

'Sailing on Life's Billowing ocean'



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Innovative Resources acknowledges the Jaara people of Dja Dja Wurrung country, the traditional custodians of the land upon which our premises are located and where our resources are developed and published. We pay our respects to the elders—past, present and future—for they hold the memories, traditions, cultures and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, and other First Nations peoples. We must remember that underneath this earth, upon which we so firmly stand, this is, was and always will be, the traditional land of First Nations peoples.



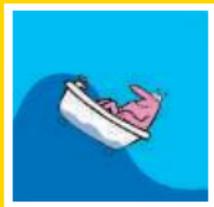


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In early 2008, James Castrission and Justin Jones completed the first trans-Tasman crossing by kayak, paddling from Australia to New Zealand in a gruelling 62-day journey. They now regularly inspire others to pursue their own adventures and follow their dreams. Find out more: www.crossingtheditch.com.au



Crossing the Ditch

Our sixty-two-day journey across the Tasman was, at times, frightening—sharks tearing at our hull, thirty foot waves crashing over our kayak and the very real possibility that the stern of our vessel might be ripped away—these were all fears experienced on our journey. But there are worse things than fear. Life has taught me that these fears—the tangible kind—are never as debilitating as the fears of failure, rejection and regret. These can be crippling.



During those sixty-two lonely days at sea we experienced a lifetime of emotions. When you are right on the edge the view is crystal clear. We experienced euphoric highs and piercing lows. The most frightening experience was being stuck in a four-day storm. We had received about an hour of sleep between us, when suddenly a rope outside fouled around the rudder.

Lying petrified, like two sodden rats, as the god-awful screech and groaning threatened to rip the entire back of the kayak away, we were indeed at the mercy of God. Fortunately, the line untangled and we were able to catch up on some much needed sleep. That experience forced us to confront real fear.

Going round in circles, mid-Tasman, for two weeks taught us the meaning of patience. It also heightened the pure joy of sighting land after sixty days at sea. It was 7.03pm, January 11, 2008 when a pyramid began to form on the horizon. It was Mt Taranaki on New Zealand's North Island.

All the feelings and emotions that we experienced on the Tasman have been captured with stunning effect by Ray Bowler—a versatile and dynamic illustrator—in *Ups and Downs*. Reflecting on these images stirs up all kinds of emotions for both Justin and me.

Crossing the Tasman was a team experience. If it wasn't for the support of our team, we would never have pushed off from the coast of Australia, let alone paddled across the Tasman. Life is a shared experience, and I was fortunate enough to be able to spend the sixty-two most intense days of my life with Justin Jones, my best mate. He was always there for me when I was down or needed encouraging. Similarly, I would hope, I provided that strength for him. It was truly a global collaboration with contributions made from more than eighteen countries around the world.



Ups and Downs, like all of Innovative Resources' quality publications, is inspired by the work of the first class team at St Luke's Anglicare, a human services agency that supports children and young people at risk, as well as a variety of community-building projects and mental health services. Similar to the team we required to cross the Tasman Sea safely, the team at St Luke's continues to recognise and promote the strengths and dignity of those individuals and families most at risk in our community.

You don't need to paddle across the Tasman Sea to experience all of life's emotions—this well-crafted resource tickles on the vast continuum of feelings that make us all human.

James Castrission

Crossing the Ditch

Ups and Downs: Sailing on Life's Billowing Ocean was an idea long before it was launched.

The original concept was very simple: the vicissitudes of the sea, with its tides, waves and unpredictable weather, provide us with a great metaphor for the ups and downs of life.

In line with the values and mission of St Luke's Anglicare, these cards were conceived as a conversation-building tool that might visually capture life in all its wonderfulness and terror.

Most people who seek assistance from St Luke's Anglicare find that life's changes bring such consistent 'downtimes' that they may even feel they are drowning. But at St Luke's we have long believed that no matter how bleak the problem feels, it is always possible to find glimmers of hope. *Ups and Downs* also reminds us that everyone has ups and downs.

Like many of the conversation-building materials published by St Luke's Innovative Resources we wanted to explore how gentle humour could be a catalyst for change while still respecting the power of grief and the pain of suffering.



