

## V3 Self Reflection

### The solitaire of Feelings and Needs Exploration

Self-reflection is an opportunity to clarify thoughts, ease uncomfortable feelings, celebrate positive feelings, and move into connecting needs to feelings. The resulting clarity improves decision-making, communication, productivity, and your presence with others.

While most people seek tools such as Listening Game Cards to help with challenging situations or relationships, it's also important to give yourself the opportunity to identify and name positive feelings.

Connecting met needs to positive feelings is a form of positive reinforcement – keep going you! The confidence of knowing what makes you feel content, competent, or happy is as important as knowing what unmet needs might be impeding your path to experiencing positive feelings more often.

Akin to classic solitaire games, self-reflection with Listening Game Cards takes many forms. Here are two common approaches. You may find that an *On-The-Go* version works well sometimes, and at other times, a *Take-It-All-In* approach works best. Of course, there are other ways to use the cards for self-reflection. Adjust your practice to fit your setting and needs.

### PLAY

#### On-The-Go

This approach presumes that feelings and needs decks are readily available. For example, I keep a set in a tray on my office desk and another set in a tray on a bookshelf at home. Some workplaces leave cards in publicly accessible activity spaces.

Imagine that you are preparing for an uncomfortable or awkward conversation with a boss, teacher, or other authority figure.

- Pick up a small stack of feelings cards, look through them, and select 2 or 3 that fit the situation. Take a moment to say the feelings words out loud
  - Naming helps to calm the brain. Psychologist Dan Siegel is famous for the saying, “Name it to tame it.” Listening Game Cards can help you to get comfortable with naming
- Place the feelings cards on a surface, allowing room to add needs cards

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- Pick up a stack of needs cards to connect to the named feelings. Keep working through small stacks of needs cards until you are satisfied that enough needs have been identified
- Say the needs out loud as you connect them to a feeling or feelings
- Step back and take a helicopter view of what you've named
  - Narrow the needs cards to the top 2 or 3 most impactful
  - Say each of the top 2 or 3 needs out loud using a positive connection statement such as ...

I am feeling \_\_\_\_\_ for the beautiful need of \_\_\_\_\_.

Allow yourself the time and grace to reframe and to consider multiple approaches to how you will pursue getting your needs met while staying keenly aware that the other person also has feelings and needs.

Possible questions to consider:

- What can I ask of myself?
  - For example, to be patient and wait for the other person to finish talking before I ask to be heard
- Who might I need to make a request of?
  - Name them
- What might I ask them for?
  - Be as specific as possible
- How might I frame a request to them?
  - Practice makes perfect
- What might their response look like?
  - Preparing for the best, worst, and most likely
- What will the most likely impact of my request to them be on me?
  - Preparing for how you will respond to their response to your request
- When and how will I check in with myself to confirm that I'm staying on track?
  - For example, I commit to taking a few minutes every Saturday to work with feelings and needs exploration

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### PLAY

#### Take-It-All-In

Place the feelings cards face-up on a large surface

- Look at each card individually, selecting which cards fit the moment or the specific scenario you are contemplating
- Set aside the cards that aren't related to this specific situation
- Take time to notice the variety and complexity of the feelings involved in the situation you are considering
- Consider stacking the cards to get a 3D visual of how 'big' the collection of feelings is
  - Fewer cards may not represent simplicity or ease, though may help with focus
- Select the top 3 to 7 feelings cards that most resonate and leave them face up, setting the others aside
- Say the feelings cards out loud before moving into needs. (Name it to tame it!)
- Review the needs cards. As needs resonate with the feelings, set the needs card next to the most relevant feeling card(s)
- Take a helicopter view of the feelings and needs before you
  - Allow yourself time to breathe, think, and notice how your body responds. Less tension? More calm?
- Select the top 3 to 7 needs cards that you will consider for further action, such as goal setting; say them out loud
  - It can be helpful to write down goals – even if they change, writing them down may facilitate changing them for the better
- Consider what questions to ask yourself and/or other(s) to help you achieve your goals – use the list of questions above detailed in the *On-The-Go* version as a guide

### MODIFICATION

- Place both feelings and needs decks face-up on a large surface
- Pick up cards that resonate, setting the others aside
- Place the selected cards on the surface with feelings on one side and needs on the other, optionally connecting individual feelings with individual needs
- Consider how you will work with the selected feelings and needs using the previously detailed methods as a guide