



# TWO WORLDS

WHEN RELATIONSHIPS END  
AND PARENTS SEPARATE

48 CONVERSATION - BUILDING CARDS

*WRITTEN AND PUBLISHED BY: ANGLICARE Diocese of Sydney and Innovative Resources*

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**Inside Front**



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AND PARENTS SEPARATE



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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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## PREFACE

***Two Worlds* was created and published in a partnership between the ANGLICARE Diocese of Sydney and Innovative Resources to assist those who are facing the challenge of managing transitions after separation or other significant life events. These transitions are often so big that it can feel like we are in another world, or navigating between different worlds.**

The motivation for these cards came from the experience of working with separated families; assisting children to negotiate the changes that come with separation and assisting parents to understand what it is like for their children. These children face the enormous challenge of watching the old 'world' of their family cease to exist yet at the same time being compelled to experience the new—often fragile and unpredictable— worlds created by each of their parents (whether or not they live with them). Home was once one world. Now they need to live and move between two worlds.

There are, of course, those children who have never known or cannot remember a time when Mum and Dad were together but still need to navigate the different worlds of their parents, as well as their own fantasy world of how they would like things to be.

What we experience as the world of 'home' is particularly significant to our sense of security. Ideally, home is a safe place from which we deal with the challenges of our life. We ask a lot when we expect children whose parents have separated to manage the two, often very different, worlds of home. We ask too much when the adults responsible for their care do not create a safe way for children to make the transition between these two worlds.



Separation is not the only situation in which children may experience home as two worlds. Other examples include when children are in the care of extended family or friends, state-funded out-of-home care, hospitalisation or going away for school or further education. As children negotiate these kinds of significant life changes and different worlds, they are at risk of getting stuck, lost or hurt. These cards aim to better resource those wanting to assist these children.

Many people in a child's world have an opportunity to provide care through times of change. These include parents, extended family members, caregivers, foster carers, teachers, counsellors and child care workers. In unsettled times, children need understanding and guidance. They need others to see through their eyes what this change means and a safe place to express their feelings, worries and questions. Children are better able to cope with life changes that require them to move between different worlds if they are helped to express what is happening for them and assisted to find ways to

manage the challenges they experience. The publishing partners of *Two Worlds*—ANGLICARE Diocese of Sydney and Innovative Resources—hope these cards will help those who wish to walk alongside children as they negotiate different worlds, so that children get the best care possible.

While the inspiration for these cards grew out of the desire to assist families, the publishers believe that they can be used effectively with people of any age—adults and children alike. We all navigate our way through significant life changes, and some of us are called upon to manage change that can challenge us to our very core, bringing with it the potential for upheaval, confusion and dislocation. Imagine, for example, the differing worlds that migrants or refugees must navigate. Times of transition—such as the birth of a baby, retirement, moving jobs or houses, the sudden advent of an illness or disability, the loss of partners, pets and loved ones—can be eased with the help of respectful conversations that are perhaps enriched with conversational prompts such as *Two Worlds*.

## THE WORLDS IN WHICH WE LIVE

**How easily we can forget that each person's world is unique. Even in the closest of relationships there will be differences in perspective, taste, reactions and desires. This is especially so within the worlds of home.**

Parents, partners and children can forget that other members of the family live in their individual and unique worlds of likes, dislikes, emotions, beliefs, feelings, inclinations, relationships and experiences.

It is easy to assume that the way we see the world is the way others see it, and we can be surprised when we discover they don't! The word 'world' can be used to describe a distinct part or aspect of someone's experience of life. Most of us are a part of, and move between, different worlds in order to meet our various needs. A single world is unlikely to be the entirety of someone's life, but a significant and differing aspect of it. Examples include the worlds of home, work, school, extended family, friends, sports and other recreational activities.

While it may seem obvious that each of us is a 'world unto ourselves' and we each 'live in our own world', worlds may (and often do) overlap. For example, the world of school overlaps with the world of home with regard to homework, morning

preparations for school and school friends visiting at home. Individual worlds exist within worlds and are influenced by the worlds they touch.

The worlds of home, work and school exist within the worlds of the neighbourhood, larger community, country, continent and planet on which we live.

A world is individually experienced through multiple interacting dimensions including:

- physical—what we can see, smell, hear, taste and touch;
- cultural—the way things are done, rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and stories and habits passed down through generations;
- emotional—how we recognise, name, experience and express feelings;
- social—how we interact, and are affected by, our relationships with individuals, families, groups, and communities;



- cognitive—our beliefs and thoughts, how we think about, and make sense of, our experience;
- spiritual—how we determine values, higher purpose and meaning.

Just as each of us lives and moves between different worlds, so we also see and interpret things differently. Take, for example, looking at a sunrise. One person might think, 'Oh, how wonderful, how inspiring—the beginning of a new day!' Another person might think 'Oh, it's so early—I don't like having to take the kids to school this early.'

This is why there is no description of the meaning of each Two Worlds card in this booklet and why there are no words on the cards themselves. Each card has the potential to mean something different to each person. The images on the cards will elicit different associations, meanings, stories and feelings according to such factors as the history, imagination, personality, hopes, dreams, fears and present circumstances of the observer. One person may have different reactions to the same card on different occasions. Equally, two people may have similar interpretations of an image. That is the power and beauty of images—they are open to unique and sometimes surprising interpretations that can give rise to significant conversations and helpful insights.

For these reasons, whether working with a group or an individual, it is important to invite each person to speak about what they see in the card (or cards) before them.

Because there are no words on the cards, Two Worlds can be used by anyone regardless of their capacity to read English...or any other language for that matter!

Two Worlds can therefore be used with people who have limited capacity with language. Equally, Two Worlds can assist users who are confident in language and literacy but want to express something beyond words.

Some people will look at the cards and see many uniquely Australian scenes, while others will see images that are symbolic of experiences that anyone anywhere can relate to. This is because transitions, changes and separation are a common part of the human experience. While the creators of Two Worlds have chosen cards to reflect the experiences of people living in Australia—regardless of cultural and language backgrounds—we hope that the cards will have relevance for people living in a wide variety of countries and cultural environments.

## THUMBNAILS: THE COMPLETE SET OF *TWO WORLDS* CARDS

Here are all 48 cards in the *Two Worlds* set. These images were painted by Carolyn Marrone, award-winning watercolour artist from Bendigo, Victoria, Australia.

Underneath each of the thumbnail images of the cards in this section we have placed two sample questions. These questions do not appear on the cards themselves. They are certainly not the only questions that a facilitator might ask in relation to the image. Nor are they necessarily the most appropriate questions to ask in every circumstance—and nor are they necessarily placed in the ‘right’ order.

Questioning is a very important skill within therapeutic and learning environments, and it is the responsibility of facilitators themselves to decide what questions they think are the most useful to ask when

working with their particular clients—and in what sequence to ask them. These sample questions are offered to help ‘open up’ some possible interpretations of the image for a facilitator or user of the cards. We hope the sample questions will spark the imagination of the facilitator in forming their own questions when working with the cards.