'Everyperson', created by Ray Bowler, as a naked, gender-free character living out the whole gamut of our emotions is both naive and wise, simple but complex, easy-going yet troubled, surprised yet knowing, contented, discontented, happy, angry, calm, anxious, young and old.

Ray Bowler also introduced the bathtub. The very thought of going to sea in a bathtub is absurd. Likewise, facing the immensity of life naked, resource-less and in an inadequate vessel also seems a form of madness. Ironically, it is this very absurdity that may resonate so deeply within us. For when we feel as naked and vulnerable as 'Everyperson', it is often then that we discover surprising strengths within ourselves—resources we didn't even know we had.

But the bathtub has other metaphoric power. Are we ever more vulnerable than when we take a bath? Perhaps not. Yet our quiet, lonely bathtub can be an island of reflection and contemplation. We might just make the discoveries and find the solace that inspires a fresh view of our own ups and downs as we lie in its warm embrace.

The insight and creativity that Ray brought to this project has turned a vague concept into a tool that has the potential to transform the way we see this turbulent, ever-changing adventure we call life.



Step aboard the good ship 'Your Life' for an exhilarating adventure on the high seas. Sailing, like life itself, is full of ups and downs. From the bliss of steady winds and calm seas to the terror of cyclones; from the relief of seeing the beam of a lighthouse to the anxiety of watching circling sharks; we rise and fall through good times and bad—and we can never be sure what is just over the horizon—shipwreck or buried treasure!



The 54 *Ups and Downs* cards portray scenarios any bathtub sailor might experience. And if we want a metaphor reflecting 'change' we need look no further than the waves, weather and tides of the ocean. Ray Bowler's deceptively simple card images depict many of our own responses to the ebb and flow of life.

Like the sea we are constantly changing. Like the sea, life around us is also in continual flux.

A favourite saying here at St Luke's is that 'change only happens when it's noticed'. Just as a sailor needs to be vigilant about even tiny weather changes, so we benefit from noticing change. Positive changes have so much more impact and negatives less power if they can be named.

Doom and gloom can descend as suddenly as a fog in a shipping channel—paralysing us with fear and obscuring the light we know is out there. The gloom can seem impenetrable and doom our most likely outcome. But, if we want to see the lighthouse beam, sometimes we must be prepared to seek a new position. *Ups and Downs* might just provide a means to make that shift; to challenge the fatalism that so often accompanies deficit-saturated thinking.

In 1916 Antarctic explorer Ernest Shackleton and two expedition members set out in a modified dinghy to sail 1,290 kilometres across treacherous, icy water in a last ditch attempt to save themselves and 28 men trapped on a small island off the coast of Antarctica. Surely an impossible journey! The scope for disaster was huge. The small, open boat was totally inadequate, their supplies were poor and their navigational equipment was basic.



But the outcome was astounding. In less than two weeks they reached South Georgia Island where they arranged the rescue of the rest of their team.

Is a bathtub any more absurd than the *James Caird* that safely carried Shackleton and his men to the help they needed? The challenge to ‘have a go’ may feel as overwhelming as the waves must have looked from inside Shackleton’s tiny vessel. It is our hope that *Ups and Downs* will inspire the kind of bravery this epic voyage demonstrated.

Of course we can't always avoid the surprises, challenges, demands or tragedies that life throws into our shipping lanes. Yet a courageous response may not be as impossible as it seems. What we learn from our struggles can often be the very information we need to change course and head towards a more positive attitude.

While our seas will undoubtedly have their ups and downs, perhaps we can avoid taking the 'downs' on board.

When fogs descend we do not have to take on the mantle of doom and gloom. We are not the fog. The fog drifts according to forces we cannot control. But we can move.

We can make choices. We can navigate towards a clearer view.

How we understand our challenges will largely dictate our response. It can be hard to remember that beyond the fog lies clarity and hope—especially when the fog is thick and our compass is small.

Ups and Downs can be used reflectively to survey and review our own personal journeys. It is ideal for building conversations with others. Some of these

conversations may be given names like 'counselling', 'therapy' or 'groupwork'. These are indeed important conversations with significant implications. They are also conversations that are more likely to occur during the 'downs'.

