thrives.



Discover what many Indigenous communities have known forever: sitting in a circle with others and establishing simple, respectful guidelines for communicating might just be the most useful solution-finding technique ever invented!

The Circles Solutions approach to groups and teams is safe, respectful, democratic, inclusive and strengths-based. Each *Strengths in Circles* card contains a building block for putting circles into practice—in schools, teams, organisations and communities.

\$49.50 inc GST Cat no. 4932



ORDER NOW!

SOON



In the Mailbag

Meet our SOON giveaway winner

When Sue Stergo is asked how to describe herself, she pauses. She's a Creativity Life Coach in her email signature, she's done graphic design and 'tried singing'. Sue's happy to be labelled 'artist', but that's only half the story. In fact, she has a flourishing interest in art therapy—and right now, she's studying an Advanced Diploma of Therapeutic Arts in Counselling at Chiscolm TAFE, plus a Diploma of Community Services Work!

AND Sue loves Innovative Resources' card sets. She first came across the *Strength Cards* during a support group session on mindfulness run by her local council. She has the *Angels* cards and mentions excitedly, 'I just got *The Bears App!*' She's used the app already for a couple of assignments, including a reflective exercise with a full-length mirror. 'I use *The Bears App* on my iPad. I picked three bears and looked at their expressions, then practiced mirroring them. I sat there and thought 'how do I look and how do I feel?'" Then Sue set crayon to paper to capture the results.

The *Angels* have also charmed their way into her activities. 'I brought them out for a community church group,' Sue explains, 'And we all



'I enjoyed doing some quick sketches of these darker or scarier emotions that *The Bears* help bridge.'

Sue Stergo

took a card which seemed as though it might say something to us.' The cards created a terrific opportunity for everyone to share. 'It's amazing. You go so quickly from people talking about 'my day' to saying what's in their heart. We had a couple of kids in the group, and they really enjoyed the cards too. It was so sweet and cute!'

We reckon Sue will find lots of creative ways to put her winner's voucher to good use. And special thanks, Sue, for sharing the sketches created for your reflective exercise with *The Bears*.

NOW AVAILABLE!

Walking the Boundaries:

Exploring everyday ethics in human services

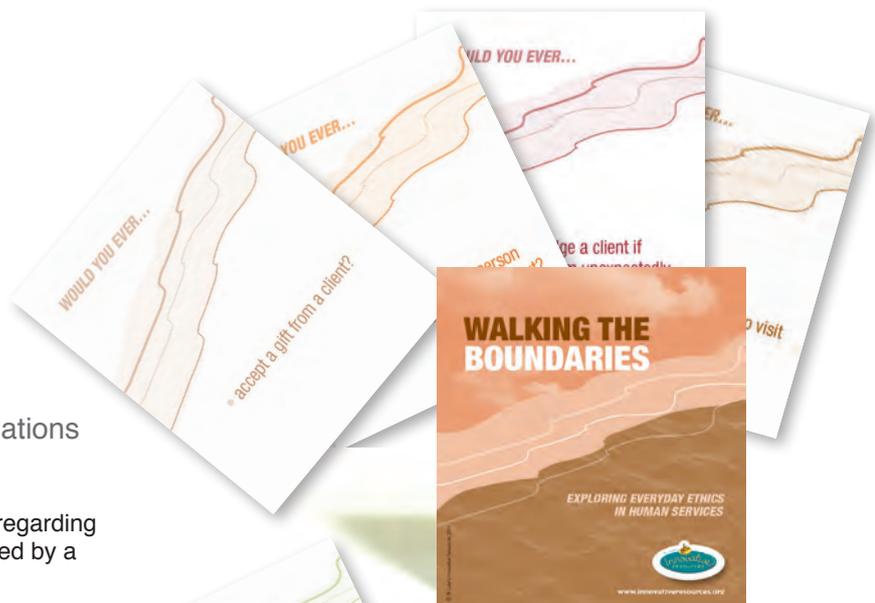
Every human service profession and most organisations have code of conduct guidelines.

