



# TOKENOMICS

## GAMES FOR MENDING

### OUTLINE

This document contains a short list of example interaction games that can be used either to allow participants to practice new behaviors, or to reveal to them the ways in which they could cooperate or interact more effectively.

### EXAMPLE GAMES

#### Stop Walk

##### How the game works:

While participants move around the room, the instructor issues 'commands'. The commands are initially explained to participants in pairs. For instance walk and stop. When a command is issued, the participants carry out the activity from the pair. Eg: When told to walk, they stop, and vice versa. As the game progresses, more command pairs are added to the list, with steadily increasing silliness of actions. The game finishes when laughter and confusion replace orderly action.

##### The learning point:

This game is useful for encouraging people to insert self-aware process between hearing input, and responding to it. Practicing this skill increases people's ability to exercise necessary awareness during token transactions.

##### Secondary learning:

This game also demonstrates the principle of 'social proof': how rapidly people begin to take their cues from those around them as soon as their environment becomes hard to navigate.

This game is based on work by Augusto Boal.

#### Token Walking

##### How the game works:

The participants are divided into two groups, A & B. The groups are assigned contrasting emotional validation goals. For instance: Group A is instructed 'you want people to fear you'. Group B is instructed 'you want people to like you'. All participants then mill around the room saying 'hello' to each other, and trying to fulfil their validation goals in the way that they interact. After the game, people's reactions are discussed.

Other useful goal pairs are:

admire you/ignore you

think you're clever/think you're ethical

## TOKENOMICS – GAMES FOR MENDING – PAGE 2

### The learning point:

This game introduces people to the idea of tokens interactively, and demonstrates that different sensations of strength or comfort come from following different kinds of goals. Participants also begin to identify what different validation goals look like in the behavior of others.

### **Dilemma Party**

#### How the game works:

Participants are given rules for an interaction game that they will play with others in the room. Depending on how they play that game, they acquire points. Participants are encouraged to try to acquire as many points as possible, and to maximize their score. The game is played like rock-paper-scissors with a single partner for each interaction, with participants making a simultaneous choice on the count of three. They have two options: to thumb their nose at their partner, or to mime the act of offering a gift. Depending on what combination of choices are made, the scores are as follows: When one player thumbs, and the other offers, the player who thumbed receives three points, and the person who offered receives none.

When both players thumb, they both receive one point.

When both players offer, they both receive two points.

There are no restrictions on participants interacting with the same person multiple times, or choosing to avoid a person with whom they don't want to interact.

### The learning point:

For large groups, thumbing almost automatically becomes the default behavior, even though there are better strategies available. This is because it's a choice that comes with no risks. Once established, a pattern of thumbing becomes very hard to break as expectations of giving fall to zero. However, after playing once, participants can be shown that choosing to offer with reliable partners wins points faster than any other alternative. When the game is played again with awareness raised, different patterns emerge. Cooperating cliques establish themselves.

This game teaches both the value of cooperation, and the difficulty of establishing it. It's based on the notion of Prisoner's Dilemma, as explored in Game Theory.

### **Cafe Intellectuals**

#### How the game works:

This game requires three relatively confident volunteers and comes in three phases. The volunteers are brought to the front of the room to simulate a discussion between a group of French-style cafe intellectuals having a discussion about any topic they choose.

In phase one, they're told that they've received word, secretly, that they're being watched by a film crew who are selecting intellectuals as pundits for an upcoming television program. Only one of them will make it onto the show. During the conversation, they have to try to secure their position on the show. The facilitator lets the dialog persist for a few minutes to let the patterns become clear.



## TOKENOMICS – GAMES FOR MENDING – PAGE 3

In phase two, they're told they've received a newsflash, as one of the resident intellectuals has dropped out of the show. This means there are two free slots on the program, not one. The conversation then proceeds again on this basis.

In phase three, they receive a second newsflash: the TV company has decided to go with an established clique of intellectuals--either theirs or the one from the next town over. Conversation then proceeds again until the new patterns are clear to the audience.

Between each phase of the game, the audience and volunteers discuss what they see, and what's happening in the group.

### The learning point:

The game makes the difference between a collaborative and a competitive environment very clear, in terms of the token transactions that the volunteers engage in. With each phase of the game, the tribal boundary moves, and with it the habits of those taking part.

### Secondary learning:

This game also provides an example of what a specific kind of token acquisition looks like. Throughout the game, all volunteers are attempting to collect 'clever tokens' though their behaviors are different. Playing a similar game, in which volunteers must pretend to be potential judges vying for a place on a TV 'family court' program, and thus exhibit highly ethical behavior, reveals a completely different set of conversational gambits.