

Authentic World Presents...

The
Authentic Relating
Games Night Handbook



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ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

The book you're reading here represents over 7 years of experience in running evening events designed to create more depth, fun and intimacy for participants.

To that end, we've tried lots of different games over the years, and these are most of our favorites.

Plus, we've included tips on how to market, promote, set up and facilitate an Authentic Relating evening.

To make it as easy as possible, for each game I've included specific word-for-word instructions for *what the facilitator should say in blue italics*.

So, at the bare minimum, you could simply print out this book, read straight from the page, and the games will practically run themselves!

That said, final disclaimer: these activities are only as rich as the way of being you bring to them (so keep evolving folks).

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ROLES

When you first start out, I recommend you find someone to co-facilitate with you. Ideally, that person has group facilitation experience.

Below are the recommended roles. Don't try to do it all on your own – involve others in making this evening happen!

Lead Facilitator

Responsibilities: Theme creation, setting context, overseeing and execution of the evening, game facilitation

A few key points (a full out training for this is recommended, but meanwhile...) -

- Do Not lead a game you have not played, we continually rediscover these games after leading them so long we'd forgotten what it Feels like to really drop into them deeply
- Imagine being the person playing while guiding them to play it, this will influence how fluidly you guide them to start/stop etc & more subtly just enriches the tone in which you lead them
- Consider doing a demo for any game before leading a group in it (especially key for beginner facilitators, they'll help you along if they've seen where you're trying to guide them)
- Upset – if you continue to explore the edges of how deeply people will go into these games, upset is inevitable...taking shares and questions between each game serves the dual purpose of inviting out these upsets. A distinct aspect of AuthenticWorld-style activities is that the leader always responds to anything, **especially** upset, by welcoming whatever is happening. Rather than offering a 'preferable' perspective or possibility, our response and questions invite whatever is happening even more fully out, such that you (And They!) become more in relationship with what it's like for them to be upset and exactly what about a situation has them upset, etc. You can be truly astonished by how many beautiful insights and tender shares can come from relaxing out of the impulse to change where they're at and really want to understand their experience as intimately as possible.

Co-Facilitator (optional, 1 or 2 recommended)

Responsibilities: Game facilitation, weaving in supplementary context for the evening/activities, dropping in good jokes 😊

Procurement

Responsibilities:

- Go to Trader Joe's or equivalent and pick up snacks: grapes, cheese and crackers, or chips and salsa, and/or big bowl of mixed nuts
- Bring a stereo / sound system if needed

Setup

Responsibilities:

- Anticipate # of chairs, set em up in a circle
- Make sure center (including bathrooms) are clean and tidy
- Set out table with grapes, cheese and crackers
- Use table cloths
- Have water dispenser and plastic / reusable cups available
- Have music on, a nice playlist appropriate for the evening, or organize someone to play acoustic music in the beginning and on breaks
- [Print out the signup sheet](#) if registering people by hand

Greeter

(can be same person as setup)

Responsibilities:

- Be available at 7pm with laptop or clipboard sheet to sign people in
- Open the doors 15 minutes before event start time
- Warmly greet everyone, take payment, answer questions, set up extra chairs for and direct latecomers to free seats
- Have \$\$\$ change available if you're charging
- Ensure that the signup sheet end up in your hands at end of evening to continue growing your invitation list

SAMPLE GAMES NIGHT STRUCTURE:

7:15 Doors open

7:30 Circle Up, Introductions – Leaders

Theme discussion: <Fill in theme here> _____

Set the Agreements ( [Listen to this Recording for an Example](#))

Sentence stem to introduce everyone - _____ <Fill in stem here>

7:45 Game #1: _____ <Fill in game here>

Game #2: _____ <Fill in game here>

~8:50 Fifteen (15) minute break (offer something to explore/play with on the break)

Game #3 - _____ <Fill in game here>

9:50 Announcements – upcoming events, etc.

10:00 Close and mingle

10:30 Kick everybody out, Facilitators debrief

[See below for Sample Games Night Outlines](#)

VISIONING TOOL: "CPR" FOR GAMES NIGHTS: (context, purpose, results)

A CPR is a structure for organizing my intentions for something, whether it's a date, my business, my life plan, or an evening with friends.. This is one I wrote for our Game Nights. Feel free to write your own, or use this one to organize your intentions for the night.

Context: Love Juggernaut

Purpose:

The Purpose of Authentic Relating Games Nights...

Is To create community, propagate relating & intimacy tools

Through offering an intimate taste of authentic community and opening the doors to go deeper for those so inclined...

So That the vision of AW is deepened locally and propagated globally
– that Everyone who wants it has access to Authentic Relating ongoingly.

