

How We Played is a game about three things we hold dearly: The times we spent playing games, the people we enjoyed them with, and the shared bond of memories we created together.



It is not recommended for people currently in distress over loss.

### The Things You Need

- An existing game of your choice. How We Played is an adaptive LARP experience that can revolve around any game, whether digital or analogue. The bigger your own collection, the greater your selection.
  - ! To play impromptu, think of games that do not need materials.
- A number of players depending on the existing game you have chosen.
  - ! Optional: A means to blindfold someone, like a mask
  - ! Optional: A block of sticky notes

### Who are you?

You are a group of people coming together over their favourite game. You may come as yourselves (friends, family, co-workers,...), or you can roleplay to create a unique group dynamic (friends, family, co-workers, dogs in a bar,...). In the latter case, it is recommended to write down your name and character description on a piece of paper. Discuss the relations between your group's characters before starting.

### Do you want to play? 😊

- Every game has a rule that determines who goes first. Follow that rule.
  - ! When roleplaying, write your character names on slips of paper and put them in a ruffle to determine one player.

- That player has passed away. He or she is henceforth referred to as the departed. Your group has met to play your favourite game in honour of the departed. You play with your traditional house rules.

Remember how we played...?

Granny's favorite rule!  
Roll twice if you hug her

## Rules

- Once a game has been chosen and the initial shock of loss has been coped with, the departed takes place among the leftover players and is blindfolded.
  - ! If blindfolding triggers discomfort, the departed may sit with their back to the leftover players.
- The departed and the leftover players never communicate directly.
- The leftover players commence the game according to its rules as written in the game's manual.
  - ! Roleplaying groups must stay in character from this point on.

## Making Memories

As the leftover players begin the game, they must vocally describe what they are doing, comment on their gameplay, and give remarks on their playstyle. Their lively joy of the game is the only means for the departed to form a connection to their ritual.

The departed may use any utterance of a leftover player as a prompt of remembrance. *How We Played* revolves around the unique quirks, rules, and habits we share. Under the emotional presence of the departed, these instances are slowly rediscovered by the leftover players in a process of mournful coping.

The prompt of the departed always begins with: "Do you remember...", followed by a unique rule or a typical situation of play they consider to be

significant for their group. This produces a story-rule for both, the game and the group narration, which must henceforth be followed.

The currently active leftover player then adapts the story-rule by proclaiming "I remember how...", accompanied by a brief anecdote about this rule change. They explain their motivation as elicited by the departed, give reasons, remember a glimpse of the past, and share it.

Together, the leftover players create an artefact to memorise these rules. They can take notes on paper or gather personal belongings as tokens.

! If you are playing with sticky notes, you can write the story-rules down and put them inside the actual game manual where they fit the most.

### Mistakes have been made

Once a leftover player has provided a brief narration, another leftover player may conclude that narration with the phrase "Everybody makes mistakes, but...", proclaiming that things were actually different. The interrupting player must now modify the story-rule and share an anecdote about why they remember it differently.

This must trigger a memory of grave implications.

The rule modification echoes the mistake the player made in his or her relation to the departed. It can be rooted in playing the game, but also in an encounter that is, for whatever reason, remarkably similar to the current moment of gameplay. As they cannot speak to the departed, they share their memory with the other leftover players.

Every living player must do this once per game.

Make your modifications meaningful!



Granny's favorite rule!  
Roll twice if you hug her



... While rolling the dice ...

## Ending

- Play until you reach a natural conclusion. This can be the ending of the existing game or the ending of your group's story. Conclude *How We Played* with a healing ritual.
- Look at the artefact you produced. In the established order, every player must pick their favourite story-rule and make a case about why they consider this to be an important bond among their group.
- Once this is done, it is time for the departed to pass their judgement on the living. They still may not talk, but they may enact their approval or disapproval of the created artefact. Will they embrace it? Sign it? Tear it apart?

It is natural to feel exhausted after enacting loss. Talk about your feelings. Thank your group for being there. Call your loved ones. Live.

## Suggestions

- If you have time to prepare before a game of *How We Played*, we recommend photocopying the rules of your chosen game for usage. Besides using sticky notes, you will then be able to leave marks, tear the paper, make doodles, or to stick a polaroid in there – everything to make your ruleset a personal, more meaningful souvenir of your game.
- Bigger groups may see the need for more than one departed. If you agree on this rule, the first departed may choose any number of leftover players to be with them, provided they can elaborate on a reason why they, too, have departed. The departed may communicate with one another but are still not allowed to speak directly with the leftover players.
- A game for two is possible but an emotional challenge.

## How We Created

*How We Played* is a shared entry by lecturers and students of the master's programme Game Studies and Engineering at the University of Klagenfurt, Austria. It was designed in a collaborative creative explosion by KriSSS Gonko, Thomas Sauerschnig, René Reinhold Schalleger, and Felix Schniz.