However, *Ups and Downs* also has numerous roles to play in less formal and pressing conversations. It might, for example, be used by a family to recap each person's day or used at a staff meeting to help clarify where each person is at.

It is a great ice-breaker in any new group or class; as a stimulus for creative writing; at a dinner party; on school camps—the list is broad and deep (just like the ocean).



For all these possibilities, *Ups and Downs* is no panacea. These cards depend on your creativity and discernment if they are to be used for greatest success. What we—the crew of the good ship Innovative Resources—have learnt is that art and artifact have the capacity to deepen our reflections and conversations into places that words alone may not. In this way *Ups and Downs* contains huge potential for change. How this potential is actualised depends upon the dynamics of our interpretations and relationships. Yet, like all Innovative Resources' publications there are no rules, no manuals and no curriculum to be followed.

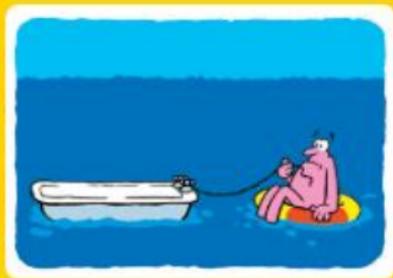
Essentially there are two main ways to cast a line with *Ups and Downs*. Firstly, there is the 'three-S' method: spread, scan and select. In this approach card selection depends upon the questions asked.

Alternatively, there is the fourth 'S': serendipity. A card picked by chance, like the experiences that life throws up, can have surprising resonance.

But when and how the cards are introduced, how many cards are used, the questions that are asked and how long the activity goes for, are ultimately dependant upon your own creativity and judgement.

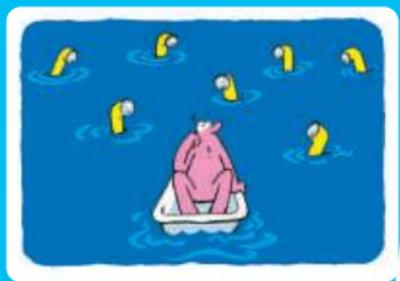


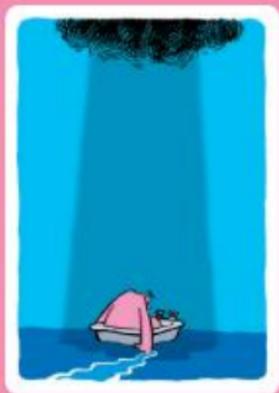
And now choose your bathtub!

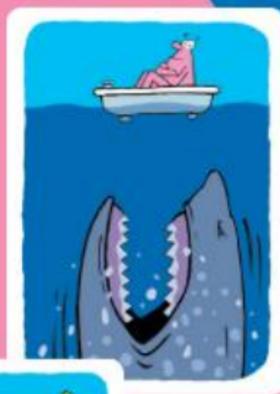


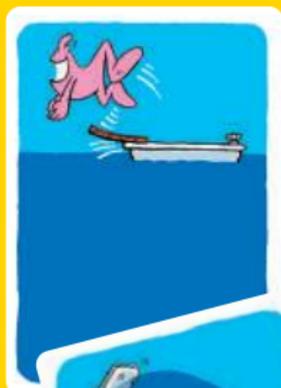


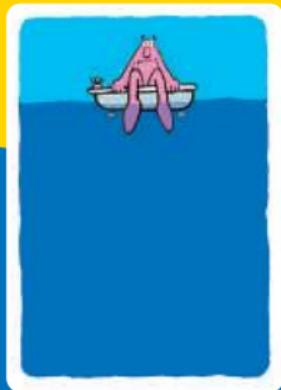
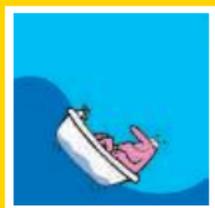
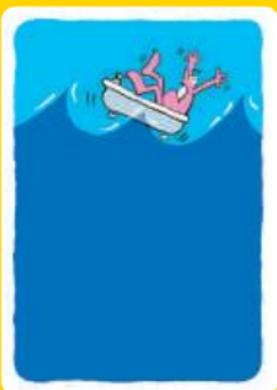














Here are a few questions to whet your appetite for the immense possibilities that only your creativity can deliver...