Results:

- Attendees received 'WOW' level of value
- Attendees were inspired and enthusiastic to share with their friends, and to advertise that they are attending in the future (fb repost)
- Attendees were excited about coming back
- Attendees received personal on-the-spot intensity at some point in the evening
- Visitors were warmly greeted and oriented to the theme when they arrived
- Participants received/were trained in a concrete, practical relating tool to use in their lives following the evening
- Attendees felt safe and empowered to set boundaries on unwanted attention
- Cheese, crackers, grapes and water provided nourishment and a 'step-up' experience for attendees
- Attendees came into a space that was clean, tastefully decorated, tidy, relaxed, spacious
- Attendees and facilitators had a Blast! Lots of fun and laughter
- Facilitators benefited from the evening by building reputation and receiving coaching clients

- The value of the games nights stands independent of the facilitator's 'circling' or coaching abilities

So, this is one I wrote. Feel free to write your own (together with your co-facilitator if you have one) – you don't have to have so many results, either – and if you didn't, it's an opportunity to explore why.

THE GAMES

Below is a description of the games, along with a ranking of fun factor (1 to 5 stars) and depth level.

The art of running an Authentic Relating games night is finding the right balance of fun and depth so that new people aren't "blown out", but the "depth junkies" in the group feel satisfied.

Having a finger on the pulse of whether a higher-energy, more-fun game or a deeper, richer game is called for will come with experience. Eventually, you'll be making games up on the fly, dynamically changing them up as the situation calls for it.

To make it as easy as possible, for each game I've included specific word-for-word instructions for *what the facilitator should say in blue italics*.

So, at the bare minimum, you could simply print out this book, and read from the page, and the games will practically run themselves!

TIMING

Make sure you have a watch or phone that can count seconds. Whenever you're doing paired exercises with multiple pairs engaged around the room, announce a 30-second warning before calling time and bringing attention back to the group.

At 30 seconds *"30 seconds left!"*

At 5 seconds *"Start to wrap it up!"*

At 0 seconds *"Ok, come to SILENCE and bring your attention back to the group" or if they're resistant to stopping "notice the connection you both have without needing to say anything"*

Artistry points: When a pair that have been working together are about to separate, invite them to "give a sign of acknowledgement" to each other (this sometimes leads to tender moments but also has space for silly/playful gestures to lighten a mood).

TAKING SHARES

After each game, bring everyone's attention back to the group to take 3-6 shares on what they noticed. This is a rich time for integration and insight-sharing that can be rewarding for the whole group.

"Ok, we're going to take a few shares. What did you notice during that last game?"

You can also take shares in between ROUNDS of the same game in paired-partner exercises.

“The Noticing Game”

[aka Intersubjective Meditation]

Fun Factor: 

Depth Factor: 

DESCRIPTION:

This is a simple, powerful game. I love it for exactly these reasons.

It's easy and in-the-moment, and you can play it with your lover, a friend, on a date, or with someone you've just met.

Last time I played it...it had us both in tears, and the time before that, we were both smiling so much our cheeks hurt...

Warning: You will both likely feel more present, playful, connected, and perhaps even turned-on after playing this game.

Great first game to kick off the night and get everyone present.

REQUIREMENTS: 2 or more people

SETUP: Pairs

If it's a large group, form 2 rows of people facing each other, OR, 2 concentric circles of people facing each other, making sure each person has someone across from them. An assistant facilitator or the Greeter can jump in to balance the numbers if needed.

Two people stand directly across from each other, standing or sitting, making eye contact. One person is **A** and the other is **B**. **A** goes first.

A: What I notice when I'm with you is...<fill in the blank>

B: Hearing that, I'm noticing...<fill in the blank>

A: Hearing that, I'm noticing...<fill in the blank>

B: Hearing that, I'm noticing...<fill in the blank>

...and so on, alternating back and forth...

...until you're incapacitated with laughter, epiphany, tears, or find yourselves passionately making out...

...or, whenever seems like a good time to stop. It could be 45 seconds or 5 minutes or even longer...explore it for yourself.

YOU CAN SHARE OBSERVATIONS, THOUGHTS, SENSATIONS, FEELINGS...

You can share ANYTHING you're noticing inside this structure of "A" and "B" going back and forth...

The other person's physical appearance:

- "...the smoothness of your skin" "...the way your earrings jingle when you laugh"
- "...that you seem to be looking away a lot"
- "...the gap between your front teeth when you smiled just then"

Sensations in your own body:

- "...I'm feeling nervous tension in my chest"
- "...I felt my shoulders relax when you smiled just now"
- "...I'm feeling uncomfortable with this intense eye contact"
- "...I felt giddy and turned-on when you said that"

Thoughts you're having:

- "...I find myself thinking about when we first met"
- "...I'm getting curious about how you got that scar on your forehead"
- "...I'm wanting to reassure you that I don't feel offended by your comment"

Emotions you're feeling:

- "...I'm scared that you're upset that I pointed out the gap in your teeth"
- "...I'm grateful that we're getting to have this experience together"
- "...I'm feeling frustrated that you keep breaking eye contact with me"
- "...I'm excited that you noticed my earrings because I made them myself"
- "...I'm feeling warmth in my chest and gratitude for you and for this moment"
- "...I'm having fun playing this game!"

