

# REFLECTING ON FEELINGS

The impact of the COVID-19 virus has been felt by all of us in many different ways.

How have you felt during the pandemic? Write down 3 things that have changed for you – they can be good or bad. Write a feeling word or draw your own emoji face to describe how you feel about each one.

THINGS THAT CHANGED:	FEELINGS OR EMOJI FACE:
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Choose someone in your household and write down 3 things that have changed for them. Remember, they can be good or bad.

Then, write a feeling word or draw an emoji face to describe how you think they might be feeling about each one.

THINGS THAT CHANGED:	FEELINGS OR EMOJI FACE:
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**Read Ray and Catherine's story (see next page).** What are 3 things that changed for this family? Write a feeling word or draw an emoji face to describe how you think they might be feeling about each one.

THINGS THAT CHANGED:	FEELINGS OR EMOJI FACE:

Why is it important to think about our own feelings?

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Why is it important to think about the experiences and feelings of others?

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Reflecting on the feelings you've written about, what is one thing you can do to look after yourself?

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Reflecting on the feelings of others, what is one thing you can do to help others feel a bit better?

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# RAY AND CATHERINE'S STORY

**Coronavirus has upended the world as we know it. In a matter of weeks, COVID-19 has completely altered our everyday life. The crisis has virtually shut down the country, and its duration is unknown. It has caused many people to lose their jobs and left hundreds of thousands of Australians queuing for Centrelink support.**

This is what has happened to Ray and his wife Catherine. Just weeks ago, Ray was a busy personal trainer working across five different gyms. Today he is completely out of work and worried that his young family will be evicted from their home or unable to afford a supermarket shop next week.

“The difference a day makes is incredible. It was like a domino effect,” Ray’s wife Catherine said.

She had just finished studying herself, and was due to start a new job, after many years as a stay-at-home mum and carer for her sister, who lives with Down syndrome. But that too has been put on hold due to COVID-19.

Suddenly the family were in a situation they never imagined; worrying about how they would meet rent, keep their lights on, and ensure their five-year-old son Ben, doesn’t go hungry.

“It’s an emotional rollercoaster, day by day. I force myself to get out of bed every morning, just to stop thinking dark thoughts,” said Catherine. “I just need some hope.”

As they come to terms with their “new normal”, the family are living on Catherine’s meagre carer’s pension of \$360 a week. That means this family of three are forced to survive on \$50 a day, before rent, utilities and food.

“We’ve tried to put all of our outstanding bills on hold as much as possible, and that’s helped a bit. But when this six-month period ends, a huge debt will have just accrued,” explained Catherine.

Ray’s mental health is at breaking point right now. While he keeps busy applying for jobs, he is struggling with adjusting to the reality of unemployment and the uncertainty of when he will work again.

As his family’s sole breadwinner, and with limited savings, you can imagine the burden he feels, the powerlessness and the anxiety of what the future holds.

Catherine and Ray never had to ask for help from a charity or government before, and they struggled to come forward. When they finally called Kim, a local Vinnies support worker, Catherine’s one humble request was for some winter clothes for Ben.

“I came to Vinnies with so much shame about my situation, but Kim treated me with such dignity,” said Catherine.

Thanks to the kindness of Vinnies’ donors and supporters, our worker Kim was able to help pay the family’s electricity bill. She also dropped off warm clothes and much-needed food vouchers at their front door.

“I’m eternally grateful for the hope we now have, and the sense that we’re going to be okay,” Catherine told Kim.