On the here and now

- Which of the *Ups and Downs* cards (and there may be more than one) sum up how you are travelling right now?
- Can you describe how you are feeling?
- How ship-shape is your boat?
- Where do you need repairs?
- What provisions do you think you need for the next stage of your voyage?

On destinations:

- Do you know where you are sailing to?
- Do you have a port in mind?
- Do you know what you want to achieve in your journey through life?
- Do you have all you need to complete your journey?

On the next wave:

- What do you think is over the horizon for you?
- Are storms predicted?
- What are you hoping for?
- What is your picture of the future?
- What will things be like when the problem/s you are facing is/are no longer there?



On Successes:

- Which card (or cards) represents the highlights of your voyage so far?
- What exactly have you enjoyed about the good times?



- Which card (or cards) represents how it feels when things are going well?
- What are your favourite memories?

In the doldrums:

- What have been the hardest times on your voyage?
- Have you ever hit rock bottom?
- Have you ever been hit by a tsunami?
- Totally becalmed?
- Sailing in circles?
- Been stuck in a leaky boat?
- Can you tell or do you have a sense when things are about to 'go down'?

On learning:

- Which cards would you say describe some of the most important things you have learnt about life?
- How have you recovered from the 'down' times?
- How have you gotten on an even keel again?
- Which cards represent things you have learnt that might inspire others (your children, partner, family, friends, colleagues)?
- What will you do differently in the future when facing situations the cards represent?
- Which cards represent emotions or qualities you would most like to learn to manage well in the future?
- Who could be your role models for this?



When the tide changes:

- How do you feel when things are about to change in your life?
- Which cards represent how you feel most of the time?
- Which cards describe what it is like when change happens?
- Are you in a time of stability or transition right now?
- What helps the most when you are in a time of transition?

Like all other 'hands-on tools' published by Innovative Resources it is important to observe some cautions before the cards are introduced. Here are some questions to consider:

1. Have I familiarised myself with the cards?
2. Am I comfortable with the cards?
3. What is my purpose in introducing the cards?
4. Do I know the other person/s well enough to believe the cards are appropriate?



5. Am I confident to take a risk?
6. Is the timing right?
7. Have I considered the relevance and usefulness of each card and made a considered selection or will I use the whole set?
8. Am I prepared for strong feelings to emerge?
9. In a group situation am I able to deal with some very different experiences that may emerge?
10. How will I make sure people can 'pass' if they don't wish to participate?

11. How will the group respect confidentiality?
12. Do I have a 'Plan B'?
13. What if more time is required?
14. How do I intend to end the activity?
15. How will I evaluate the activity?





About Innovative Resources

St Luke's Innovative Resources is part of Anglicare Victoria, one of Australia's leading community service organisations. Anglicare Victoria is a not-for-profit organisation providing a range of child, youth, family and community services throughout Victoria and New South Wales.

Our publishing

Innovative resources publishes card sets, stickers, books, picture books, digital and tactile materials to enrich conversations about feelings, strengths, relationships stories and goals. Our resources bring colour and creativity to therapeutic and educational settings all over the world. They are used by counsellors, teachers, trainers, social workers, managers, mentors, parents, teams, supervisors...and anyone who works with people to create positive change.

Our training

Innovative resources also offers highly-engaging training in 'strengths-based' approaches to working with people where change arises out of a focus on strengths, respect, and hopeful possibilities.

We also offer 'tools' workshops on ways of using our resources to invigorate human service work. Our workshops honour different learning styles and the power of visual images to open up storytelling and other ways to truly connect with children and adults alike.



www.innovativeresources.org

The sea provides a very powerful metaphor for the changing conditions people experience every day.

Ups and Downs is a light-hearted yet poignant set of 54 cards that provides a unique way of giving voice to our feelings, hopes and dreams as we travel through our lives and experience the ebb and flow of our emotions and circumstances.



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