Demo this game first with your co-facilitator, then have them try it.

"Ok, so make sure each person is facing someone. Outer circle, 'What I'm noticing when I'm with you is...', inner circle, 'Hearing that, what I'm noticing is...' Begin. "

Time it for about 1-2 minutes, then, 30 second warning, then wrap it up. Have partners make a sign of acknowledgement, and inner circle moves one step to the left to stop in front of a new partner.

FACILITATOR NOTES:

- Have them get grounded before each round:

“Everyone close your eyes and bring awareness to the emotions and sensations your OWN body..... now expand your awareness to include the person across from you.”

- Invite them to take risks.

“The more vulnerable, edgy and unfiltered, the more exhilarating and engaging this game becomes. This includes sharing your nervousness, enjoyment and even frustration!”

- Keep it in-the-moment.

“Don’t prepare what you might say – let it unfold organically, allow yourself to be surprised by what comes out of your mouth!”

- Have the group pick a new partner, and run it again... you could do this game all night if you wish!

YOU CAN FACILITATE THIS GAME FOR A SOCIAL GROUP...

Last week I was at a birthday party where each attendee was asked to perform or share something (like a variety show). I facilitated this game for everyone there...and they loved it. Some people were deeply moved while others were laughing hysterically... it’s a great ice breaker!

Make sure to demo it in front of everyone first, then have them all pair up, choose an A and a B, and then run the game.

“Curiosity”

Fun: 

Depth: 

Consistently our deepest game besides Circling.

“This game never seems to fail to deliver.” - Kendra

SETUP: Pairs

“Everyone choose a partner...either someone you’d like to get to know better or even better someone you think you “already know”. Sit across from each other, get comfortable, and figure out which of you has the...largest ears. Large eared people will be ‘A’, small ears will be ‘B’”.

“A goes first, and can ask ANY question of B they wish.

The only rule is this: You have to be Genuinely Curious about their answer. So, no sleepwalking questions, like, “Where are you from?” unless you’re Genuinely Curious about that answer.”

“B’s, you are allowing yourself to be impacted however you naturally are by their questions, and you can, like in everyday life, either answer, refuse to answer, or lie”.

ROUND 1

A continually asks B questions they’re genuinely curious about, for about 4-6 minutes. <encourage them to let whatever question they already prepared, go, and take a few moments connecting to allow a natural question to arise>

ROUND 2

Pause everyone about 2 minutes in, and have B give A 30-60 seconds of feedback.

“B, share what you liked about A’s questions so far, and any questions you wish A would’ve asked...”

After about 60 seconds of feedback...

“Ok, now A’s, incorporate B’s feedback into this next round of curiosity. Resume.”

Continue for another 3 minutes.

ROUND 3

When questions are complete...

"Ok, A is going to complete Three sentence stems for B. This is an opportunity to give back to B your experience of them, as a gift."

Stem number one: 'My first impression of you was....' Begin." <either in that game or the first time you met them, positive or negative either is great As Long As You're Appreciating them While You Say It!>

Give them about 30 seconds, then...

"Wrap it up.... And come to silence..."

"Ok, stem number two: 'The moment I felt you the most was....' Begin."

Give them about 30 seconds, then...

"Wrap it up.... And come to silence..."

"Ok, final stem. This last one is an opportunity to go out on a limb, and take a risk.

'What I really get about you is...' Begin."

Give them about 30 seconds, then...

"Wrap it up.... And come to silence..."

Now another round of feedback from the B's, on anything they wish had been 'gotten' about them as well as the ways they felt most deeply seen by the A's.

Give them about 60 seconds, then...

At this point you can have them switch and now B is going to ask A questions, or, we usually prefer to have them change partners, by having all B's stand up and find a new partner.

This time, B's are the one being Curious and asking the questions, and A are the ones answering.

"Anybody Else?"

Fun factor: ★★★★★

Depth: 

DESCRIPTION:

This game is high on fun and energy– not quite as deep as other games, but gets everybody out of their chairs and moving around. Great for after the snack break.

REQUIREMENTS: 5 or more people, chairs/backjacks

SETUP: Group

Arrange everyone in a circle. Everyone must be seated in a chair. If women are wearing high heels, have them take them off.

"This game is called, "Anybody Else". One person in the center of the circle is going to share something about themselves, then they're going to say, "Anybody Else?"

If the statement is true for anyone else, they immediately stand up and all those people need to quickly scramble to find an open chair to sit in.