- How do you carry your things from one house to another?
- What do you take with you?



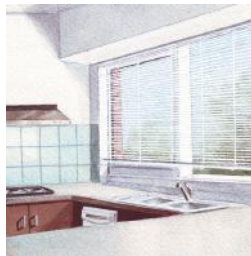
- How do you decide who is invited?
- How do you feel about a new commitment?



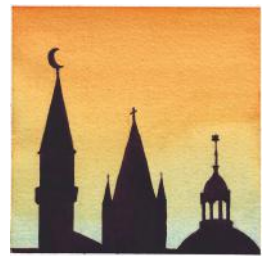
- Who do you practise with now?
- Who takes you to the game?



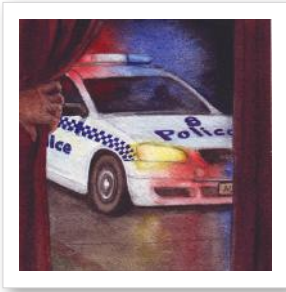
- Who does the dishes?
- Is life sometimes messy?



- Do people in your life have different ideas about cleanliness?
- What chores do you do?



- Have your beliefs changed?
- Do people in your life have different beliefs?



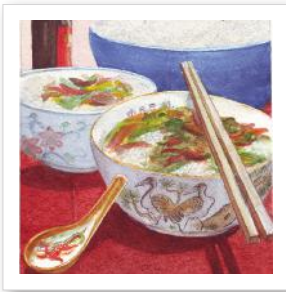
- Do you feel safe?
- Do you worry for the safety of your loved ones?



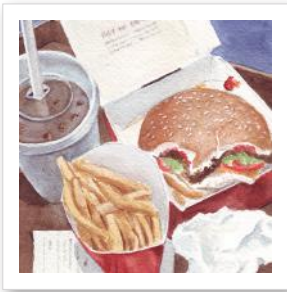
- What are some of your precious memories?
- What brings you comfort now?



- What's new in your life?
- What is your favourite toy?



- Do you eat different foods in different houses?
- Are meal times enjoyable?



- Do you eat well?
- Do you always agree about meals?



- If you think of your life as having seasons, what does winter mean for you?
- What are the benefits of winter?



- If you think of your life as having seasons, what does spring mean for you?
- What are the benefits of spring?



- If you think of your life as having seasons, what does summer mean for you?
- What are the benefits of summer?



- If you think of your life as having seasons, what does autumn mean for you?
- What are the benefits of autumn?



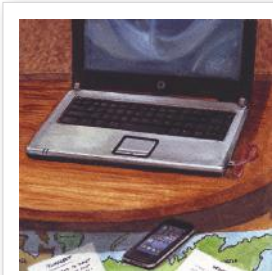
- What will you celebrate?
- Who will you invite to celebrate with you?



- What do you like to do with your friends?
- Do you have the same friends now?



- Do you share a bedroom?
- Do you manage to find your own space?



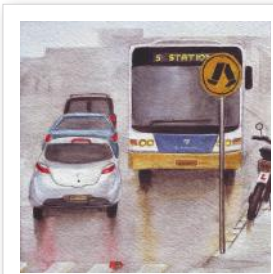
- How do you stay in touch?
- Who makes the rules?



- Is forgiveness possible?
- What does it take to rebuild dreams?



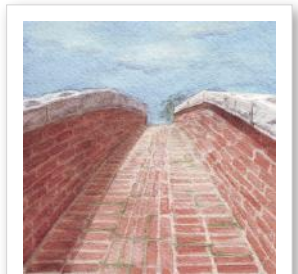
- What direction will you take?
- What signs will help you along the way?



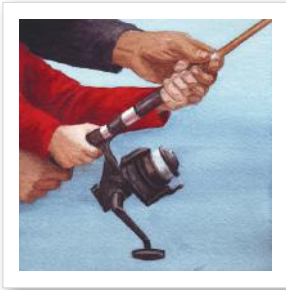
- Is it easy to get around?
- Where do you want to go?



- Are there bridges that you have to cross?
- What is on the other side?



- In your life, are you crossing a bridge from one place to another?
- How solid is the ground beneath your feet?



- Who do you like doing things with?
- Who helps you learn now?



- When does time run short?
- When does time go slowly?



- How do you help out?
- Do you enjoy a challenge?



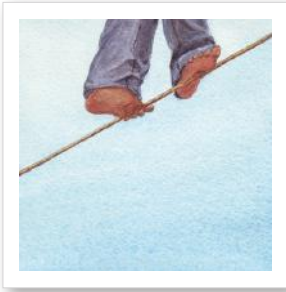
- Are all your loved ones nearby?
- When can you visit?



- How organised do you feel?
- Can you do it all?



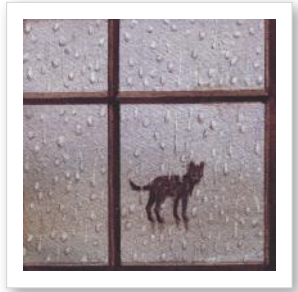
- Do you have to pack up and go?
- What do you want to take with you?



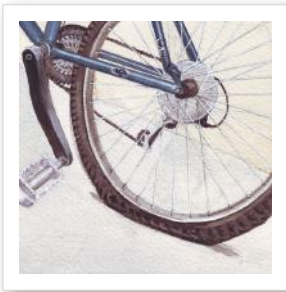
- Do you ever feel that you are trying to balance on a tightrope?
- What or who is your safety net?



- What is at the end of your rainbow?
- What comes after the storm?



- Who needs you?
- Where do you find shelter?



- Can it be fixed?
- Who fixes it?



- Can you concentrate?
- How do you keep up?

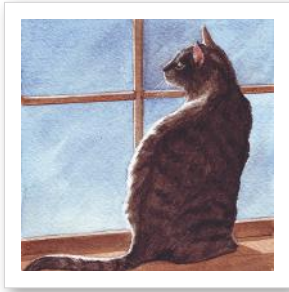


- What do others do for you?
- What do you do for yourself?





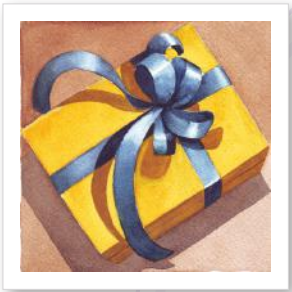
- What is your journey like?
- How far to go?



- Who do you miss?
- Who misses you?



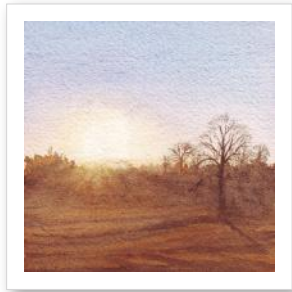
- What has changed in your life?
- What does 'home' mean to you?



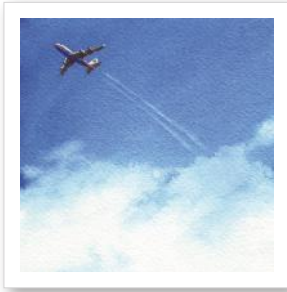
- What are you grateful for?
- What reminds you of someone special?



