

# Read-aloud *discussion* cards

*12 conversations for big feelings, real bodies, and brave choices*

FOR PARENTS & EDUCATORS



A free SEL printable from *Wooden House Books*

## HOW TO USE THESE CARDS

# One card. One *conversation*. No pressure.

Twelve cards. Each one is built around a feeling, a question, and a small thing to notice in your body. Cut them out, shuffle them, or pull one when the moment is right.

### FOR GROWN-UPS AT HOME

You don't need to teach. You don't need the right answer. You just need to read aloud, ask, and listen.

- Try one card at bedtime, in the car, or while you're cooking together.
- If your child shrugs, share your own answer first. They will follow.
- It's okay to skip a card. It's okay to come back to it next week.

### FOR EDUCATORS

Each card is mapped to one of the five CASEL competencies and structured for a 5–7 minute morning meeting, advisory, or transition.

- ★ **Self-Awareness** — cards 1, 2, 3
- ★ **Self-Management** — cards 4, 5, 6
- ★ **Social Awareness** — cards 7, 8, 9
- ★ **Relationship Skills** — cards 10, 11
- ★ **Responsible Decision-Making** — card 12

Pair with a turn-and-talk, a quick journal write, or a class circle. Cards work as a 12-day cycle, a monthly rotation, or a stand-alone toolkit.

## Naming the feeling



Sometimes a feeling shows up before we know its name. It might be a tight tummy, hot ears, or a buzz in your hands.

### TALK ABOUT IT

What does your body feel like right now? If that feeling had a name, what would you call it?

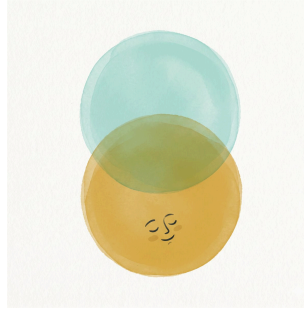
*Go deeper: Has your body ever told you something before your brain figured it out?*

#### ★ NOTICE YOUR BODY

Place one hand on your chest. Take one slow breath. What do you notice?

*Educator note · Pairs with body-based emotion recognition (interoception).*

## What's underneath?



Big feelings can hide little ones. Anger sometimes hides hurt. Silly sometimes hides nervous.

### TALK ABOUT IT

Has a feeling ever surprised you? What feeling do you think was hiding underneath it?

*Go deeper: When you feel mad, what's another feeling that might be there too?*

#### ★ NOTICE YOUR BODY

Press your palms together. Feel the warmth between them. Feelings can have layers, just like hands.

*Educator note · Builds emotion granularity and recognition of secondary emotions.*

## Loud and quiet feelings



Some feelings shout. Some feelings whisper. Both are real.

### TALK ABOUT IT

Can you think of a feeling that whispers inside you? Can you think of one that shouts?

*Go deeper: Which kind is harder to notice — the loud ones or the quiet ones?*

#### ★ NOTICE YOUR BODY

Listen for the quietest sound in the room. Feelings can be that quiet too.

*Educator note · Recognizing the intensity range of emotions.*

## When my body won't settle



Sometimes my body feels jumpy, fast, or full of bees. It doesn't want to sit still.

### TALK ABOUT IT

What does your body do when you can't settle? What helps it slow down?

*Go deeper: If your jumpy body could move on purpose — wiggle, push, jump — would that help more than sitting still?*

#### ★ NOTICE YOUR BODY

Press your feet hard into the floor. Push for five seconds. Let go. Feel that?

*Educator note · Somatic regulation and movement-based calming strategies.*

## When something is hard



Hard things can make us want to give up. The "give up" feeling is real, and it isn't the end of the story.

### TALK ABOUT IT

What is something that was hard for you, and you kept trying anyway?

*Go deeper: What did your body feel like during the "I want to quit" moment? What about after you tried again?*

#### ★ NOTICE YOUR BODY

Open and close your hands five times. Hard tasks need warm hands.

*Educator note · Frustration tolerance, persistence, growth mindset.*

## Pause before you pop



Sometimes a feeling comes so fast that the words pop out before we choose them. A small pause can change the whole moment.

### TALK ABOUT IT

What's the longest you can pause before you say or do something? One second? Three?

*Go deeper: Can you remember a time you wished you had paused? What would you have done with the extra moment?*

#### ★ NOTICE YOUR BODY

Breathe in for three counts. Hold for one. Breathe out for three. That's a pause.

*Educator note · Impulse control and response inhibition.*

## Reading faces



Faces tell us things. A friend's eyebrows, a friend's mouth — they're like little signs.

### TALK ABOUT IT

Look at someone you trust. What does their face tell you they're feeling right now?

*Go deeper: Is your face telling the truth right now? Or is it hiding something?*

#### ★ NOTICE YOUR BODY

Make your face show "happy." Now show "tired." Notice which muscles move.

*Educator note · Recognizing emotion in others and reading nonverbal cues.*

## When someone is quiet



Some friends say a lot. Some friends say very little. Both kinds of friends are still feeling things.

### TALK ABOUT IT

How can you tell when a quiet friend is happy? Sad? Worried?

*Go deeper: What's a kind way to ask a quiet friend how they're feeling?*

#### ★ NOTICE YOUR BODY

Sit very still for ten seconds. Notice everything you would have missed if you were busy talking.

*Educator note · Perspective-taking with introverted and quiet peers.*

## Different and together



Two people can see the same thing and feel two different ways about it. That's not a problem to fix. That's just how feelings work.

### TALK ABOUT IT

When was the last time you and someone you love felt different about the same thing?

*Go deeper: How did you both stay together even though your feelings were different?*

#### ★ NOTICE YOUR BODY

Hold one hand up. Hold the other hand up differently. Both hands belong to you.

*Educator note · Perspective-taking and valuing diverse experiences.*

## *When we disagree*



*Two people who love each other will sometimes disagree. Disagreeing is not the same as being mean.*

### **TALK ABOUT IT**

Think of a time you disagreed with a friend or family member. What did you do? What did they do?

*Go deeper: What words help when you really, really don't agree but you still want to stay friends?*

#### **★ NOTICE YOUR BODY**

Stand up. Take one big step back.

Sometimes a little space helps a big disagreement.

*Educator note · Conflict navigation and healthy disagreement.*

## *Repair after a mistake*



*Everybody makes mistakes that hurt somebody. The hard part isn't the mistake. The hard part is what comes next.*

### **TALK ABOUT IT**

When was a time you said sorry and meant it? What did you say after the word "sorry"?

*Go deeper: What's the difference between "sorry" and actually fixing what happened?*

#### **★ NOTICE YOUR BODY**

Open your hand wide. That's what an honest sorry looks like — nothing hidden.

*Educator note · Repair, accountability, and restorative practices.*

## *Brave choices*



*Brave isn't always loud. Sometimes brave is being kind when nobody is looking. Sometimes brave is telling the truth when it's easier not to.*

### **TALK ABOUT IT**

Tell about a brave thing you did this week — even a small one.

*Go deeper: What is one brave choice you want to make tomorrow?*

#### **★ NOTICE YOUR BODY**

Stand tall. Shoulders back. Brave bodies start with breath.

*Educator note · Values-aligned choices and ethical reasoning.*



**KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING**

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