

Welcome to 'The Inbetween'

Dealing with uncertainty

Some say the only certainty in life is... change and uncertainty. But while change can bring us exciting new experiences, it can also take us out of our comfort zone.

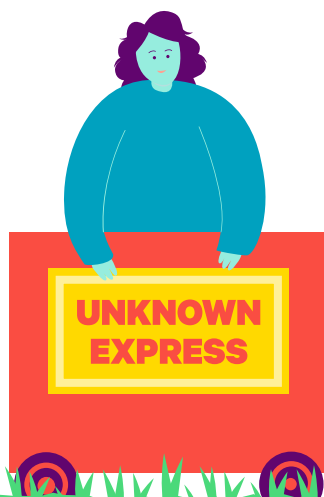
When we experience big life transitions—like starting a new school year, moving to a new school, or even moving to a whole new state or country—we are in a place that we call 'The Inbetween'. In 'The Inbetween', we are uncertain of what's ahead. As a result, we can feel a wide range of emotions, both positive and negative. First of all, it's important to acknowledge how we're feeling. Once we name our emotions, we are in a better position to deal with them constructively.

The power of 'and'

When we're experiencing uncertainty—in other words, stuck in 'The Inbetween'—it can be easy to focus on the negative. In fact, our brains are wired to focus on the negative. While this helps us avoid risk and avoid harm, it also might leave us feeling worried or anxious. But, with practice, we can realise there are multiple aspects to change, including positives. For example, there can be opportunities for new learning or even making new friends.

Using the word 'and' opens us up to the possibility that we can feel multiple emotions at the same time. Our emotions might even be conflicting. We might feel happy and worried. We might feel enthusiastic and a little bit scared. We might feel excited about what's in store and feel grief for what we've left behind.

It's normal to experience multiple emotions during life transitions. Acknowledging various emotions helps us identify both the good and the more daunting aspects of change. It helps us move through uncertainty by acknowledging the potential positives on the other side.



TRY IT

- Set aside 5-10 minutes to reflect on your own 'Inbetween' experience - either a current experience or a time in the past when you've experienced significant change.
- Think about the emotions that you're feeling or have felt. You might like to write them down. Use a journal or simply a piece of paper.
- Try using the word 'and' to link together emotions you're feeling or have felt. For example 'I'm feeling nervous and excited'. Notice that some of these emotions might be conflicting—that's completely normal.
- Acknowledge all of the emotions you have identified. Be sure to focus as much attention on the positive aspects of change. Doing that helps you manage the uncertainty you're feeling and get to the other side of 'The Inbetween'.

REFLECT

- How did you find practising this exercise? Were you able to identify multiple (and maybe even conflicting) emotions?
- How did focusing on the positive aspects of change affect the way you feel about your own experience of 'The Inbetween'? Were you initially worried about things that in the end turned out to be fine, or even positive?
- Have you noticed if you currently use the word 'and' to acknowledge multiple aspects of how you feel?
- Going forward, how will you use 'and' in your thoughts and language to help manage uncertainty and change?

WANT MORE? CHECK THESE OUT!

Try this short meditation to help you relax and seek advice from your 'inner master'*: <https://app.smilingmind.com.au/explore/classroom/secondary-year-10-to-12-classroom-program/take-home-activity-finding-your-inner-master-430>

Smiling Mind app location:

All programs > Classroom > Secondary Year 10-12 Classroom Program > Mindfulness 108- A wish for me > Finding your Inner Master

Regularly practice self-care to supercharge your coping skills*: <https://app.smilingmind.com.au/explore/youth/feeling-it-year-11-12/from-me-to-me-self-care-essentials-1466>

Smiling Mind app location:

All programs > Youth > Feeling It, Year 11-12 > From Me to Me: Self-Care Essentials (Lesson)

Check out ReachOut's tips for dealing with change:

<https://au.reachout.com/articles/7-tips-for-dealing-with-change>

*Remember to **sign in** to the Smiling Mind app before clicking the link

CHECK OUT THE FEELING IT SERIES HERE!

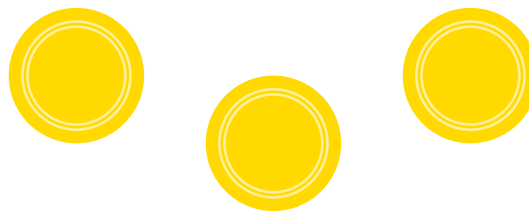


Web app link:

<https://app.smilingmind.com.au/explore/youth/feeling-it-year-7-10>

Smiling Mind app location:

All programs > Youth > Feeling It, Year 7-10



WHERE TO FIND SUPPORT

Immediate danger

If you're in a life-threatening situation and need immediate help call 000

Want to talk to someone?

Your school

- Reach out to a teacher or wellbeing coordinator at your school

During business hours

If you're having difficulty coping during business hours you can also contact:

- Headspace <https://headspace.org.au>
- A local GP to arrange an appointment with them that day

Available 24 hours every day

If you're in crisis or are having difficulty coping call one of the following services, both of which are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

- Lifeline 13 11 14
- Kids Helpline 1800 551 800