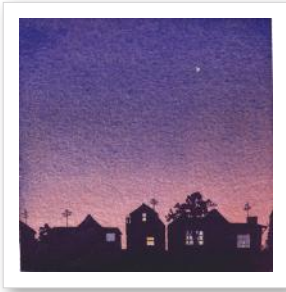
- Is it hard to say sorry?
- Can you forgive?



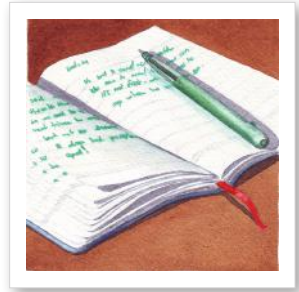
- What is beginning?
- What is ending?



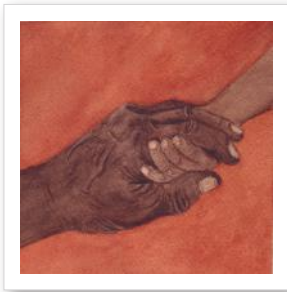
- When is it time to say goodbye?
- What would a brand new horizon look like?



- Do you sleep soundly?
- How important are neighbours to you?



- Have you ever kept a journal?
- How do you reflect on your experiences?



- Who is there for you?
- Who are you there for?



- What are your goals?
- Has the game changed?



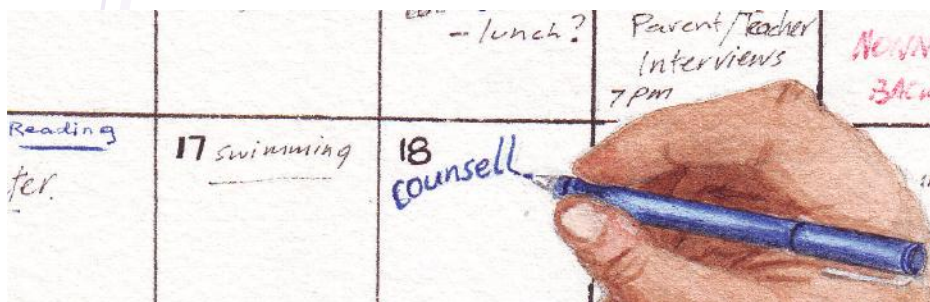
- What fires your imagination?
- What warms your heart?

## POSSIBLE APPLICATIONS

The *Two Worlds* cards were developed for use with children and adults experiencing separation and change. They can be used to invite participants to reflect on their own experiences and circumstances, and those of other people. In this way the cards can be used to help participants develop empathy with the feelings of others. They can be used for story-telling, goal-setting and describing perspectives and emotions. We hope they will play a part in creating hopeful pictures of the future and positive ways forward for children, parents and families.

As the title implies, the cards are designed to facilitate conversations when negotiating the spaces between 'worlds', especially during times of upheaval and crisis. This makes the cards particularly suitable for situations that include separation, out-of-home care or other changes and challenges in family dynamics and structure.

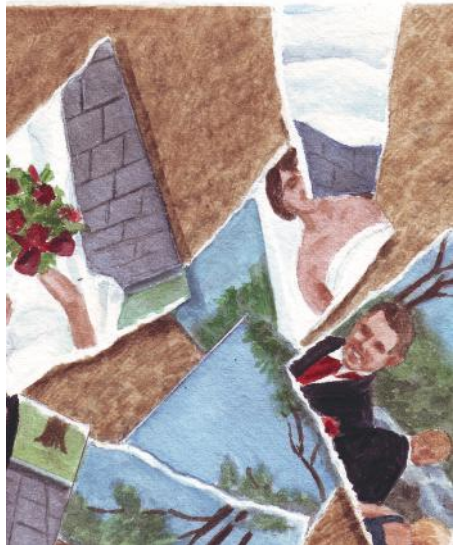
Undoubtedly, people using Two Worlds will discover many more possible settings for using the cards. In the meantime, here are some possible applications for Two Worlds to spark your ideas for conversations and activities using this resource.



## Post-separation parenting group programs and counselling

Separation is a difficult time for parents. They may face many challenges in meeting basic family needs for finances, accommodation, meals, attendance at work, transport to school and activities as well as arrangements for spending time with the other parent. They also need to manage the emotional impact of the separation on themselves. It is not surprising that sometimes the emotional needs of children can be lost in this process.

Post-separation parenting group programs and counselling can assist parents to better understand their children's needs after separation. These services often focus on the impact of ongoing conflict between parents. A child requires love, understanding and guidance through such challenging times. Two Worlds can be used to alert parents to the challenges their children may be facing while living in, and moving between, two worlds. As a result they may be better able to respond to their children's needs.



## Family dispute resolution, family counselling and mediation

The purpose of family dispute resolution is to assist parents and carers in separated families to make parenting arrangements that are in their children's best interests. Family counselling and family mediation may be appropriate for separated or intact families.

Two Worlds can be a conduit for developing understanding and empathy by asking each person in the family questions that focus attention on their core issues and those of others. It can particularly assist parents to focus on how their children may be experiencing the current parenting arrangements and any ongoing parental conflict.

## Child-inclusive practice

Child-inclusive practice is sometimes used as part of the post-separation family dispute resolution process to explore the concerns and needs of children whose parents have separated. Non-intrusive counselling processes are used.

With children's permission, the information they provide can inform and encourage parents (and other relevant people) to make decisions that are in the best interests of the child.

Children can be asked to pick one or more cards that show something they want to discuss. A conversation can then begin by inviting the child to talk about what they see in the card and why they picked it.

Depending on the specific circumstances, it may be appropriate to show the cards chosen by the child to a parent, parents or other relevant people, and to share the child's description.

For children, the separation of parents often feels like loss—loss of one or both parents, loss of grandparents and other extended family, loss of friends and community—loss of the world they knew.

Carers and professionals can assist children by encouraging them to find words and other ways to express feelings about how the separation is affecting them. This helps children to grieve and adjust to new circumstances.

## Child counselling

Two Worlds is a great addition to a child counsellor's toolbox or playbox, especially when the counsellor is aware that the child's parents are separating or have separated.

However, the cards can also be used to help a child express their thoughts and feelings when challenged by uncertainty, change, grief and loss in any circumstances.

In fact, any time when the world of a child is significantly disturbed.

Children are not always able to express themselves sufficiently with words, and may find it easier to express themselves through talking about a card they have chosen in answer to a question. Cards also provide an alternative entry to the use of artwork with older children and adolescents. Two Worlds provides a potential focus other than face-to-face talking.