And, here's the catch: there will be one less chair than people, so whoever is left standing, now has the opportunity to stand in the middle and share something about themselves with the room."

For example, the person in the center might say, "I have a fetish for people dressed in Muppet costumes. Anybody else?" Everyone else with this Muppet fetish stands up and races to find a new seat to sit in, including the person in the center. Since there will be one less chair, whoever doesn't get a seat is now in the middle and the game continues."

"Two Rules:

Number 1: You can't sit back in the same chair you stood up from, nor in an adjacent one.

Number 2: You must wait until the person in the center of the room says, 'Anybody else?' before you leave your chair."

"This is a great game to get to know new, intimate things about everyone in the room– like who has a Muppet Fetish– all at once!"

NOTES:

- People tend to have the most fun if they supplement a share with something less specific such that others will be able to relate, ie "I've climbed Mt Everest...I **love a challenge, Anybody Else?!**"
- If the person in the center shares something that isn't true for anyone else, then they go again.
- This game can be dangerous as people race to find a chair. Keep it safe while still encouraging some kid-like raucousness.
- If the person in the center feels stuck, you can offer them a [sentence stem](#):
 - "Something I want you to know about me is..."
 - "Something I'd be embarrassed to share with you is..."
 - "One of my darkest fantasies is..."
 Other sentence stems available [here](#)

FACILITATOR NOTES:

- Emphasize that people are NOT to get out of their chairs until the person in the middle says, "Anybody Else?"
This gives everyone a fair chance at finding a new seat by starting at the same time. You may need to prompt the person in the middle to say, "Anybody else?" after their share.
- If the person in the middle is having trouble thinking of something to share, you can offer a sentence stem: "Something I really love about myself is...", "Something I don't want to tell you is...", "Something you'd be surprised to know about me is..."
- Encourage the person in the center to take risks!

"Gauntlet"

Fun Factor: 

Depth: 

SETUP: Pairs

Form 2 rows of people facing each other, OR, 2 concentric circles of people facing each other. Make sure each person has someone across from them. An assistant facilitator or the Greeter can jump in to balance the numbers if needed.

Inner circle is A, outer Circle is B.

"Ok, those in the inner circle are "A", those in the outer circle are "B". A goes first. Complete this sentence stem...":

Based on the theme of the evening, choose from the [list of sentence stems](#) or make up your own, and time the share, anywhere from 15 seconds to 2 minutes, depending on the stem.

FACILITATOR NOTES:

- **Feel yourself First:** Before each round, ground them in their own bodies:

"Ok, everyone close your eyes and bring awareness to the emotions and sensations in your OWN body.... Then slowly open your eyes, and bring a portion of your awareness to the person across from you..."

- **Invite them to take risks.**

"The more vulnerable, edgy and unfiltered, the more exhilarating and engaging this game becomes. This includes sharing your nervousness, attraction and even frustration!"

- **Keep it in-the-moment.**

"Don't prepare what you might say – let it unfold organically, allow yourself to be surprised by what comes out of your mouth!"

“Breakout Groups”

Fun Factor: 

Depth: 

REQUIREMENTS: 4 or more people

SETUP:

Break people into pods of 4-6 by having them go around the room and count off 1 through 6.

Once they're in their pods, announce a [sentence stem](#). Each pod member completes the stem, when everyone has had a turn, facilitator offers a new stem.

FUN OPTION: Group members can reflect back on a scale of 1-5 (by a show of fingers) in terms of how vulnerably/artfully each person shares.

NOTES:

- Feel free to mix up the pods every so often.
- You'll have to track multiple pods at once because each one will be going around the circle at slightly different rates. A little tricky if there are several groups!
- You could do this game all night. We usually do 6-10 stems, with perhaps a mix-up of the pods halfway through.

Breakout Group Variant: Distinguish Your Shadow

Put people into smaller pods and ask them to introduce their alter ego --- the part of them that they hide or are ashamed of or think isn't ok. Simply acknowledge its existence. You can time each person (2 minutes) and then move to the next person in the pod.

A Deeper cut -- ask them:

- * The ways they most like to be seen;
- * What other people need to be for them to feel seen that way,
- * What they say and do to be seen that way,
- * What these behaviors might be covering up.

Then, embody the shadow, walk around and become it!

After each person has had a turn, you can give some time where each person interacts with the others in the pod AS their shadow.

“Hot Seat”

Fun Factor: ★★★★★

Depth Factor: 

A longtime fan favorite, this game originates from Vic Baranco and the Morehouse Community way back in the 1970s. The facilitation of this game is really important to create a tight container and stick to the rules to keep the game nice and intense for the person on the hot seat. This is a good end-of-the-evening game.

