

Emotional Touch Points

Emotional Touch Points, Listen to Our Stories is a visual tool that empowers people to explore the emotions they are feeling around a situation or experience of using a service. This is accomplished by picking two cards from a menu of emotions, one positive and one negative, giving people a chance to share how situations and experiences of services and professionals made them feel.



Emotional Touch Points is a tool that is widely used however it was adapted for use with young people by replacing the traditional images with emojis.

Using Emotional Touch Points

- The Emotional Touch Point cards are laid out on a table so that it is possible to see the emoji on each card.
- Facilitators explain the aim of the activity and demonstrate how to use the cards by picking one and sharing a story about their own experience of a health or social care service.
- Participants are then asked to think about an experience they have had and then pick a pair of cards, one representing a positive emotion and another to represent a negative one regarding how they feel about that experience.
- It is explained that there is no obligation to participate or to share any information.
- Depending on numbers, the group is then split into two or three smaller groups which are facilitated by staff and/or support workers.
- All participants are then given the time and opportunity to share their own stories while the rest of the group listen and learn about the experiences and feelings of others.



I was **FRUSTRATED** when I went to my appointment because the help being offered was different from what was advertised and what I felt I needed. However, I was **GLAD** to meet my support worker and to find someone who takes the time to listen to me and to offer some support and guidance.

What works well and what are the challenges

- This exercise works well as an ice-breaking and peer learning activity to support the building of trust and to make the first steps toward developing shared recognition and understanding.
- By choosing both a positive and negative emotion, the exercise helps participants to recognise both the good and bad aspects of any experience and promotes balanced discussion.
- There is added value when support staff join in and share their own experiences, building more mutual understanding with those they support.
- This exercise is time consuming especially in larger groups, as it is essential that all participants have the same opportunity to share their experiences, plenty of time is needed.

It is recommended to use this tool with caution when engaging with young people in vulnerable situations. In these circumstances it is essential that support staff participate in the discussion and are able to intervene if information is being shared in a way that might be unhealthy for the individual. Involving support staff is vital in creating a safe and comfortable space for young people to share their views.

I was **ANGRY** when I went to get help with my benefits. I had missed an appointment because of health problems and because of this no one would speak with me. I ended up going to a local charity where I felt really **SUPPORTED**, I was listened to and people helped me to get the benefits that I was entitled to.



Top tips

- Be patient, this is an important exercise to encourage open conversations but it does take time.
- Make sure enough time is available for everyone to be able to meaningfully participate.
- Keep group sizes small where possible.
- Include staff who have experience of being able to open up and close down discussions to ensure a safe space for all participants.