## Out-of-home care

The experience of out-of-home care for a child is an experience of change and often, upheaval. It may be a permanent move (to carers or kin) after a series of different short-term carers (to whom they may feel a strong attachment as well). Children are exposed to uncertain time frames about when each change will happen, and it can be hard to keep all the caregivers and family members 'sorted' in their mind and emotions. When they need to move, children (aged 7-12 years) have described feelings of 'waiting, waiting, waiting'; of sadness at being moved; of divided loyalty that they aren't able to look after their parent anymore; of confusion, excitement, fear, strangeness and unfamiliarity, disappointment and 'feeling like I am a guest staying in someone else's house for a while.'

The cards may be particularly useful for children to describe the different worlds of their placement or placements. They may also be useful when a caseworker is speaking with a child, such as during an annual review, or during supervision when asking a worker about a carer's or child's perspective.

## Caregiver assessment and review

The *Two Worlds* cards can provide an original and creative adjunct to important conversations with caregivers. Firstly, as part of the assessment process for caregiver applicants, the cards can provide a prompt to talk about the different families, childhoods and homes of each partner.

- What similar and different experiences do you bring to your relationship?
- Of these experiences, which provide you with the skills, strengths and resources to step into caring for other people's children?
- How do you imagine that your resilience as a parent, or your relationship with your partner, might be tested by children who come from a very different world?

In evaluating an out-of-home care placement with carers, the *Two Worlds* cards can be used to describe which aspects of the placement worked well and which were a challenge:

- Which cards say something about the life experience of the child you took into your home?
- Which cards suggest the important differences between your family and home, and the child's family and home?

- Which cards suggest things you think the child found most difficult in living with you?
- Which cards indicate things that were challenging or difficult for you?
- Which cards show things that you think benefited the child the most?
- Which cards show how you benefited or learned the most from the child living with you?
- Which cards indicate what you might do differently next time?

### Pre-marriage and couple's counselling

Two Worlds can be a useful way to introduce reflection and discussion about the differences, similarities, challenges and expectations of the 'worlds' of two people entering marriage. The cards can also be used by the couple as a way of telling each other about their childhood worlds. They may also be used for picturing the future worlds they envisage for the children and family they may create together.

Equally, the cards can be used during couples counselling as a way to explore and discover more about the differing yet intersecting worlds that each person in a partnership inhabits.



### General counselling

Two Worlds can be used when it seems that an individual or couple might benefit from looking at things from a different perspective. That might include considering their own worlds of the past, present or future, or reflecting on someone else's world. Goal-setting, story-telling, and identifying hopes, dreams, values and next steps can all be introduced via the cards.

## Supervision

*Two Worlds* can be used in either individual or group supervision. The cards can be used to communicate about, and reflect on, clients' experiences and what occurred during client contact.

Supervisees can be encouraged to consider images chosen by clients that had particular emotional impact for the client, and to reflect on how this may influence the work. This discussion may also raise challenges for the practitioner in caring for the client and themselves. The supervisor and the supervisee may also wish to choose cards that represent each of their perspectives or expectations of the work. They can then discuss the similarities and differences between their intersecting 'worlds', and how best to navigate them so that the needs of both parties are taken into account—with the needs of the client at the very centre, of course!



## Team meetings

When teams of people get together to debrief about events in their working lives, to share ideas and to come up with plans for the future, *Two Worlds* may be used:

- as an 'ice-breaker' or conversation-starter at the beginning of a meeting;
- to present different people's point of view;
- to express the challenges different people are feeling;
- to compare and contrast team members' thoughts and expectations;
- as a story-telling tool;
- to represent the strengths, resources, hopes and dreams of clients and team members.

Conversations may be especially fruitful when team members are using *Two Worlds* in their work with clients. This is an opportunity to compare and contrast the cards that team members choose, with the cards that their clients choose when describing their experiences.



## Parents and guardians

Two Worlds can be used by parents and guardians as a way to help a child express their perspective and tell their stories. Storytelling can open up meaningful conversations in delightful ways.

For example, every member of the family or household (including adults) can be invited to pick a card and tell everyone else about that card. Why did they select it? What does it mean to them and does it remind them of something they have experienced? Can they select a series of cards and arrange them in a sequence to tell a story about family life? Can the child add to the story or change the ending of the story by introducing other cards?

A parent can invite a child to select and talk about a card (or cards) that shows what they are feeling. The child may choose to speak about happy times, or more difficult times. Even if the parent cannot fix a problem that the child raises, or change the sadness the child may express, it provides a time where parents can enter into the world of their child and be alongside them in what they are experiencing.



For any of the above conversations to be respectful and open, professionals, parents or anyone introducing the cards must provide a safe place for children to be honest about their experiences without fear of hurting their parents' (or anyone else's) feelings. Parents need to explicitly let children know that whatever they say, they will be listened to, and responded to, with love.

This principle applies to anyone using the cards. It is important to provide a safe and respectful space where conversations, including the most painful ones, can take place in ways that invite people to focus on strengths and discover possibilities for hopeful steps forward. With this foremost in mind, we draw your attention to the next section entitled 'Taking care before you begin'.

## TAKING CARE BEFORE YOU BEGIN

**Before you start using these cards we encourage you to take some time to reflect on how to use them as effectively and safely as possible.**

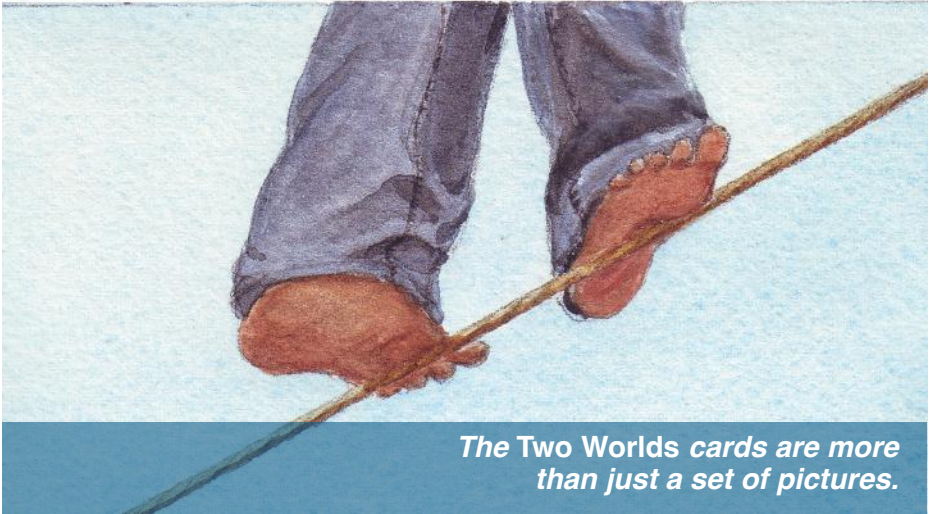
A primary focus of the *Two Worlds* cards is to support parents and caregivers in their understanding of their children's experience of separation and to encourage children in describing their experience. Separation has an emotional impact for everyone involved, with possible feelings of anger, confusion, guilt and relief—to name just a few.

The stories of the separation experience will also be incredibly varied and unpredictable. Everyone's story will change significantly over time and potentially even day to day, given the strength of the emotions that parental separation can release.