REQUIREMENTS: 4 or more people

SETUP:

Place a chair at the front of the room. This is the “hot seat”. Then list the Rules:



[AN AUDIO RECORDING OF HOW TO SET THIS GAME UP IS AVAILABLE, HERE](#)

“One person sits in the “hot seat” and anyone in the room (including the facilitator) may ask that person a question. They will raise their hand and I will call on them.”

“You can ask the person in the hot seat ANY question you want. The person in the hot seat may choose to lie, tell the truth, or refuse to answer, just like in real life.”

“Questioners must **ask interested questions versus interesting questions**. Interested questions keep the focus on the person in the hot seat, while interesting questions put the attention back on the questioner.”

[If someone asks an interesting question, it’s up to the facilitator to redirect that rather than let it play out].

“**The question-askers can only respond in one way: by saying “Thank you.”** And they can say it at ANY time during the hot seat person’s response, and the person on the hot seat stops speaking, even MID-SENTENCE, PERIOD.”

“This does the person/people listening the favor of not needing to listen to more than they asked for, and the speaker doesn’t have to be speaking to someone who doesn’t want to listen to them.”

“Everyone in the room keeps full attention on the person in the hot seat, not the questioner. So, while the natural tendency of people is to look at the person asking the question, instead, everyone should keep their attention focused on the person in the hot seat. This keeps the seat nice and hot.”

After setting up the rules, the facilitator asks for a volunteer to be first in the hot seat and the game begins. The facilitator calls on participants with questions, and waits for a high note before saying “and I’ll take you off of the hot seat there”, encouraging a round of applause, probably after about 4-10 minutes per person.

NOTES:

- Usually only 3-8 people will get a chance to be on the hot seat in any given evening. 4-10 minutes per person.
- **Clarifying Questions:** If a questioner asks a question like, "What are your relationships like right now?" and the person in the hot seat asks a clarifying question, "Do you mean my romantic relationships or my friendships?" that should be taken as their answer and the appropriate response from the questioner is "Thank you." Then another person in the room or the facilitator can re-ask that question, "What are your romantic relationships like?" or they can ask an entirely different question.
- **Keeping the seat hot:** Ideally, people are feeling some intensity while in the hot seat. Be sure to invite the questioners to ask **anything** at all. At any point the facilitator can turn up the heat, explore the edges of the person on the hot seat "Tell me about the last time you felt shame/ angry / had an orgasm. How is your relationship going? What would you like more of? How is the sex?"

For extra heat: you can ask questions about people in the room: "Who are you most attracted to? What would you like to do with them?"



[AN AUDIO RECORDING OF HOW TO SET THIS GAME UP IS AVAILABLE HERE.](#)

"Kingdom"

Fun: 

Depth: 

Complexity: 

DESCRIPTION:

We rarely play this one, because it's not really intimacy-focused, but it's still fun. Only 2 stars because the depth of the game can be hit or miss, and is usually dependent on the artistry of the facilitator to make it really rock.

REQUIREMENTS: 5 or more people

SETUP: Single Focus

A "throne" is set at the front of the room. One volunteer is designated the "king" or "queen" of the rest of us, who are now the subjects, and takes a seat in the throne.

Facilitate an inquiry, starting with either the ruler or the subjects:

Sample Questions to Ask the Subjects:

- How would we feel being ruled by this person?
- Would they be a kind ruler?
- A just ruler?
- Capable of making tough decisions?
- Able to defend the kingdom against invaders?

Sample Questions to Ask the Ruler:

- You've just been crowned the new ruler. What do you have to say to your subjects?
- What would you do with your kingdom?
- What would be your first decree? Invite the chosen ruler to really take on this inquiry fully.

FUN OPTION:

Ask the ruler to choose another, a queen or king to rule with him/her, respectively. Ruler invites them up and positions them physically in the room where he/she wants them, in a chair or not..

Sample Questions To Ask the Ruler:

- Why did you make this choice?
- [was it for the good of the kingdom, or because you were attracted?]

- What would be the ideal arrangement? (have a queen who helps rule, but have a mistress on the side?)

Sample Questions To Ask the Subjects:

- Was this a good choice for the king/queen?
- Who should/shouldn't he have picked instead? (Try switching out the king/queen that was chosen, to see how the subject's pick feels...)

FUN OPTION:

Ask ruler: If you had to add one more member to the royalty, who would they be, and what would their job be? Military Captain? A Wizard? An Advisor?

Ruler Invites them up and positions them physically in the room where he/she wants them. Eg. Advisor might be over the right shoulder of the King...

Check in with the Subjects to evaluate the ruler's choice...

FACILITATOR NOTES:

- Be creative, mix it up, and explore what comes up for the participants at each phase!
- This can be a long game per person, try to keep each ruler's turn to under 12-15 minutes, keep the subjects as involved and engaged as possible. End each person's turn on a "high note" if possible
- Be willing/ready to pause the game and Circle someone if there's an interesting thread to explore – this game can be especially intense for the ruler!

