

## How these cards were developed

I developed these cards in order to work with students on the theme “emotions.” In 1996 I asked ten year-old students in an elementary school which feelings they knew and I only got the answer “cool” or “not cool”. In order to animate these children to talk about emotions with greater detail and variety, I asked my son Christian to draw the “dispute monster” (which he had drawn for me when he was thirteen years old) with different feelings. This first edition of the cards in black and white already enabled the children to name different feelings.



As I liked these cards so much I used them in my trainings with adults. I placed the cards in the middle of the room before beginning with the theme “non-violent communication” or exposure to emotions within mediation trainings. The friendly atmosphere due to the funny comics made them all laugh and supported the discussion that followed.

My respectful thanks go to Marshall Rosenberg. His notion that “feelings are the children of needs” has become an essential basis for mediation and for dealing with differences between individuals. A second trigger for developing these cards was the work that has been done in the field of “non-violent communication.” Since 2008, we have been maintaining a website that contains suggestions, user reports, background information and materials available for download. We invite our customers to provide avid feedback and commentary, and are grateful for your participation!



Gefühlsmonster®

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Gefühlsmonster®

## “Gefühlsmonster®” Cards

*Feeling-Monsters Cards*



*How do I feel in this very moment?*

*Which feelings can I name?*

*When encountering the feelings of others, which feelings can I deal with and which are difficult for me?*



**“Feelings are the Children of Needs”**

(Marshall Rosenberg)

When our needs are satisfied, we have pleasant feelings such as satisfaction, cheerfulness or happiness.

In case of unmet needs we feel bad, unsatisfied, and confused. If we cannot fulfill our needs, such as feeling understood, appreciated, or secure, then feelings like anger, irritation or desperation will develop.



## Ideas for using the cards:

### 1. Working with yourself:

- Before important conversations or decisions, do the **Gefühlsmonster®-Scan**:
- For a few minutes, prepare yourself for the situation itself, and then scan the cards without a specific focus.
- Which card draws your attention?
- How does this card relate to the situation? What does this card mean in terms of your needs? Which card could help you in this situation?
- Place the card that could help you in this situation in a conspicuous place in your day-to-day environment.

### 2. Coaching:

- Refer to the section *"Working with yourself"*.
- Ask which card would express a successful solution to the situation.
- What support does the person need to achieve success?
- Use an evaluation scale: what number between 1 and 10 would fit a successful solution? What feelings are associated with this number?



### 3. Non-violent communication (Marshall Rosenberg)

- Present all cards at the beginning of a sequence about feelings
- Discussion about "positive or negative emotions," that is, emotions that we feel when needs are satisfied and feelings we have when our needs have not been met.
- Form small groups to discuss which feelings we consider to be acceptable for others, and which we consider acceptable for ourselves.
- Talk about what the basic feelings are, such as fear, happiness etc., and which feelings express our attitudes about others, such as "I feel neglected, left alone," etc.  
Work together to find feelings that may be at the root of the attitudes we have about others.
- "Feelings are the Children of Needs!" (Marshall Rosenberg): Participants choose one card for a situation in which they were angry, irritated or furious. Then talk about what they really needed in this situation (needs).



### 4. Mediation:

- Initial phase: have participants in the group choose one or two cards that express one's own feelings as well as the feelings of the conflict partner.
- Allow participants to choose cards at any time to portray the discussed situation. (The mediator should decide carefully when this is appropriate.)
- Ask the conflict parties: "Imagine that the conflict is solved and you have cleared up everything that is of concern. How would you feel then?"



### 5. Seminars:

- Spread the cards in the middle of a circle at the beginning of the seminar and for every situation for which a short review of attitudes is useful. Participants will choose a card, explain what it means for them and return it to the middle of the circle.
- If sufficient space is available, distribute the large-format cards in the room (good for larger groups and to facilitate adjustment to the cards by physically moving). Participants will stand by the cards and describe what the cards mean to them.  
Should more than one person stand by a

card, then a short discussion about the shared interpretation of the card can be very useful.

### 6. Social Learning:

- Every participant chooses a card that expresses his or her feelings at that moment; he or she provides a short statement and returns the card to the circle.
  - Spread the cards facing down: pull a card, depict the emotion on the card, and the others have to guess it. Then, show the card to everybody. Small groups each receive a deck of cards and describe which feelings are depicted.
  - Subsequently, share the results and discuss the various descriptions. (The cards are made in a way that allows different interpretations, such as annoyed, shy, surprised etc.)
- ### 7. Last but not least:
- **The cards are an excellent way to create a friendly, light-hearted atmosphere and to initiate discussions about feelings!**

