

# SENSITIVE NEW AGE CAVEPERSONS



Meet 54 Neolithic ancestors embracing life's roles and responsibilities with boulder-rolling zeal!

*Sensitive New Age Cavepersons* offers a humorous, light-hearted window into parts of our lives that are not often discussed. They invite reflection about the pressures and stresses men face, and they also encourage conversations about the skills, strengths, virtues and resources in ourselves and others—regardless of gender.

## Exploring men's roles in your family

You might be having a therapeutic discussion. Or you could be collecting information for a family history project! There are many contexts in which you might use these cards for exploring men's roles and their significance for individuals and family members.

- Which cards (roles) best represent your husband, partner, father, son, grandson, friend or brother?
- Which roles do you think they excel in? Which cards represent their strengths?
- Which roles to you think they are most comfortable performing?
- Which roles to you think they may struggle with at times?
- Choose three cards. Can you use these cards to talk about the dynamics you observe or experience in your family?

## Managing stress and conflict

We can talk fairly glibly about striving for work-life balance. But inevitably there are times when multiple roles lead to clashes of expectations and even conflict as we try to fulfil different roles with limited time. Spread the cards out on the floor or on a table.

- Which of the cards identify an important part of your life now?
- Have some of the roles named on the cards been more important to you in previous years?
- Can you imagine the significance of these roles changing in the future?
- Of the cards that are important to you now, do any compete for your time or attention?
- Are there roles that cause conflict or stress?
- Which roles are the most challenging? Which are the most fulfilling?
- Are there roles you think you should devote more time to?

## Creative writing for boys (and girls!)

Teachers can use these cards as prompts for creative writing while also promoting positive messages about the different roles men perform. Turn the cards face down and invite students to choose three cards at random.

- Write about a character who fulfils these three roles.
- Does your character fulfil all his roles successfully?
- In what ways does your character conform to expectations of men's behaviour? Does he break any stereotypes?
- Invite students to work in pairs and compare their male characters. What do the characters have in common? How might they see the world differently?
- Invite students to reflect on the descriptions of their male characters. Does their description suggest they have described the character from male, female or neutral point of view? What clues suggest one perspective or another?

## Media and social studies

Media studies teachers may like to use these cards to help older students reflect on how journalism and advertising represent and target men. You could also adapt this activity to investigate the representation of women by imagining women performing the roles depicted on the cards.

- Using a newspaper, magazine or online newsfeed, invite students to match card(s) to individual articles or advertisements according to the male roles depicted or referred to. For example, you might select 'the coach' and 'the sportsman' for sports stories, 'the author' for a book review, or 'the dad' or 'the carer' for articles about fathers.
- Do some roles (cards) seem to be represented more than others? Are there any roles that are commonly represented and not included among the *Cavepersons* cards?
- Why do some roles seem to be featured more often than others? Are these roles that many or only a few men would identify with?
- Who decides which roles get talked about or featured?
- What do your findings suggest about society's values and beliefs about men/women?



Innovative Resources

## SENSITIVE NEW-AGE CAVEPERSONS

Author: Russell Deal  
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Polypropylene box with a booklet  
of suggested activities  
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