For these reasons it is vital, firstly, that a safe space is created to enable adults and children to tell their stories. Secondly, it is crucial that the listener accept the reality of each person's journey without preconceived ideas of what shape the story will take and without passing judgment on the contents of any of the stories.

Lastly, if strong emotions are exhibited in the telling of the story these too need to be anticipated, accepted and allowed the freedom to emerge. Strong emotions may not suggest the *Two Worlds* cards have failed but rather, like any metaphor (especially a visual metaphor), it may be an indicator the cards have worked as a short cut to meaning and emotions, by-passing some of our cognitive, self-censoring mechanisms.





*The Two Worlds cards are more than just a set of pictures.*

The *Two Worlds* cards are more than just a set of pictures. They can enable the user to open up the physical, emotional, social, cognitive, cultural and spiritual experiences of the worlds they are negotiating. However, it is very important that the person using *Two Worlds* as a therapeutic tool is able to appropriately support the person or people working with the cards.

Before using *Two Worlds* with others we encourage you to reflect on whether you (and your team members) have the ability and time to create and hold a supportive space for a person or people who may express a range and depth of emotions.

At the heart of strengths-based, solution-oriented practice is the commitment to creating a hopeful sense of the future. Therefore, we recommend that a sense

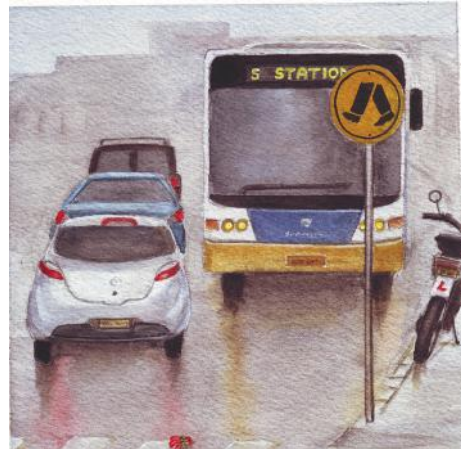
of hope is encouraged within the group members or individuals as conversations unfold. This might be achieved by focusing on agreed strengths, goals and simple next steps to take.

If you are considering using *Two Worlds* for your own personal development, remember to give yourself time and space to process the experiences and emotions that may arise.

Of course, no hands-on conversational prompt is a panacea. Each of us has our own personal taste in language, metaphor and illustrative style. Even when great care is taken, the tool or exercise simply may not work for a particular group or individual. In using any conversational prompt it is always important to be aware of its potential impact, and to have a 'Plan B' on hand.

At times, the most light-hearted or innocuous-looking visual prompt can contain huge potency for people and cause all sorts of powerful emotions to tumble out. We can all be caught by unexpected revelations in our conversations, and adopting a position of 'taking care' often requires that thought be given to:

- the facilitator's own comfort with the images and metaphors used in the cards. Does the resource work for you? Are you comfortable using it yourself or with family and friends who you know well?
- your knowledge of the materials. Are you familiar with the cards? Do you need to use all of the cards or are there some you can leave out? Have you used cards before? What did you discover?



- your knowledge of your clients. Does your knowledge of the culture, age and literacy of those you are working with suggest that they will relate to the images? Are you comfortable taking the risk that the cards may not work as you anticipate?
- the safety of the setting. Do you believe you have created a 'safe space' for people to talk openly and honestly? If you are introducing the cards to a group, what are the dynamics and mood of the group? Is there respect in the group? Is the timing right? Have rules such as listening and confidentiality been established? Have you thought about how you will enable people to 'pass'—that is, to feel free to decline an invitation to share or comment if they wish?



*At times, the most light-hearted or innocuous-looking visual prompt can contain huge potency for people.*



- valuing people's own interpretations. Have you thought about how to support people's own interpretations of meaning while keeping the door open to consider other possibilities?
- your expectations. How do you imagine conversations will flow? What if something different happens? What constitutes 'successful' or 'unsuccessful' use of the cards? Do you have an alternative plan if something isn't working? What if the cards elicit strong emotions—how will you care for people during or after the session?
- setting the context. Have you thought about how best to introduce the cards? Do you want to introduce them with a particular activity? Or will you simply leave the cards on a table or shelf (or a notice board) where clients might find them and begin a spontaneous conversation?

## GETTING CARDS INTO PARTICIPANTS' HANDS

Once you have decided who you want to use the cards with and considered all the factors involved in creating a safe and respectful setting, it is time to think about how you will invite participants to engage with the cards. While there are a myriad of creative ways for doing this, in general, they all fall into two broad methods.

### 1. Spread, scan and select

Firstly, there is the method known as 'The Three Ss'—Spread, Scan and Select. Using this method, all or some of the cards are spread face up on a flat surface and participants are invited to scan the cards and make a selection. Sometimes spreading the cards on the floor can create a different dynamic. Participants are invited to walk around the cards and in so doing they can have a bird's eye view of the array of cards. They also engage their bodies more fully during the process of selection because they are moving around. This can open up learning and reflection in different ways.

The amount of time allowed for scanning the cards can vary enormously. Generally, the more complex the cards and the more reflective the activity, the more time is



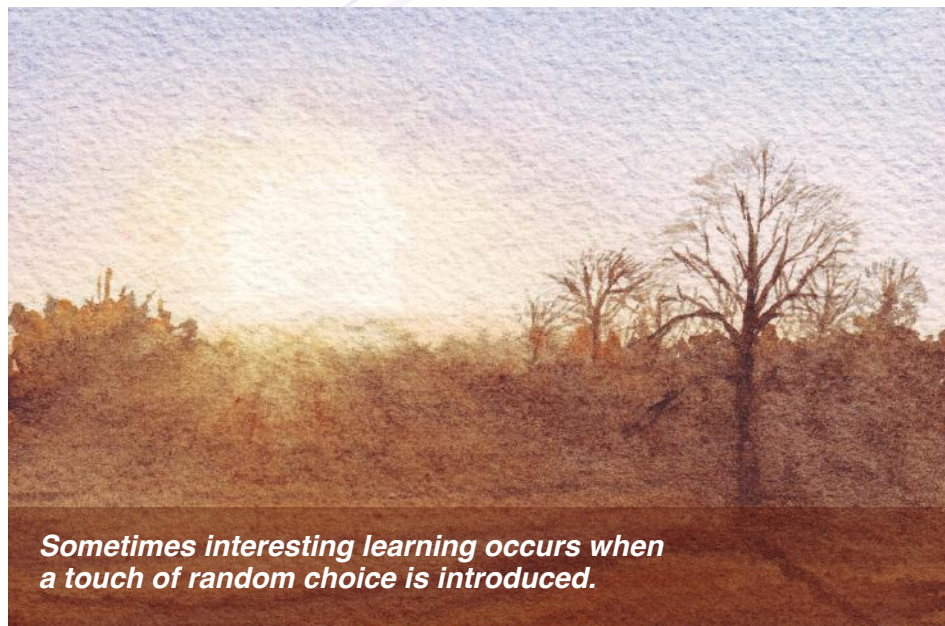
needed. As always though, it is preferable to move at a pace that participants are comfortable with. As in any therapeutic conversation, managing the available time well is an important skill.

