

New Beginnings

Written by Lyn French, Director of A Space for Creative Learning and Support

This resource is used in conjunction with cards drawn from the **Emotional Learning Cards** series, *Who are you? Where are you going?* Purchase the cards online at: www.inivacreativelearning.org

Exercise 1:

Making conscious hidden memories of past experiences of beginnings and becoming aware of how they affect present life

Open up a discussion based on freely associating to the word 'beginnings'. Questions to prompt discussion could include the following:

- *What feelings come to mind when you think of starting something new?*
- *What is your most recent memory of a new beginning? What feelings are associated with these memories?*
- *What is your earliest memory of a new experience? (eg. being separated for the first time from your mother or carer; starting at nursery school; the birth of a new sibling; moving house; etc)*
- *What would someone who had had a bad experience of a new beginning in the past feel about facing something new now?*
- *What would someone who had had a good experience of a new beginning in the past feel about facing something new now?*
- *What is the hardest new beginning your family has had to face? What about your parents or carers- what kind of new beginnings have they encountered? How do you think they handled them?*
- *What is the hardest new beginning you've face? How did you handle it? How has this influenced how you experience new beginnings now?*

- *Are any of your past experiences of new beginnings negatively influencing how you deal with new challenges or changes now? What can you do to change your perspective?*

Exercise 2:

Identifying common feelings, challenges and opportunities that we all encounter when facing a new beginning

Match the words below to images from *'Who are you? Where are you going?'*

Common feelings, challenges and opportunities we encounter when facing a new beginning <i>(Feel free to add your own words to the list below)</i>	Images from 'Who are you? Where are you going?' which could illustrate these feelings <i>(you can, come up with your own pairings - these are just some examples)</i>
<p>Lost without a map</p>	<p><i>Susan Stockwell South London Arteries</i> (a 'map' without the background context)</p>
<p>Confused</p>	<p><i>Hew Locke Black Queen</i> (too many conflicting ideas/ cultural references in mind)</p>
<p>Muddled</p>	<p><i>Los Carpinteros Untitled</i> (a caravan that isn't mobile = muddled)</p>
<p>Frightened/ Anxious</p>	<p><i>Jennifer Allora and Guillermo Calzadilla Under Discussion</i> (taking flight from a potentially fearful situation)</p>
<p>At sea/ Unanchored</p>	<p><i>Zineb Sedira The Lovers</i> (beached/ abandoned ships lost at</p>

	sea)
Set adrift / Cut loose	<i>Fiona Tan Lift</i> (harnessed to balloons and 'let go')
Taking off/ New terrain to explore	<i>Alex Flemming Flying Carpet</i> (excitement of 'touching down' some place new)
Creative opportunities/ New perspectives	<i>Lucy Orta Refuge Wear – Habitent</i> (hooded jacket seen in a new light as a possible design for a portable home; being creative with what we have)
The chance to present ourselves differently	<i>Juan Pablo Echeverri Miss fotojapon</i> (re-shaping our identity; letting go of past selves and taking on a new, more confident persona)
The opportunity to bring the old and the new together	<i>Anthony Key Chopstick/ Knife Fork</i> (integrating two cultures; joining up the past and the present)

Exercise 3:

What makes trying out new experiences easier?

Here are some ideas. Give examples of your own relating to the statements below.

When were you.....
Reassured by memories of good experiences in the past

Confident that you could adapt to the new even if you knew it would take time
Able to tolerate not knowing what would happen and trusting that you would be able to cope
Able to think clearly even when feeling anxious
Feeling Ok even when things were difficult especially when facing new experiences
Willing to ask for help and to accept support even though you were new and feeling vulnerable
Pleased that life moves on and there are always chances to develop and change
Looking forward to new experiences and feeling optimistic about the future
Able to prepare for new experiences by learning from past experiences
Ready to step into the unknown

What did you think of this resource? We want to hear from you...

Contact Us:

	info@inivacreativelearning.org
	+44 (0)20 7749 1247
	www.inivacreativelearning.org Rivington Place London EC2A 3BA UK

About Iniva Creative Learning

Iniva Creative Learning is a not-for-profit partnership between [A Space](#) (arts and therapy service, Hackney) and [Iniva](#) (the Institute of International Visual Arts). We share a commitment to producing art-based resources and delivering initiatives which promote emotional learning, personal development and psychological growth.

Emotional Learning Cards

It is now widely recognised that well-being in every part of life depends on successfully building understanding, insight and emotional resilience. **A Space** and **Iniva** have been co-publishing **Emotional Learning Cards since 2008** and they now occupy a leading position in the growing fields of **emotional learning and psychological therapies**.

Each boxed set of Emotional Learning Cards includes 20 cards:

- **On the front:** visually rich images of a contemporary artwork by a variety of culturally diverse and emerging artists known for their engagement in social or political enquiry.
- **On the back:** open questions and discussion prompts around the theme 'What do you feel?', 'Who are you? Where are you going?' and 'How do we live well with others?' for group or one-to-one use.

Suggestions for using the cards in different contexts such as school, home, gallery workshops and individual or group therapy settings are offered in a **fold-out leaflet**.