



## Feeling Charades: Reading Feelings from Nonverbal Clues

In a staff meeting, have some fun and raise awareness about nonverbal communication by engaging your team in Feeling Charades.

Use the following list of emotions (and add your own). Write ONE EMOTION on each of several 3x5 cards. In a meeting, hand out the cards and ask each person to take turns silently ACTING OUT the emotion on their card.

### Instructions

- Explain the purpose:
  - Practice reading feelings from nonverbal clues and cues
  - Gain awareness of how we sense and tune into the underlying emotional state of another person—what they are feeling beneath their words
  - Expand our feeling vocabularies so we can more easily acknowledge people's feelings
- Go over the ground rule: There may be more than one feeling word that can be used to reflect back a feeling. As long as people suggest a related feeling, consider it a right answer.
- Get started: One at a time, each person acts out the emotion on their card.
  - Team members try to guess the feeling.
  - When they guess it, ask them to describe how they decided on that particular feeling. What clues did they see? How did they sense it? For example:
    - For **afraid** you might see -- shallow breath; rigid posture; wide eyes; rapid eye movements...
    - For **hopeless** you might see -- sagging shoulders; forward neck; little eye contact; slight frown; low energy; slow responsiveness...
- Ask people to continue this practice in their work with the people they serve, paying careful attention to the person's feelings behind the words.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• afraid</li><li>• angry</li><li>• nervous</li><li>• out-of-control</li><li>• grieving</li><li>• distressed</li><li>• surprised</li><li>• embarrassed</li><li>• sad</li><li>• happy</li><li>• hopeful</li><li>• courageous</li><li>• dejected</li><li>• determined</li><li>• distrustful</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• accepting</li><li>• resigned</li><li>• resentful</li><li>• lonely</li><li>• hopeless</li><li>• upset</li><li>• ambivalent</li><li>• anxious</li><li>• apprehensive</li><li>• confused</li><li>• confident</li><li>• cranky</li><li>• desperate</li><li>• depressed</li><li>• frustrated</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• eager</li><li>• elated</li><li>• energized</li><li>• enthusiastic</li><li>• gloomy</li><li>• helpless</li><li>• invisible</li><li>• motivated</li><li>• overwhelmed</li><li>• powerless</li><li>• worried</li><li>• impatient</li><li>• humiliated</li><li>• unsure</li></ul>
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