

Gefühlsmonster® cards – First steps for teachers

- Do you sometimes wish it were easier to talk about emotions with children and adolescents?
- Do you want to learn about games to play that make dealing with them easier?
- Are you looking for a tool to support conflict resolution positively?

Then you are at the right place!



Decide for yourself in which cases the Gefühlsmonster® can help you.

This works best if you experience the cards for yourself.

That's what this paper is about.

Let's get started:

Step 1: FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE CARDS



Look at the open spread of cards in front of you (you can also use the Gefühlsmonster® Scan on our website).

- Are there Gefühlsmonster® that you spontaneously feel drawn to?
- Maybe there are also Gefühlsmonster® that you dislike?
- Does the depiction remind you of an experience you had?
- Or do they remind you of other people you have seen in this position?

- That's exactly what the cards achieve. Emotions—or depictions of emotions—are contagious. That's why the cards that attract your attention are connected to your own experiences.



At this point there are two possible ways to work: If you feel like exploring your own experiences continue with the steps 2 to 4, as often as you like. That way you

have a solid foundation to then work with the cards with others.

If you prefer to learn more about the basics for working with children and adolescents right away move to step 5.

Step 2: GET TO KNOW ALL THE CARDS

To get to know all the cards you can just play with them. Either with a set of cards or the Gefühlsmonster® Scan on our website.

Example: Sort the cards according to intensity of emotions or by likes or dislikes. When you work with the cards in this way you'll notice that interesting feelings will arise.



Step 3: WORKING WITH YOURSELF

Look at the cards or the Gefühlsmonster® Scan in a relaxed way and ask yourself: How am I feeling right now?

Let your eyes wander aimlessly over the cards. Don't look for an emotion you thought of

ahead of time on purpose. Let yourself be surprised by what cards draw your attention. (More about this with further instructions at the Gefühlsmonster® Scan on our website).

Step 4: FOCUSED WORK WITH YOURSELF

Now you'll work with the Gefühlsmonsters® on a problem that you are preoccupied with.

Pick something from your everyday life, a question you are interested in. For example:

- a) How am I doing with project XY?
- b) How am I doing in my teamwork with AB?
- c) How do I feel about the invitation next Saturday?

Move into that question, then, in the same relaxed, unfocused way as above, let your eyes wander over the Gefühlsmonster® cards and pick the cards that speak to you spontaneously, the cards that resonate with you.



We suggest that you pick all the cards first, before you think about the individual cards you chose.

Now calmly look at the separate cards you put aside and ask yourself for each card:

"What does this card mean to me?"

Probably you are a step closer to answering your original question than you were before this exercise.



HINT: If you don't feel good with your results close this exercise with the question:

"Which card would be helpful right now?" or

"How would I like to feel right now?"

Find the right card(s) and place them in a prominent place, like carrying them on you or prop them up somewhere, where you will see them often. This can connect you with the emotion of the card you picked.

If you do this exercise with the Online Scan you have the option to write a note about the card and have it sent to yourself by email.

Now that you have familiarized yourself with the Gefühlsmonster® cards we would like to introduce you to the next step building the foundation of your work with children and adolescents.

Step 5: BASIC KNOWLEDGE FOR YOUR WORK WITH CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

The Gefühlsmonsters® work on two levels. First, they remind us of situations we have experienced ourselves. Second, they speak to our own feelings. Let the children and adolescents talk without interruptions. This will help you to access the cards' possibilities.

The word "monsters" doesn't suit all situations or people. Use it only if you are sure that your partner understands that it is meant in a playful way. If you use just the word "cards", or instead of "monsters" use "figures" for starters, you might later find a name that works well together.

Even with children and adolescents the guiding question for your work with the cards is:

"What does this card mean to you?"

This way you invite thoughts and conversation about the card. Besides, finding your own interpretations for the cards is more helpful than attributions by others. Encourage the children/adolescents to comment on their connections to the cards. Each depiction is meant to be understood in varying ways.

This process helps the children/adolescents to learn that something that appears obvious can have different interpretations.

Before you start working with the cards specifically, give the children/adolescents time to "befriend" the cards.

For this the following game can be helpful:

Step 6: Game "MAKING UP STORIES"



This game is suitable for play in groups (2 – 25 participants) for the purpose of easing into the topic of emotions in a fun way, or to encourage contact within a new group.