“Truth”

Fun Factor: 

Depth Factor: 

This is a great end-of-the-evening game. Also known as a variation on “withholds” or “high light reel”.

REQUIREMENTS: 4 or more people

SETUP: Group

Facilitator:

“Over the course of this evening, you’ve all had thousands of micro-experiences with each other. For this game, we’re going to go around the room, one at a time, and you’re going to choose ONE of those snapshot-moments in time, and share it with that person.”

“Address someone in the room, and say, ‘<name>, I’ve got a Truth for you.’”

“That person then says, ‘Ok, I’m listening’. – This ensures that they’re ready to hear your share.”

“Now, the person sharing fills in this stem. ‘When you _____<the more specific the moment you are describing, the better, without straining on details>, I felt _____’ <describe your actual experience minus any interpretations>”

When you’re complete, the person receiving the Truth simply says “Thank You.”

EXAMPLES OF “TRUTHS”

“Brittany, **when you** shared about your frustration about your sex life in the Hot Seat exercise, **I felt** admiration and respect that you could be so vulnerable with us.”

“Jennifer, when we were doing the Anybody Else exercise and **you shared your fantasy** about wanting to be dominated in the bedroom, **I felt** turned on, and excited about the idea of creating that experience for you.”

“Brendan, **when you** stopped me on the break when I was crying and asked me if I needed anything, **I felt** much safer to be here, and felt supported and cared for.”

- **Truths don’t always have to be “positive”.** It’s not your evaluations/judgments, even nice ones like “I felt like you were really kind”, or “I thought your outfit was really great”. Direct them to sharing the Impact that this person had on them in that moment.

“Stephen, when we were talking on the break and you interrupted our conversation to talk to Denise, I felt jealous.”

- **Truths can be addressed to the facilitators:**

“Bryan, when you were taking shares and I raised my hand three times and you didn’t call on me, I felt frustrated and ignored.”

NOTES:

- Important: Make sure people stick to the structure of “When you_____, I felt _____.”
- Discourage people receiving the Truth from responding to the share with anything other than “Thank You.” If they have a response, they can share it in the form of a truth, “Brad, when you shared your truth that _____, I felt _____” ... or they can connect after the evening is complete.
- If there’s time, you can do a second round, or even a third round. Truths beget more Truths.
- If people don’t have one ready, they can “pass”. Encourage each person to share at least 1 Truth.
- If you don’t have time for everyone to share a truth, you can do it popcorn-style, and people selectively raise their hand and share a truth.

SAMPLE THEMES & EVENING OUTLINES

Having a theme isn't necessary for an Authentic Relating games night, but it can offer an extra layer of depth and inquiry to the evening, and create a "through-line" context to play with. It also helps in the promotion of the Games Night, if you can say, "This month's theme: Shadow" along with a few lines about how this might be useful – this can intrigue and entice people to come check it out. See "[Sample Email Copy](#)" below for ideas to promote some of the themes.

At the beginning of the night, facilitate discussion on what the theme means to each person, and why it's important. Before each game, offer a bit of context about how this game will help you explore the theme.

THEME: INTIMACY

Intro Stem:

"We're going to go around the room – Say your name, where you're from, and a short phrase about the moments when you feel most intimate. I'll go first."

Game #1: Noticing

Game #2: Breakout Group with stems:

"The status of my heart right now is..."

"Something I'm afraid to share with you is..."

"One of my edgiest fantasies is..."

Break

Game #3: Anybody Else?

Game #4: Curiosity

[See "[Sample Email Copy](#)" for ideas to promote this theme]

THEME: REFLECTION

Intro Stem: "The way I want to be seen is..."

Game 1: Noticing

Game 2: Breakout Group with stems:

"The person I feel most safe with in this group is..."

"The person I feel least safe with in this group is..."

"The person I feel most drawn to is..."

"If I had an alter ego, it would be..."

Break

Game 3: Kingdom

[See "[Sample Email Copy](#)" for ideas to promote this theme]

THEME: BOUNDARIES

Intro stem: Which one is it for you?: My heart races more when.... 1. setting boundaries", or 2. honoring/ celebrating another's boundary"

Game 1: Pair up - A makes an unreasonable request, B says no (switch)
A makes a reasonable request, and try to convince, seduce, cajole, threaten, B says no (switch)

Game 2: Pair up - A makes a request, B counter offers, you collectively agree upon something.

Break

Game 3: What would you like to do with me for 3 minutes? Use all your negotiation and boundary-setting tools.

THEME: CONNECTION WITHOUT SENSES

Intro Stem: My name is _____, and what has me here is..._____

Game 1: Gauntlets sentence stems with talking

Game 2: Gauntlet without words – silent connection, eye contact, or wordless play / silliness

Break

Game 3: Contact in Darkness - This is kind of like contact improv but with eyes closed. The facilitator puts on music and people dance and make contact with their eyes closed, noticing how it feels to make contact with a man versus a woman, or other insights. If you take away words and eyes, what's left to access connection? To presence boundaries, ask people to be respectful—no cheap grabs.