## 2. Random selection

The second method for getting the *Two Worlds* cards into people's hands is sometimes called 'The Fourth S' — Serendipity. Sometimes interesting learning occurs when a touch of random choice is introduced. This method includes such activities as shuffling and dealing the cards or placing them face down on a surface so the participant selects a card without knowing what is

on it. Another method is to fan the cards out and invite participants to randomly select a card ('Pick a card, any card!')

You can also play a range of games that involve hiding and finding cards such as lucky dips, cards placed randomly on chairs, selecting a card with eyes closed, swapping cards with the person on your right and so on.



*Sometimes interesting learning occurs when a touch of random choice is introduced.*

## QUESTION SAMPLER

**Once you have decided whether to use a deliberate or a random selection method, you will need a prompt to get the conversation or activity started. In each of the applications listed earlier in this booklet (and in a myriad of other creative settings that users of the cards will discover for themselves) questions will often be the starting point for activities involving the cards.**

As countless skilled practitioners have discovered, the right question at the right time is a powerful tool. A question or a series of questions can open up conversational pathways leading to important insights, possibilities, connections, plans and next steps.

Below is a list of possible questions that you may wish to consider using. Two Worlds is designed to assist people to come up with their own answers, so these questions are simply thought-starters. Facilitators and other users of the cards will want to create questions that are relevant to the context within which they are working, and appropriate to their level of skill, experience and confidence. (Once again, please refer to the section called 'Taking care before you begin' for some important considerations.)

### Using the cards with children

Here are some suggested questions, from the many thousands of possibilities, a listener may choose to use with children going through a parental separation:

- We all live in some different worlds, for example, the worlds of school, home and play. When families separate, children often feel like their parents have created two very different and separate worlds. Do you sometimes feel like you are living in two different worlds?
- Which cards describe your worlds now that your parents are no longer (living) together?
- What parts of your worlds are working best for you now?
- What is it like going from one world to another?



*As countless skilled practitioners have discovered, the right question at the right time is a powerful tool.*



- What are the hardest parts? What are the good parts?
- How different are your worlds now compared to your worlds when your parents were still together?
- I imagine there are lots of things in your worlds at present that you can't change, but if you could change one thing, what would it be?
- When you look over the Two Worlds cards, which ones say something about what you fear the most?
- How could your world be made easier right now?
- Which cards say something about what you are good at?
- How could you use those strengths to help you most now?
- Which cards best describe the worlds of your mum/dad/siblings?
- Which cards show what your mum/dad/siblings are good at?
- Which cards show what you are most looking forward to, or hope for, in the future?

## Using the cards with parents

*Two Worlds* can provide a way that separating parents can gain insight into the experiences of their children and possibly gain new awareness of the challenges their children face. It can also be used as a powerful storytelling tool for parents to speak about their own strong emotions, challenges, fears, hopes and dreams.

Some possible questions for separated or separating parents are:

- Which *Two Worlds* cards best describe what it's like in your world right now?
  - What worlds do you think your children are negotiating at present?
  - How could your worlds be made easier?
  - How could your children's worlds be made easier?
  - How do you think others see your world?
  - What are your hopes for the future worlds of your children/yourself/other parent?
  - What would happen if...?
  - What's stopping...from happening?
  - What do you hope to achieve from...?
  - Pick a card that represents...?
- What is it like in the world of your relationship with...?
  - What's hard in your world right now?
  - What's hard in the worlds of your children/their other parent right now?
  - What's working in your world right now?
  - What's working in the worlds of your children/their other parent right now?
  - Which cards best describe your fears?
  - Which cards best describe your world before you and your partner separated?
  - What did your world look like when you and your partner were first together?
  - What did your world look like when you were expecting a baby?
  - What is it like in your children's worlds when...?

## OTHER CREATIVE WAYS OF USING THE CARDS

**All of the questions listed in the previous sections are just some ways of inviting reflective conversations. Such conversations can create connection, healing and steps forward for children and adults alike. However, conversations are not the only pathways that can lead to insights and understandings. Sometimes the spoken word is not the most effective way to communicate at all.**

Facilitators and teachers may want to invite children and adults to use the *Two Worlds* cards as prompts for:

- writing a poem;
- writing a short story;
- writing a scene from a movie of 'their world';
- making a collage;
- drawing or painting a picture of their own;
- writing in their private journal every day;
- writing/singing a song;
- researching relevant quotes from the internet;
- making a 'mind map' of ideas, plans or next steps;
- creating a greeting card or postcard;
- writing a letter (whether sent or unsent);
- writing an affirmation.



## Pairings and groupings

Many users of the cards will notice some possible 'pairings' or 'groupings' within the 48 *Two Worlds* cards. These pairings may occur because the images seem to be opposites, or because they have something in common or because we relate them in our minds in some other way.

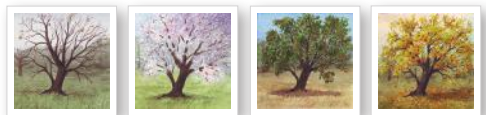
Fruitful conversations can be built around these groupings, for example:



### ***The two teddy bears***

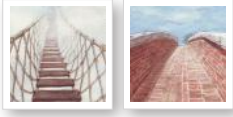
- Which of these two bears comes closest to describing you at the moment?
- Do either of these bears describe your world when...?
- Can you draw a bear that is you when...?
- If the two bears in the cards could talk to each other, what do you think they would say?
- Is there a treasured object in your life? If so, what is it?
- Where is it now?

- Do your children have treasured toys?
- Which of your children's worlds do these toys live in now?
- Do they have different treasured toys in their different worlds or do they take the same toy into their different worlds?



### ***The four cards showing a tree in each of the seasons***

- Which of the seasons do you think you are in at the moment?
- What happens in nature during this season?
- Does that offer you any helpful ideas for what to do right now? If so, how might you do more of those things?
- Thinking of the different aspects of your life at the moment, which season is each of your worlds experiencing?
- What would bring about a change in 'your season'?
- How will you know when 'your season' is changing? What will be the very first sign?



### ***The swing bridge and the brick bridge***

- A bridge takes us from one place to another. Do you feel you are on a bridge right now?
- If so, do either of these cards come close to representing your bridge?
- If not, what does your bridge look and feel like?
- What is on each side of your bridge? What are you leaving behind and what are you going towards?
- What is beneath your bridge—a road? a river? a valley? a big chasm?
- What is the view like from your bridge? Can you see what is at the beginning/ end of your bridge?
- Do you feel safe on your bridge? If not, what would help your bridge to feel safer?
- Is anyone with you on your bridge?
- Has anyone crossed over that bridge before? What would their advice be about how best to cross that bridge?
- How do you think you will feel when you get to the other side? Will you celebrate? If so, how?

