



Language Support for Migrants *A Council of Europe Toolkit*

Tool 36 - Introducing basic vocabulary for expressing opinions and emotions

Aim: To provide ideas and resources to help migrants to express their opinions and emotions at elementary level.

The importance of expressing opinions and feelings

It is important that migrant learners, whether they are children or adults, to be able to express opinions and feelings in the target language. However, it may often be difficult for them to discuss or demonstrate feelings, particularly in a group situation. You do not need to ask learners to talk about their feelings, but it is important to help them to express their feelings when they wish to do so. For example, it is a good idea to ask a group how they feel at the end of a session: "Are you happy? Tired?" etc. It is also good to ask how a learner feels if they have been absent due to illness.

Introducing the vocabulary for feelings and emotions

It is useful to begin by introducing adjectives such as 'happy', 'sad', 'surprised', 'confused' and so on. Learners can then choose pictures or symbols like those on the next page to indicate feelings. Smiley faces, which are commonly used in messages, can also help you to introduce the concepts at a very general level. For example, you can:

- distribute a set of pictures (taken from magazines, the internet etc.) which show faces expressing pleasure and happiness or sadness or worry and ask the learners to match the pictures with an appropriate smiley face and word.
- ask the learners to choose other pictures to illustrate these feelings.
- get everyone to explain, mime or use shared languages to help with any words that some learners do not understand or recognize.
- ask learners to practise using the words in pairs by picking up random cards, saying the word and demonstrating the feeling or opinion.
- ask some of the group to make simple sentences (*I feel happy; she is sad*).


Indicating feelings without any language

It is good to include learners who are beginners in the target by asking them how they are feeling. For example, use a 'question mark card' and show this to learners. Mime your question and indicate on a card how you are feeling – happy or tired or hot etc. Then ask the learner to choose a card to show his or her feelings.


Some more ideas for talking about feelings

- Play Memory (see Tool 49 - *Language games and activities for migrants*) with the cards. You will need two copies of each card or, for older children, they can play with an image on one card and the corresponding word in the new language on the other.
- A learner comes to the front of the group and mimes a feeling. The rest of the group call out the name of the feeling, e.g. *happy, proud*.
- Learners can also draw or show emojis on their phones and ask others to guess what they are. They can then practise saying simple sentences in the host country language, such as: *I feel happy. I feel tired* (drawing can help in particular children to express their feelings and gentle questioning can support migrants to name them).
- You can use puppets to act out different situations (e.g. one puppet takes something from another puppet). Ask the learners to say what the puppets might be feeling - or let them choose from the pictures.
- Put learners in pairs facing each other. One person mimes a feeling and the other has to guess what it is and copy it.

Expressing pleasure and joy

That's wonderful I'm very happy for you Fantastic		happy
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Expressing sadness

I am sad / unhappy That is bad news		sad
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Examples of smiley faces for different feelings



scared



surprised



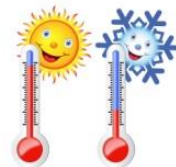
tired



angry



confused



hot / cold

To find more images

Magazines, newspapers (particularly sports images), comics and the internet are all good sources of pictures that show feelings or emotions. If searching on the internet look for 'faces with feelings'. Remember to check copyright before copying any images for use in activities (see also Tool 30 – Selecting pictures and 'realia' for language activities: some guidelines).