

# OUR COMMUNITY

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**These cards assist community members who want to:**

- **Understand their community more deeply,**
- **Prepare their community for current and future hazards, emergencies and disasters, and**
- **Support the development of community resilience.**

*Our Community - Images* is designed to support people to build strong, vibrant, connected, and resilient communities.

The cards have been inspired by emergency management and disaster related research and by work with communities across Australia. They are based on the experiences of communities themselves and reflect the growing body of evidence about community resilience.

The cards also reflect the value of conversation. It is through conversation that we are able to learn from one another; improve our skills and knowledge; consider new ways of planning and preparing for an emergency; and improve our adaptability and resilience.

*Our Community - Images* is an illustrated set of cards designed to assist people to have conversations about emergencies, crises, disasters, shocks or stresses.

These images are particularly useful for groups and communities who prefer a visual stimulus rather than written English language.

*Our Community - Images* can be used to:

1. Promote social and community connection between individuals, within groups and communities
2. Promote and strengthen connection to place and history
3. Encourage preparation and planning for emergencies
4. Enhance recovery if an emergency affects a community.

### **Things to know before using this set of cards**

These cards are based on extensive research and work with communities who have experienced large emergency events.

The cards have been designed to engage at an emotional level with anyone who uses them. Because they are visual, they particularly assist groups of people who might not usually feel able to participate in conversations about their community. They equalize everyone involved regardless of (English) language proficiency or literacy skills. They can be used to engage with young children, the aged and anyone whose first language is not English.



The cards are designed to foster collaboration and engagement across your community. They reflect an underlying set of values, including:

- 1. Each person in your community is of value**
- 2. Each person in your community has a voice and a perspective to contribute**
- 3. Each perspective is valid and reflects the life and experience of the person who holds it**
- 4. Relationships are built on listening and trust and these then reinforce those relationships**
- 5. A connected and inclusive community will be a more resilient and adaptable community.**

The cards have been designed for use by experienced group facilitators and novices alike. There are simple processes that will work in less experienced groups e.g. it is easy to choose a card and share your reflections and responses with a friend, family member or colleague. It is also relatively simple for groups to do this together, learning about one another as they share their responses.

The cards can also be used in more complex settings. Using the cards can inform community development or disaster planning, to establish or improve relationships between key stakeholders and partners in an educational

setting, or to engage with individuals and groups who do not normally feel included or easily engaged in learning or community processes.

It is important to know that using these cards may 'trigger' strong feelings in some participants. We are not always aware of the personal histories or circumstances of the people we meet. It is essential that facilitators and others who use these cards have some awareness or training in psychological first aid and are respectful of people who use these cards.

## **Card Categories**

*Our Community - Images* includes 50 cards; each designed to prompt the reader to respond to an image and to think about an aspect of their own resilience or the resilience of their community.

Each card belongs to one of seven categories that represent essential elements of community resilience. The categories are indicated by the colour of the cards.

1. Community leadership (purple)
2. Social and community connections (blue)
3. Connection to history and place (green)
4. Personal and household resilience (yellow)
5. Ability to take action (orange)



6. Knowledge and wisdom (red)

7. The need to address challenges and opportunities (grey)

## Active words

The words on the reverse of each card provide another mechanism to begin or engage in conversations. They reflect one way of thinking about the image on the front of the card. These key words focus on an action or a thought process that relates to the image, and they provide an additional level of flexibility in using the cards to engage with individuals and groups.

These words reflect the kinds of actions or values that community members bring to their community – during good times and during challenges.

They are:

CARING	ENJOYING	HOPING
KNOWING	PLANNING	SHARING
CONNECTING	FEELING	IMAGINING
LEARNING	PREPARING	SUPPORTING
VALUING	CREATING	HELPING
INCLUDING	LISTENING	REFLECTING
TRUSTING	UNDERSTANDING	

## Using the cards

The cards can be used in a variety of ways with groups and individuals, and are ideal for emergency management practitioners, community leaders, local council workers, case-workers, counsellors and therapists, teachers and trainers, and consultants.

The following are some ideas to inspire conversations (each of these can be adapted to suit the purpose of the conversation and the individuals or groups involved):

### **A. Spread the cards face down on a table or the floor,**

Ask participants to follow these steps:

1. Choose a card displaying an active word.
2. Find someone with the same or a related word OR someone with a card of the same colour.
3. Share your reasons for choosing your card, with that person.
4. Turn over your cards and look at the images.
5. Share what the picture triggers in you (thoughts or emotions).
6. Discuss why you think your card has that particular word on its back, given the picture.

7. Find another pair of participants and share your cards and your responses.

## **B. Spread the cards face up**

Ask participants to follow these steps:

1. Choose a card displaying an image.
2. Find someone with a card of the same colour.
3. Share your reasons for choosing your card, with that person.
4. In particular, share what the picture triggers in you (thoughts or emotions).
5. Find another pair of participants and share your cards and your responses.

## **These simple ideas can be built upon.**

For example:

1. Ask participants to tell a story about themselves based on the image they chose.
2. Ask participants to form groups of participants with the same coloured cards and have a conversation as a group, identifying any common threads or issues between their images

3. Ask groups to share the main points from their discussion with the whole group.
4. Have a general discussion about what the large group has learned or shared.

These cards are designed as a companion set for *Our Community – Questions*, a set of cards with questions to trigger and focus conversations.