But practitioners face a myriad of everyday ethical decisions regarding both clients and colleagues that may not be clear-cut or defined by a code of conduct.

The 80 *Walking the Boundaries* cards pose just some of the questions that practitioners have to negotiate every day where there is rarely an absolute right or wrong answer.

Walking the Boundaries has been designed by social workers for all human service practitioners to consider. It is particularly relevant to orientation processes for new staff, for supervision and for team-building.

If you want to immediately unleash hours of discussion and debate in your team of practitioners open a pack of *Walking the Boundaries* and stand back!



WALKING THE BOUNDARIES

Author: Russell Deal
Designer: Mat Jones
80 full-colour, laminated cards, 105mm x 120mm
Polypropylene box with 44-page booklet
ISBN: 978 1 920945 78 7

Product Code: 4805 \$49.50 inc. GST

Workshops and Training

Strengths Approach Training

Sometimes 'the problem' can be all-consuming, making us feel stuck and creating barriers to change. Strengths-based practice refocuses our energies and attention by helping us identify, mobilise and celebrate strengths. And everyone has strengths—they are our qualities, capacities, relationships, values, stories, experiences, skills and more. In this workshop with Andrew Shirres, we'll explore the principles and skills of strengths-based practice including: the values and beliefs of the strengths approach, 'power over' vs 'power with', the 5-column approach, and the skills of externalising, scaling, reframing and normalizing.

DATE: Tuesday 8 September, 9.30am-4pm

VENUE: Innovative Resources, 62 Collins Street, Kangaroo Flat (Bendigo)

COST: \$198.00

The Literary Therapist (2-day workshop)

It's back! The Literary Therapist is our interactive workshop that uncovers the potential of creative writing to refresh our spirits, open doorways for clients and be part of our repertoire of self-care strategies. Join us to explore the importance and power of creative writing as a tool for engaging with clients in counselling and in group work, with colleagues in supervision and strategic planning, with communities in teaching and presentations, and with ourselves through our own critical reflection and self-care.

The workshop covers a wide range of practical, readily-useable ideas, skills and prompts to bring writing alive in some very novel ways, from moon writing to stretched listing. Perfect for anyone who works with people and is passionate about writing ... or would like to be more so!

DATE: Monday 12 & Tuesday 13 October, 9.30am-4pm

VENUE: Buda Historic Homestead, Castlemaine, Victoria

COST: \$385.00

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Innovative Resources

We really value our relationships with the teachers, trainers and dedicated human service professionals who use our products, and we'd like to reward our loyal customers with the opportunity to join a new membership scheme.

Here is what you'll receive for your free membership:

- 10% discount on all purchases
- Exclusive specials throughout the year
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- Additional rewards for signing up new members
- Our monthly online newsletter
- The opportunity to test out new resources and provide feedback

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- receive regular updates about our products (but we won't spam you!)
- participate in product development surveys

Interested? Visit our website and go to the '[Members](#)' page.



Head to the [Innovative Resources website](#) to find out more about these events and to register.



The absolute classic for talking about feelings—now available as a simple App for your mobile device!

The Bears have a worldwide reputation for their ability to invite people from all cultures to identify, talk about and constructively harness their feelings. Now you can download all 48 Bears onto your mobile device—and let them to do the talking!

The Bears App gives practitioners, clients, children and adults simple and fun ways of giving immediate feedback, encouragement, reminders and messages about feelings using a much-loved metaphor. Keeps your B ears about you, on the road and in your pocket!



THE BEARS APP

[AU\\$1.29 \(Apple\)](#)

[AU\\$1.99 \(Android\)](#)



SOON

In the Mailbag

POSTCARD FROM SINGAPORE

Here are the exquisite *Angels* cards, snapped in action in Singapore. This group of university students used the cards as prompts for conversations and creative activities while on internship. You can also see the *Angels* cards spread out with *Choosing Strengths*. Many thanks, Kumar!



DON'T FORGET...

Add a spark to conversations this Father's Day—and discover the many sides to the men in your family!