The Gefühlsmonster® cards are in a closed spread, the depiction facing down. Now everyone gets to pull one card, keeping it a secret from the other players and giving the Gefühlsmonsters® a name and imagine what it might have experienced.

With a little practice you can imagine a whole story around the card.



Rule: You have to use the card you pulled even if it doesn't seem to fit. This will spike your imagination.

Here is an example of how this might look like:

This is John who is upset because he caused a penalty shot



at the soccer game.



Here comes his coach, Frank, and says: "Never mind, John, this happens to the best of us!"



Peter, the goal keeper who couldn't block the penalty shot, storms furiously toward John.



John replies: "Leave me alone!"

He really feels this way, but under no circumstances does he want to show that to Peter.



During the next game John manages to shoot the winning goal and his team leaves the field triumphantly.



And so on...

Step 7: GEFÜHLSMONSTERS® IN THE CLASSROOM

Depending on age the Gefühlsmonsters® can accompany the children at school. Here are three suggestions for use.

Application 1 — Mood Barometer



To check the mood of the class or about a specific tasks you can use the stickers or the cards to make a spread. Think about which Gefühlsmonsters® suit the situation (look at

the photos for examples). Then each student stands next to the card that expresses their mood or their feelings about a given task. Important: All players use their own words to express their choice.



Application 2 — To Develop Theatrical Roles/Characters with the Gefühlsmonster®

With the help of the Gefühlsmonster® cards you can develop theatrical roles, characters, protagonists from literature, and much more. Let the students find their character among the cards. They will then experience that their interpretation of a figure can differ from that of others and exchange their thoughts.



By visualizing in this way with the cards the complexity of the figures becomes quite evident.



A possible accompanying question would be:

“How is figure XY feeling about this situation?”

For an entry level exercise the students can practise in small groups how a character, for example from a fairy tale (or for older students a protagonist from computer games or YouTube-vlogs), is feeling.

Application 3 — Conflict resolution

When you feel more familiar with this tool you can work with the Gefühlsmonster® cards to settle a conflict. It would be good let some

time elapse for tempers to calm down and thus enable a more constructive discussion.

Let both parties find the cards in the spread that depict the feelings they have in the conflict. Then they use their own words to describe how the Gefühlsmonster® felt during this encounter. This allows the protagonist some distance from the experience itself and eases the ability to talk about it.

Application 4 — Conflict recap

Students can reconstruct a specific conflict by acting it out again. Especially when there are disagreements about who did what, the affected students or their peers can act out the situation with the cards. For example, they may say a specific sentence the way Gefühlsmonster® number 8 would say it, followed by



how Gefühlsmonster®



number 12 would express the same . This isn't about achieving consent about what happened, but makes the students aware of how different

the tone of voice and impact of a sentence can be, depending on our attitude. Let the students analyze how the different attitudes affect the situation.

As an **entry level exercise** and/or **funny, relaxing exercise to break up tension** we also suggest the following game:

Step 8: Game “EMOTIONS REVERSED”

This game is very lively. Even when the cards get first picked there is laughter, because often the cards don't suit the situation given.

The Gefühlsmonster® cards are in a closed spread in front of you.

Pick a certain situation, for example

- A fieldtrip
- Swimming lessons
- The lunchroom during lunch
- etc.

Now everyone pulls one card and acts out the behavior of the Gefühlsmonster® on the card.

1. In step one everyone can show their card to the others and then act out the emotion. Either you say something the way the figure on the card would say it or you can add movements as well. It is helpful if the teacher starts this exercise.

2. When everyone got to know the Gefühlsmonster® cards and there is another set or poster of them to look at, the pulled card stays hidden from the other players and is acted out. The other players then have to guess which card the player pulled.
3. As a modification of this game players could use a specific conflict situation to act out with the cards. For example, they may say a specific sentence the way Gefühlsmonster® number 8 would say it, followed by how Gefühlsmonster® number 15 would express the same. Help the students observe how the different emotions impact interactions in the situation.



On our homepage you will find tips and ideas for different applications. Roam around, look

And finally ...

for specific terms in the search field to find more applications for your work. We hope that you'll enjoy and use the cards on many levels.

The Gefühlsmonster® Team