

>>> YOU, MEME AND THE TEAM

>> INTRODUCTION

You, Meme and the Team is a game about projects - about taking one thing and carrying it through its entire life cycle, as a person and as a group. It is also a game about the ways the internet has altered our communication patterns. The things we send each other instead of words - images, GIFs, memes, music... - to communicate how we feel and where we're going.

You, Meme and the Team is about just that: you, the things you send and receive, and your team.

In *You, Meme and the Team* players are part of **a game development team**. Each of them is **a decision maker, a key part of the project's leadership**. They are invested in the project. It is theirs and they **will** see it to fruition.

The game will cover three phases of the project's life cycle: its inception (Hope), its struggles (Hardship), its completion (Endgame).

Over the course of the game players will get to define what the project means to them and to explore their personal and team growth.

At the end of the game they will look back on all the things they've shared and choose what defined their experience, using only the media they shared over the course of the game.

>> PLAYERS AND RUNTIME

You, Meme and the Team was designed for 2 to 6 players and for a runtime of 2 h.

>> MATERIALS

This game is designed for remote play. As such, players will need:

- # access to a videoconferencing system (Discord, Zoom, Skype, etc.)
- # the ability to send and receive files and links
- # digital storage capacity and location (ie a place to store content received locally)
- # a sturdy internet connection

>> SAFEPLAY

Despite the tensions it describes, *You, Meme and the Team* is meant as a safe experience.

In addition to the use of safe play tools such as safe words and X cards, we recommend having each player set up a list of banned content for them (i.e. things they do not want to engage with).

Make this list accessible to all (share your screen, post and pin it in a channel, etc.). All players should know what each other players will and will not engage with.

>>> PLAYING THE GAME

>> SET UP

Setup should take no more than 15 minutes. We strongly recommend all players read the entire pdf before starting a session.

1# Define rules for safeplay (see left column) and feel free to expand and accommodate to fit your particular group of players.

2# Define the types of media and content accepted in the game.

Which formats are you willing to accept (GIFs, memes, jpg, png, videos, music, etc.)? What content is acceptable and what content isn't? (*This game is set in a professional environment. As such all content should be Safe For Work regardless of what players agree upon*).

3# Define your game. No need to be too specific - broad strokes and a general idea of what genre it is will suffice (is it a video game? a board game? a shooter? is it story-driven?). *You, Meme and the Team* is about the community experience of making the game, not about the game itself. What you need here is *context*, not *content*.

4# Define your Role on the project. This will give you a general idea of what it is you actually do as part of this team. It will help inform your role-play over the course of the game. Choose one of the following Disciplines as your core Role: **Art / Audio / Game Design / Narrative Design / Production / Programming**.

Feel free to customise your Role to your heart's content. Remember you are a founding member of the team - regardless of your Role, you will have responsibilities and will be expected to join in decision-making.

If needed we recommend asking yourselves the following questions:

Are you new to this industry? What is one thing you like and one thing you don't about your job? What's hanging above your desk? What do you listen/look to for motivation? What's one thing your colleagues know about you and one thing they don't? How do you express joy and frustration? What is it about this project that you care so deeply about?

5# Choose a Timekeeper. They will be responsible for keeping track of time and signalling when the game should move on to the next Phase.

6# Each player creates a dedicated folder on their device named 'SECRET PROJECT'. They will use this folder to store media (or media links) accumulated over the course of the game.

7# Decide on a Hand Raised system. This can be any system, so long as it allows a player to clearly express their desire to speak up without having to talk over current conversation. (examples include the Hand Raised emoji in Zoom or Teams). Once a player has used the Hand Raised system, current speakers have 15 seconds to wrap up their current argument.



>> SEQUENCE OF PLAY

At the beginning of each Phase, have a player (whomsoever wishes) read the text and tasks for that Phase out loud to everyone.

The game will ask you to find and save 'pieces of media'. This can be any kind of shareable content defined collectively in step 2 of the Setup. It must however be storable (either as a file or as a link) in your SECRET PROJECT folder.

You, Meme and the Team focuses on three moments in the projects life: it's beginning (Hope), the struggles it goes through (Hardship) and its completion (Endgame).