There are as many other pairings and groupings as our imaginations are inclined to create. For example:

- The ripped up wedding photo and the wedding invitation;
- The tidy kitchen and the messy kitchen;
- The ball and the goal posts;
- The takeaway food and the food in Chinese bowls;
- The computer and the journal with pen;
- The suitcase and the back pack;
- The various cards depicting different modes of transport;
- The two cards depicting the night sky;
- The city scenes and the country scenes;
- The travel documents and the plane;
- The clock and the calendar;
- The present and the birthday cake;
- The cat in the window and the dog outside in the rain.

We hope these suggested groupings will inspire other possible clusters of cards, and lead to a myriad of creative activities and conversations.

## ABOUT ANGLICARE DIOCESE OF SYDNEY

ANGLICARE Diocese of Sydney, the community service agency of the Sydney Anglican Church, has been providing Christian care and support since 1856. Every year ANGLICARE services reach out to many thousands of people to provide support, assistance, advice and advocacy.

ANGLICARE services include:

- Counselling and family dispute resolution;
- Family education and relationship skills group programs;
- Early intervention programs for young families providing education, counselling and supported accommodation;
- Sustainable living services providing material assistance, financial counselling and capacity building to assist people living in financial hardship;
- Migrant and refugee services helping people arriving from other parts of the world to overcome language and cultural barriers and settle into their new community;
- Foster care and out-of-home care programs;
- Respite care and other services to support children, young people and adults with intellectual and physical disabilities and acquired brain injuries;
- Services for people living with mental illness and their carers;
- Programs assisting homeless young people and those at risk of becoming homeless;
- Disaster Recovery volunteer teams providing practical support and hope to those affected by disasters;
- ANGLICARE shops providing quality clothing, community partnerships and income to support our other services;
- Chaplains ministering in hospitals, aged care services, juvenile justice centres, mental health facilities and prisons;
- Independent retirement living in a caring community for seniors;
- Low to high-level residential aged care including specialist dementia care;
- In-home and centre-based programs supporting older people living at home and their carers.

To learn more about ANGLICARE Sydney, please go to: [www.anglicare.org.au](http://www.anglicare.org.au)

## ABOUT INNOVATIVE RESOURCES

Innovative Resources is part of Anglicare Victoria, a community services organisation providing child, youth and family services in Victoria and New South Wales, Australia. We publish card sets, stickers, books, and digital and tactile materials to enrich conversations about feelings, strengths, relationships, values and goals. Our resources are for all people regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, culture, ability or age. They are used by counsellors, educators, social workers, mentors, managers and parents. We also offer 'strengths approach' training and 'tools' workshops, both online and in-person.

**[www.innovativeresources.org](http://www.innovativeresources.org)**



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS FROM THE PUBLISHING PARTNERS: ANGLICARE SHOALHAVEN AND INNOVATIVE RESOURCES

Producing a resource like this, especially as a partnership between two organisations, takes countless hours of discussion, negotiation, collaboration, revision and more discussion in repeating cycles. The cards, booklet and box that make up Two Worlds were formed as they travelled through the worlds of writing, editing, painting, graphic design, printing and collating. It's a credit to all involved how much good will has been present throughout this journey.

In 2008, Glenda Devlin, Shoalhaven Community Care Manager for ANGLICARE Sydney (in NSW Australia) approached Russell Deal, Creative Director of Innovative Resources, the publishing arm of St Luke's Anglicare (in Victoria, Australia) about the potential for jointly developing a resource focussed on supporting parents and children through the separation process.

Glenda Devlin managed this project on behalf of ANGLICARE Sydney with the assistance of Jacqui Leonard, (Nowra

Family Relationship Centre Manager) and Judith Edwards (Family Services and Post Separation Cooperative Parenting (PSCP) Service Manager). Glenda was actively involved in the writing, editing and development of the cards and booklet. Jane Ewins (Soulvable Consulting and a former ANGLICARE team member) was contracted to develop the first draft of this booklet. The card concepts, boxing and subsequent drafts of this booklet were very much a collaborative effort between both publishers, with input from staff from the Nowra Family Relationship Centre and ANGLICARE PSCP Teams in the Shoalhaven and Bega. This includes Michelle Woszatka, Jennifer Bailey, Susanne Baylis, Hannah Brumerskyj, Karen Christison, Douglas Coreau, Angela Cornford, Sue-Anne Cutmore, Fiona Doquile, Darryll Farrell, Terry Grant, Sandra Kettlewell, Carolyn Bateman, Kim McGuire, Suzanne Olds, Michele Polach, Dee Rabbolini, Karen Richardson, Jill Smith and Mark Stevenson.



This resource would not be what it is without the skill and care of artist, Carolyn Marrone, who by painting the watercolour images for these cards, has created fascinating windows into at least 48 worlds.

In-house graphic designer at Innovative Resources, Mat Jones, worked his magic to create the design for the cards, booklet and box. Thank you once again, Mat.

Russell Deal (Creative Director at Innovative Resources at the time of first publication), and Karen Bedford (Managing Editor) managed the project on behalf of Innovative Resources. Drawing on the experience of having created and published over 50 resources for children, youth, families and communities, both Russell and Karen contributed significantly to the writing, editing and shaping of the cards, booklet and box. Georgena Stuckenschmidt (General Manager) was a tireless supporter of the project and helped lay the necessary foundations for the publishing partnership. Thank you also to Chris Cain, Print Production and Warehouse Manager at Innovative Resources. The co-creators and co-publishers of *Two Worlds* want to



acknowledge and offer gratitude for the opportunities for learning and connection that this collaboration has given each organisation. This partnership wove the various threads into what became: *Two Worlds*—when relationships end and parents separate.

Most of all we want to acknowledge and thank children and families, and those who work alongside them. We hope that *Two Worlds* will play a part in opening up hopeful worlds.

## FURTHER READING

### **Studies and journal articles**

1. Amato, PR 2010, 'Research on divorce: Continuing trends and new developments', *Journal of Marriage and Family*, vol. 72(3), pp. 650-666.

This article summarises a wide range of research around divorce. In regards to factors impacting children's adjustment to divorce, Amato suggests most theoretical perspectives have drawn on notions of stress, coping, risk and resiliency. Amato refers to multiple studies which suggest that effective parenting, low conflict between parents and cooperative parenting behaviour are associated with greater child wellbeing.

2. Bagshaw, D 2007, 'Reshaping responses to children when parents are separating: hearing children's voices in the transition', *Australian Social Work*, vol. 60(4), pp. 450-465.

3. Bagshaw, D, Brown, T, Wendt, S, Campbell, A, McInnes, E, Tinning, B, Batagol, B, Sifris, A, Tyson, D, Baker, J & Fernandez Arias, P 2010, *Family Violence and Family Law in Australia: The experiences and views of children and adults from families who separated post-1995 and post-2006*, vol. 1, Commonwealth of Australia

This study discusses data collected from approximately 1100 parents and children who had experienced a parental relationship breakdown. Interviews were conducted online and over the phone.