THEME: Being Impacted, Sharing Impact

Intro Stem: "The last time I felt impacted was..."

Game 1: Gauntlet
- A Shares a time of impact, B shares the impact that A had on B (inspiration, tears, and/or turn-on)

Game 2: Gauntlet - Silent Eye-gazing, then share impact

Break

Game 3: Curiosity

Other Potential Themes

Reflection

Listening

Truth

Polarity (Attraction)

Spontaneity

Honesty

Authenticity

Shadow

Projection

What the shoes of the person next to me says about them is...

What I don't like about you (that I see in myself) is...

Essence

Love

Taboo

Sex

Death

Mischief

Sin

Dance

Movement

Play

Flirting

Conversation

Contact

Eye contact

Speaking

Tension

Anger

Dreams

Surrender

Letting Go

Vulnerability

Listening

Contact

Embodiment

Desire

Body (body image games)

Social Status

SAMPLE SENTENCE STEMS

What I think you think about me is...
Something I'm afraid to share with you is...
Something I don't want you to know about me is...
One of my favorite/edgiest/darkest fantasies is...
My relationship to sex/anal sex/same-sex play/homosexuality is...
The status of my heart is...
My relationship to anger is...
Something I'm really fucking good at is...
Something I want to be seen/appreciated for is...
Something most people don't know about me is...
Something I feel ashamed about is...
What the shoes of the person next to me says about them is...
My experience with flirting is...
As a child, I was...
My favorite part of my body is... because...
My first impression of you was...
What I really want for you is...
You can count on me for ...
How I make art with the conflict I'm having is ...

Experience Stems (feel it as you share it)

A time I was disappointed in love is... the worst part about it was...
A time I was elated in love is... The best part about it was...
A transcendent experience I had in sex was... The most rewarding part about it was...
A spiritually unitive experience I've had was... The most rewarding part about it was...
A time when I felt most vulnerable was... The most vulnerable part about it was...
A time in my life when I felt most challenged was... The most challenging part about it was...
An embarrassing experience I had as a child was...The most embarrassing part about it was...
An embarrassing experience I had at school was...The most embarrassing part about it was...
My earliest memory is... The way I felt in that moment was...
My favorite toy as a child was... because...

Response stems

My first impression of you was...
Where I felt you the most was...
What I really got about you is...
I felt connected you at a _____ (1-10 scale)

FACILITATOR DEBRIEF & FEEDBACK

After each evening, facilitators should get together to debrief how the evening went. This is an opportunity to offer constructive feedback and reflection, clear withholds or frustration that may have arisen during the evening, and see how you can improve the structure and facilitation for next time.

Facilitator feedback checklist, and opportunities for improvement:

Did the facilitator speak loud enough to “own the room”?

Did the facilitators model the authenticity and vulnerability they were wanting for the participants?

Did the facilitator set clear and strong context for the evening?

Did the facilitator set clear and strong context for each game?

Did the games chosen offer the right mix of depth and fun?

Which games seemed to be the most rewarding? How come?

Which games were the least rewarding? How come?

Go back over the CPR you wrote for the evening, to see if you got each of the Results you set forth. If you didn't get those results, how come?

SAMPLE EMAIL COPY TO PROMOTE GAMES NIGHTS

Feel free to swipe any of the copy from our evite invitations from these themes!

Woody Allen insists he was thrown out of college for cheating; "It was on a metaphysics exam and I was caught looking into the soul of my neighbor..."

The theme this night is Reflection - Discover how you are truly experienced by others, and how you can share your experience in a way that creates unforgettable connections.

The games and exercises are designed to practice 'looking into the souls of our neighbors'. It's an exhilarating opportunity to share our experiences of each other clearly, honestly, and with a sense of humor - to co-explore more deeply Who We Are: You know those aspects you suddenly discover about yourself only to realize you've unknowingly had them for YEARS?! There is always a richer appreciation for myself on the other side of those discoveries, as well as the exuberance that naturally accompanies more clearly choosing my life going forward.

Hope to see you there & Temet Nosce (Know Thyself)

The theme for this game night is Spontaneity -

We'll be exploring that subtle & alive (and more risky) space our relationships can tap into that creates more anticipation, excitement & freedom.

It's that space where we don't necessarily know what we're going to do or say next, neither anticipating nor managing how we might be seen.

It's that space in which the nice, neat roles we usually filter our behavior to contain ourselves within start to fall away and more of Who We (Truly) Are emerges in unpredictable & beautiful ways.

