

Brain Files

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A 2016 Golden Cobra Entry

3+ Players / ~1 Hour

Facilitator Can Play!
(Though, they will need to keep their eyes open to read, at times when others have them closed!)

Read as You Play!

The game text is designed to be read aloud as it is played.

Ideal Supplies / Setup

Private Room

Timer with Alarm:

Ready for 20 minutes

Name Tags:

Everyone should put on a name tag

Post-It Notes (or Index Cards & Tape):

Everyone should write their name on one

Approximate Timeline

:00 Overview, Intros

:10 Context, Limits

:20 Download

:30 The Room

:50 Recharge, Debrief

Safety

Door Is Always Open

In-Game Recharge

Touch Requires Explicit Consent

About This Game

In this game you will be playing yourself, but slightly android-like, and with rules that limit access to your own memories.

The setting is in the future, but other than the context introduced by the game, you will not be aware of anything else about the future, so there will be no need to invent details about a reality other than the one you already know.

The physical space will be closed to the characters, but *The Door Is Always Open* for players. You can leave at any time, for any reason. The game will be okay.

Game Structure

First there will be an introspective portion of the game where you think of answers to questions. After the reader states a “**Question**”, everyone should pause and silently think of their own real answer. Your goal is to answer honestly, with as many details as possible, as if telling a story to a friend.

After this there will be an interactive portion of the game, where your goal will be to ask questions of the other players, and to collaboratively figure out why you were all brought here.

Introductions

As a group, everyone should introduce themselves. Give your name, pronouns, hometown, where you live now, what you spend your time doing, and a hope that you have for your own future.

When introductions are complete, everyone should find a private spot facing a wall, and attach their Post-It there. Make sure you can sit or stand comfortably while touching your Post-It for an extended period of time.

Background Context

In the year [current year] technology was created that could save individual brains through conversation. A human would interact with software by answering questions and telling stories. Over time the software would construct a set of Brain Files that could act as if it were that individual. The project was recruiting people at [current place] and you volunteered to participate.

Question: Why would you volunteer to participate in the Brain Files project?

The Brain Files scientists imagined a future where they could download Brain Files into live bodies, though they had no idea how to actually do this yet. Instead, they used currently available technology to 3D scan participants' entire bodies. They also asked everyone for a DNA sample, just in case.

Question: What is one thing that you love about your body?

Files to save a brain were huge. This limited how the data could be used. The software couldn't sort through information on its own, because it didn't know where to start. Instead, it had to be guided. It could find answers when asked direct questions. The answer could then be manipulated in memory and connected to other ideas. The Brain Files scientists thought this was too restrictive and abandoned the project.

The Future

It is now an undetermined date in the future. Your Brain File is about to be used. A Body was created from your DNA and 3D scan, and your Brain File was downloaded into the Body.

Limitations

Your Body may feel new to you, as you learn to operate it. You also recognize that the relationship between a Brain File and Body is sacred. Before you make any physical contact with another Body, you will first ask that Body's Brain File if that would be okay, and respect its answer.

This Body and Brain File require power. Your posted name on the wall is your power source. You will start here, in physical contact with your power source. You can return here any time to *Recharge*.

As Brain Files *Recharge* they remain aware of what is happening in the room around them, but do not communicate. You respect this process very much, and will not try to interrupt or interfere with any Body or Brain File in *Recharge*.

Unfortunately, this Brain File is still subject to software limitations. It cannot retrieve any memories that are not already downloaded, unless it is asked a direct question.

Brain File Download

Close your eyes and touch your power source for a moment. You are a Brain File and are being powered on for the first time.

As you regain consciousness, your Brain File will automatically load a specific set of memories. These are memories from your conversation with the software, when you first created your Brain File.

Like an audio tape on playback, you will hear the comments the software made, and the questions the software asked you. You will hear in your mind the stories you gave as answers in response.

Download Script

Hello, I am the software program that will be saving your thoughts and memories into a Brain File.

Ok, let us start at the beginning.

Question: What is an important event from your childhood?

It is more important who you are today.

Question: If your current self was in your past self from that time, what would you change?

Regrets are likely unimportant. Accomplishments seem to be more important.

Question: What are you proud of?

Connections to other humans is a part of being human.

Question: Who are other humans that you are connected to?

Feelings are important. Let us now explore how you feel.

Question: What is a time when you were angry?

Anger is hard.

Question: What is a time when you were very happy?

Humans imagine events that may never come true, but they enjoy thinking about these ideas anyway.

Question: What is something that you wish for?

Everyone adds to their world in some way or another way.

Question: What do you think you contribute to your society?

I am software, limited by my programming. I may not realize what important area I am missing.

Question: What question do you want me to ask you next?

Question: What is your answer to that question you want me to ask?

The Room

You do not know when it is in the future. You do not know why you have been brought back and put in this room. You do know that you have to stay in this room, because you need to be close to your power source in order to *Recharge*.

Although you can't access your own memories, you are able to ask questions of other Brain Files. You do not know why all of these other Brain Files are here either. Maybe they know more than you do?

You have twenty minutes to try to figure out why you and these other Brain Files are here. When you hear an alarm, you will return to your power source immediately.

[Start the 20-minute timer now. Continue reading after it goes off.]

Recharge?

Your Body and Brain File almost ran out of power. If that had happened you would have lost all the memories that you just accessed, the details you just heard, and any conclusions you came to. That might have been better? You still have a choice.

Question: Do you Recharge and stay aware, or drain your power?

If you stay aware, close your eyes. If you erase your memories, tear apart your power source.

Debrief

It is time to be your real self again, with all of your memories. When you are ready, come to the center of the room. Debrief as a group.

Everyone can answer any or all of the following: What was easy or hard? What did you learn about yourself or someone else? Did you choose to stay aware or be erased?