4. Baxter, J, Weston, R & Qu, L 2011, 'Family structure, co-parental relationship quality, post-separation paternal involvement and children's emotional well-being', *Journal of Family Studies*, vol.17, pp. 86-109.

This study considered the links between the emotional wellbeing of 4,403 young children (aged 6-7 years) and the quality of the co-parental relationship and post-separation paternal involvement. Regardless of family type, children whose parents had a hostile inter-parental relationship tended to have poorer emotional wellbeing than those in a non-hostile relationship. The authors conclude that interventions that assist parents to reduce or overcome their hostility will benefit young children, whether those parents stay together or separate.

5. Kelly, JB & Emery, RE 2003, 'Children's adjustment following divorce: risk and resilience perspectives', *Family Relations*, vol. 52(4), pp. 352-362.

This paper reviews the empirical literature on the longer-term adjustment of children after parental divorce. Recognised stressors for children include the stress of the initial separation, parental conflict, diminished parenting after divorce, loss of important relationships, economic opportunities and re-marriage and re-partnering. These stressors are seen as variable according to the child, family and particular situations over time. The authors suggest that the 'majority of children seem to have little emotional preparation for their parents' separation and they react to the separation with distress, anxiety, anger, shock and disbelief' (p.353). This is complicated by the fact that most parents fail to discuss the separation and divorce with their children or give information about living arrangements and parent/child relationships. When there is contact with the non-resident parent, children must deal with both the practical and emotional aspects of transitioning between households, including differing

schedules, physical spaces and what they need in each space (for example, clothes, leisure activities, homework resources). Kelly and Emery suggest that interventions are more likely to assist children from divorced families when they focus on containing parental conflict, promoting authoritative parenting styles, supporting close relationships between children and both parents, enhancing economic stability in the post-divorce family and involving children in 'effective interventions that help them have a voice in shaping more individualised and helpful access arrangements' (p.360).

6. Lodge, J & Alexander, M 2010, 'Views of adolescents in separated families –a study of adolescents' experiences after the 2006 reforms to the family law system', *Australian Institute of Family Studies*: Melbourne.

This study used data collected through the Australian Institute of Family Studies *Family Pathways: Adolescent Study*. It is based on telephone interviews with youth aged 12-18 years whose parents have separated after the implementation of the 2006 reforms.

7. McIntosh, J, Smyth, B, Kelaher, M, Wells, Y & Long, C 2011, 'Post separation parenting arrangements: patterns and developmental outcomes: studies of two risk groups', *Family Matters*, vol. 86, pp. 40-18. The results of these two Australian studies are consistent with that of international research over the last twenty years which has consistently confirmed that the best outcomes for children whose parents have separated is not so much associated with the actual parenting arrangements as nurturing relationships with each parent and supportive relationships between parents. The authors underline that children's development is impacted by parents' emotional availability and capacity to flexibly respond to their children's needs. Post separation arrangements are generally positively experienced by children when there is a positive emotional climate and attention to their needs and schedules in the transitions between parents' households. Parents with high levels of conflict, rigid arrangements and poor cooperation are more likely to report higher depressive and anxiety symptoms in their school-aged children.

8. Rigg, A & Pryor, J 2007, 'Children's perceptions of families: what do they really think?', *Children and Society*, vol. 21, pp. 17-30.

This study looked at the perceptions of 111 New Zealand children (aged 9.9 to 13.5 years) from different family structures and cultures, and compared this study with a similar study of adolescents. The study was underpinned by the premise that children's concepts of family will impact how they cope with transitions. They found that children have many similarities in family concepts. Children frequently mention affective factors—love, care, support and nurturing—as paramount in family descriptions. The authors suggest that their studies affirm that children and adolescents have thoughts about families and that these thoughts need to be listened to, especially when families reorganise after separation and during the formation of new blended families.

9. Trinder, L 2009, 'What might children mean by a meaningful relationship?', *Journal of Family Studies*, vol. 15, pp. 20-35.

This paper draws on a United Kingdom study of contact to illustrate some ways in which children (7 years and upwards) might define meaningful relationships and what implications that might have for policy and practice. Trinder suggests that children in all types of living arrangements readily identified what worked and didn't work for them in the relationships with parents. She quotes research by Smart, Neale and Wade which suggests that the quality of family relationships or parenting based on ideas of care and respect are more important than blood ties. Her review highlighted the importance of being able to shape the arrangements with parents, negotiate changes and the needs of both parents and child. She highlights the importance of a sense of warmth, fun and closeness or care and ability to negotiate children's needs as opposed to a relationship based on the needs and wishes of the parent. She suggests that the study highlights that children are active participants in their relationships with their parents, not merely recipients of parenting activities. They seek to strengthen and repair relationships as they are able. 'Child-inclusive practice' is the term used to support parents to focus on children's experiences of relationships.

10. Wu, Z, Hou, F & Schimmele, CM 2008, 'Family structure, co-parental relationship quality, post-separation paternal involvement and children's emotional well-being', *Journal of Family Studies*, vol. 17, pp. 86-109.

This study used longitudinal data to measure differences for 6,132 Canadian children's psychosocial functioning according to their family structure, with special attention to cohabitation. The data from this study suggests that divorce has more significant effect on children than cohabitation dissolution.

### ***Books for parents and families***

Burrett, J & Green, M 2006, *Shared parenting; raising your children cooperatively after separation*, Finch Publishing, Sydney.

Clark, L & Smith, C 2007, *Separating respectfully : how to separate without emotionally harming your children, a practical guide to understanding separation and to protecting children from its impact for all parents who have separated or who are in the process of separating*, Grayfel, Miami Qld.

Long, N & Forehand, R 2002, *Making divorce easier on your child; 50 effective ways to help children adjust*, McGraw Hill, USA.

Krasny Brown, L & Brown, M 2009, *Dinosaurs divorce: a guide for changing families*, Little, Brown and Co, New York.

Lightfoot, K & Galbraith, B 2009, *Every second friday*, Hodder Children's Books, London.

McGhee, C 2011, *Parenting apart: how separated and divorced parents can raise happy and secure children*, Vermilion, London.

# Inside Back



# TWO WORLDS

WHEN RELATIONSHIPS END  
AND PARENTS SEPARATE

When parents separate, children are often faced with the confusing challenge of navigating the two very different worlds of their parents. Their familiar worlds of home, school, community, friends and extended family members may change dramatically. Parents also experience the upheaval of their previous world coming to an end, and the challenge of creating a new world for themselves and their children.

These 48 laminated cards, featuring exquisite water colour paintings by Carolyn Marrone, can be used for having meaningful conversations with:

- **adults to build understanding about what children may be experiencing**
- **children to help them navigate changes and build resilience**
- **couples or individuals who are separating to help them build strategies for moving on**
- **couples who are about to enter a partnership to better understand each other's hopes, dreams and plans**
- **counsellors, out-of-home carers, welfare coordinators and anyone who works with children.**

*These cards are also...*

**FOR ANYONE WHO IS EXPERIENCING  
SIGNIFICANT LIFE CHANGES.**