

# FEELINGS FLOWERS AND THE HEALING GARDEN

*This activity will help you and your children to identify and express your feelings while you also connect to nature!*

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

Water, Sand, Wooden sticks or small branches, tree leaves. This activity can get messy, so you may want to cover your clothes and any indoor surfaces, do it on large plates or plastic bags, or do it outside!

Play is an effective way to help children explore and share their feelings and experiences, which in turn can have a great impact on their self-confidence, self-awareness, and ability to develop relationships.

0-12  
YEARS



**STEP 1:** Invite your children to sit by your side and make sure that you have enough space and privacy for this activity. Tell your children you are going to play and speak with each other. Try to come to an agreement that whatever you share will not be communicated to anybody else. It will be a secret!

**STEP 2:** Mix the water and the sand to create some mud. Spend some time on this and encourage your children to fully involve themselves without worrying about getting dirty. Encourage them to touch the mud, to make it soft or firm, to focus on how it feels in their hands, to look at the colours, and if they want to see how it smells!

**STEP 3:** When the mud is ready, start by creating mud flowers using the sticks and the leaves. The flowers can have any form or shape, because you are their creators. Tell your children that each flower represents a feeling of yours. So, encourage them to connect to how they feel in the moment and to create a flower that represents this exact feeling they are holding.

Provide examples to your children to help them understand the process. For instance, you might say: "Today I do not feel well rested because last night I did not sleep well. Therefore, I will create a sleepy flower."

**STEP 4:** Create 2-3 flowers each. After you've finished, spend some time talking about the flowers you each created and what they represent. If someone does not want to share about their flower, let them know this is absolutely fine and they do not have to share.

**STEP 5:** Take your flowers and place them in a safe place. This can either be a place inside your residence, or somewhere outside. This place will be your healing garden! Spend some together thinking about "What will these flowers grow to become?" For example, perhaps the sleepy flower will get some good sleep in the healing garden and grow to be powerful, rested and positive.

If it is possible to, keep these flowers for longer than a day and pretend to water them every now and then. Whenever you water them, start the conversation with your children about how these feeling flowers have developed.

Alternatives for younger ages:

If your children are too young to follow all the above steps, focus more on the sensorial part of creating the flowers and naming them. You could ask questions such as "Is the flower smiling? Is the flower crying?"