

# Deep Speak



Anyone who spends time with young people can use *Deep Speak* to build rich conversations about some of life's big questions... and some of the little quirky ones as well!

This classic card set—a must for classrooms—feature 120 questions pertinent to the issues that absorb young people as they deal with relationships, identity, emotions, beliefs and values. But they're not just for young people—they can be used with people of all ages as you'll see in the suggestions below.

## Respectful listening

Listening well to someone tell a story—without interrupting or asking questions—can sometimes be harder than we expect! *Deep Speak* can be used in group activities to practice listening carefully and responding respectfully.

Invite participants to form pairs and ask each person to choose a question they feel comfortable answering. Each person has two minutes to talk about their answer to the question. Listeners may only interrupt to affirm what has been said or ask a relevant question. At the end of the two minutes, listeners and speakers swap roles.

At the end of the exercise, invite the group to reflect on their listening capacities. Was the experience of listening quietly simple or challenging? How much could listeners remember? How did participants decide when to interrupt to continue listening?

## Cards for the journey

The *Deep Speak* cards are fantastic for long trips by car, bus or train. Be surprised and intrigued by the answers of the people you already know best. The cards are ideal for inspiring rich discussions between parents and adolescents, partners and colleagues—just remember, no put downs and everyone has the right to pass on any card without explanation.

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## Journaling and blogging

While *Deep Speak* was primarily designed to be a conversation-building tool, the cards pose many interesting and soulful questions that some people will enjoy responding to in writing. You might prefer to select card(s) as a focus for journaling or for blogging, like one teacher who was inspired to blog in response to the card 'What do you think is the hardest thing for young people today?'

Here are some questions you might like to try to add creativity to your responses:

- Does a particular *Deep Speak* card remind you of someone you know?
- Pick a question and write the answer you think you might have given when you were ten. What answer would you give today? What answer do you think you might give many years from now?
- Pick a question and imagine two characters—perhaps they are two characters within you. What do they have to say to each other in response to the question?
- Pick a card(s) at random. If you could give the card to anyone, who would you most like to answer the question. Why?

## The art of asking questions

While the questions on the *Deep Speak* cards invite answers, they can also be used to explore how and when we chose to ask questions in different situations. Counsellors, teachers, carers and facilitators can use *Deep Speak* to reflect on the importance of cultural sensitivity, respectful relationships and personal values. Questions to explore might include:

- Which questions do you feel comfortable asking? Which ones feel more challenging?
- How might you go about asking difficult or challenging questions?
- What factors affect how comfortable you feel asking someone a challenging question?
- How do other members of your group decide what questions they are willing to ask? What roles do people's personal values and beliefs play?
- Can you choose a card(s) that you might be unwilling to answer in some situations? In what circumstances would you be willing/unwilling to answer the question? What factors would influence how you felt?

## DEEP SPEAK

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