Beware: Routine, predictable conversations will meet their maker this night. Those adorable 'awkward silences' will be no more. Holding back because 'there was nothing to say' will be but a distant memory.

The theme for the night is Connection - We'll be exploring the art of creating deeper connection with others, new people and those you've 'known' for years. Men, women & couples are welcome to join us in playing outside the box on an otherwise innocent Monday night.

As we are meeting for the first time at the new ASF headquarters, we are going to **explore a new theme ... Innocence!**

INNOCENCE:

We use the word innocence for this Games Night to give you an opportunity to connect with your most free and vibrant state of being. Who are you when you follow your deepest truths and desires, rather than making decisions in an effort to live up to ideals, yours or others'? Who are you when you begin to live your life beyond concepts of right and wrong?

Let this be the night where you are re-inspired to live as your fullest, where you feel excited about life and all it has to offer you.

Explore the innocence you were more likely to feel as a child, so uninhibited by looking good that you would jump, sing and cry freely to express yourself.

We have created a container for you to speak what you might normally hold back, to ask questions you are curious about, and to feel the deep sense of satisfaction and relief that occurs when you connect with others while truly being yourself.

In line with my favorite holiday celebrating the Dark Side....

Halloween originated in paganism, which is associated with forbidden rituals, costumes, women losing themselves in out-of-control ecstatic dance and other debauchery that ran counter to our Puritan roots....

This evening we'll be **exploring those topics that are taboo and "Off Limits"**.

Why is there such a charge around these topics, and how can they serve to enhance, energize and uplift our interactions and relationships?

Singles and couples, men and women (no children, unless they need corrupting) all welcome!

Fear.....and.....Love

We're living in a time of uncertainty – the economy is teetering, jobs are being lost, 60% of the world's wealth–GONE in the last 6 months...

There's a lot we could Fear right now!

AND, depending on how we face these challenging times, this can actually be a opportunity for us all to strip away the layers and Reconnect with what's Truly important to us... that which we most deeply Care about.

The games we play tonight will be an exploration of how we're responding in the face of this uncertainty: Are we unconsciously reacting in Fear? Or are we choosing from and inspired by Love?

Join us for an all-new Authentic Relating 'Games Night' – where in this unprecedented time in the history of the world, we can come together to play and celebrate this extraordinary ride, *wherever* it leads!

Intimacy... delicious, tender, tantalizing, terrifying!

There are few things as satisfying as intimacy with another. It is the space where I am being myself fully, you are being yourself fully, and we are deeply connecting. True intimacy can bring out the most beautiful parts of ourselves and others.

Interesting that we also find so many ways to avoid it!

We will be exploring exactly what we mean by intimacy, the risks and delights of letting yourself fully be known, and the art of making deep contact with others.

Get ready for a juicy evening!

Getting Real

Be yourself and have more fun than ever this holiday season!

During the holiday season we spend a lot of time with family and out at parties.

How often do these months seem exciting and celebratory at first and then turn out to be draining and even self-sabotaging?

Are you tired of idle chit chat with family and strangers- getting lost and depressed in Grandma's desires for your life, your parents' not seeing who you have become in the last 10 years, and boring conversations that don't light a spark?

After Thanksgiving, come re-ground in who you really are. Spend time with your AuthenticSF family, where you can say it like it is and freely dive into those deep and important aspects of YOU.

Prepare yourself for the holiday season by learning tools to create interesting conversations and profound connections with family, people you are attracted to and your current friends and lovers.

This is going to be an inspiring evening that can change how you experience the holiday season for evermore!

You will have time to mingle and get to know one another after the games! Bring your friends and people you love.

We will have a special surprise guest!

The theme this time is Connection -

We'll be exploring the art of deeply seeing others, and of allowing ourselves to be deeply seen; having fun with the layers of 'social masks' we don consciously and unconsciously

We'll be diving in to see how honestly and adventurously we can cut to the chase and create deeper connection, in this moment, with new people as well as with those you've 'known' for years.

For you regulars, the invitation is to notice the more habitual ways you connect powerfully with other people and get curious about those ways which you have yet to discover.

Newcomers, arrive prepared to experience new aspects of yourself and of others (in a space where you can opt to never see these people again)!

Seriously, these events are a safe place to take risks and play a little more outside the box in a way that allows us to discover more of ourselves than we often do in our everyday lives - All in service of creating more exciting, engaging & flourishing relationships while having a great time on an otherwise innocent Monday night.

Men, women & couples are all welcome to come have a lot of fun with us while cultivating a deeper understanding of yourselves and what's possible in your relationships.

Bryan here. I'll be hosting Authentic Relating this week.

And this week's theme is.....a mystery!

I COULD just come out and tell you, but I'm feeling too subversive for that this week (imagine that!).

So, you'll just have to come and see!

What I CAN guarantee is an evening of fun, laughter, connection, seeing and being seen, and.....???

