



Ups and Downs



One does not need to live at the edge of the sea to appreciate the significance that seas and oceans have for us emotionally and spiritually. In *Ups and Downs* we have a small, very pink character sailing a bathtub (of all things!) through the vicissitudes of life.

These cards will appeal to sailors, coast dwellers and land-lubbers alike, but they have also proven to be invaluable in working with survivors of natural disasters—drought, bushfire and floods—who find the sailing metaphor a safe way of exploring their emotional ups and downs. Use your creativity to adapt the cards to your specific needs. Here are some ideas to get you started.

A Life on the Waves

Use *Ups and Downs* to link together life's key moments and tell a person's story. Invite the participant to scan the cards and pick 6 or more cards representing significant events or experiences.

- Did you ever have a particular destination in mind? Did you reach that destination or did you change course?
- Did you ever struggle to stay on an even keel?
- Which cards represent the highlights of your voyage?
- What strengths did you rely on to weather the storms or reach land?
- Were you ever totally becalmed?
- Who helped keep you afloat? Did anyone ever throw you a life line?
- What have you learned from the voyage so far?

Establishing Goals and Purpose

Use the cards to open gentle conversations about goals and planning for the future. Just like the little pink Everyperson, we can never be sure what's over the horizon, and that makes the cards particularly good for discussing strategies to surmount the difficulties that may arise on the journey.

- Do you know where you are sailing to? Is there a card that represents how you will be feeling when you reach your destination?
- Do you know what you want to achieve on your journey through life?
- How ship-shape is your boat? Do you have all you need to complete your journey?
- Pick cards that represent challenges you might face on the way. How might you tackle these challenges?

Change and Transitions

Like the sea we are constantly changing. Like the sea, life around us is also in continual flux. *Ups and Downs* can be used to help groups and individuals reflect on times of change and preferred coping strategies.

- Choose a card(s) that represents how you feel when things are about to change in life.
- Which card represents how you feel most of the time?
- Are you in a time of stability or transition now?
- When change occurs, what helps to you go with the flow or sail with the wind behind you? What makes the journey harder?
- Can you select a card that shows how you prefer to feel when change is approaching?

Creative Activities in the Classroom

Teachers can use *Ups and Downs* as a prompt for creative storytelling in an array of different forms. Here are just a few ideas to try with students:

- Turn all the cards down and randomly choose 5-6 cards. Arrange the cards in an order that tells a story. Now tell that story using only sound effects!
- Chose a card from the set. Create a six word story about the card.
- Invite each student to pick two cards each. Now, working in pairs, act out a story that connects all four cards. While one student takes the part of the sailor, the other student may take one or multiple roles to support the action.



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Innovative Resources
62 Collins Street, Kangaroo Flat
Victoria 3555 Australia

e: info@innovativeresources.org
w: innovativeresources.org