Each moment is split into two Phases:

a Personal Development Phase, where players explore how they feel towards the project, how they've grow and how their relationships have evolved.

a Team Meeting Phase, where players must discuss the state of the project and how they feel as a group.

>> PHASE 1 - PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT: HOPE (15 MINUTES)

This is it. You've gathered the teams, you know what game you want to make, you've set up workflows and objectives... Today is the first day of production - the first day you start actually making your game!

All those years you've dreamed of it. This is your collective brain-child and it's finally, finally happening!

TASK: Choose any number of pieces of media that best represent how you feel about this situation, the project, your prospects... Save those pieces of media to your SECRET PROJECT folder.

You look around the room. These people are your colleagues, possibly your friends. You came up with this project together, now you're going ahead with it. Together.

TASK: Secretly give each other player up to two pieces of media that represent what they individually mean to you at this stage - how you work together, how you see them, what your personal history is, etc.

Players save these pieces of media to their SECRET PROJECT folder.

>> PHASE 2 - TEAM MEETING: HOPE (15 MINUTES)

Tomorrow is the first day at work, in front of the whole hired team. All of you, together, will be expected to give a speech - something to hype people up, to start off on the best footing!

What you tell them is up to you. You're all the heads of this project. This has to be your united, communal voice speaking.

What feelings, hopes, values do you want to put forward? Remember, none of you is more important than the others: you have to make this work together.

OPENING QUESTION:

So. Where do we start? What do we tell them?

>> PHASE 3 - PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT: HARDSHIP (15 MINUTES)

Everything was going fine - until it wasn't. Something happened, and now all your careful planning is for nothing. Something needs to change, and fast.

Overtime is not an option - your team's health is your absolute priority.

So what will it be? What will you have to give up?

TASK: Choose any number of pieces of media that best represent how you feel about this situation, the project, your prospects... Save those pieces of media to your SECRET PROJECT folder.

The stress is intense, straining relationships and budgets alike. None of you want to be the first to say it, but you must face it: the project has to change. Worry and weariness tug at you - all of you.

TASK: Secretly give each other player up to two pieces of media that represent what they individually mean to you at this stage - how you work together, how you see them, what your personal history is, etc.

Players save these pieces of media to their SECRET PROJECT folder.

>> PHASE 4 - TEAM MEETING: HARDSHIP (15 MINUTES)

Something has to be done. You're reaching breaking point. The teams no longer believe - there's talk of many of them looking for opportunities elsewhere.

You're the leadership team. This is your project, you will not abandon it or the people behind it. Now you have to gather everyone and address the issue.

What will you tell them? Can you make them believe again?

OPENING QUESTION:

So. How do we move forward?

>> PHASE 5 - PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT: ENDGAME (15 MINUTES)

It's over. It's done! Only a bit of cleaning and tweaking left to do and this'll be it: your game, set to release!

You pushed through, made tough choices - and now the moment of truth.

This is the game you dreamed of. Your game. Will it all have been worth it?

TASK: Choose any number of pieces of media that best represent how you feel about this situation, the project, your prospects... Save those pieces of media to your SECRET PROJECT folder.

Around you are the people with whom it all started. You stare at each other. So much has changed... and so much hasn't. You're not who you used to be - but change isn't always bad, is it?

TASK: Secretly give each other player up to two pieces of media that represent what what they individually mean to you at this stage - how you work together, how you >



> see them, what your personal history is, etc.
Players save these pieces of media to their SECRET PROJECT folder.

>> PHASE 6 - TEAM MEETING: ENDGAME (15 MINUTES)

At last, the game is here!
Tomorrow it ships, hopefully to raving reviews and commercial success.
Today you're a studio as yet unproven.
Tomorrow... tomorrow you'll have something to show for all that time, effort, hardships and hope.
You look at each other - how many years since you joined together on this mad quest? Did you expect to come this far? To live through so much?
Here, in this room, are the people who started it all.

OPENING QUESTION:

So. We ready to do this? Then what?

>> PHASE 7 - THE GAME (15 MINUTES)

Success!
The game has shipped to raving reviews! All your hard work, those months, even years, of tribulations - all that has finally paid off!
But now is not the time to rest on your laurels. Now is the time to look back and remember: remember the good and the bad, the things learnt and lost along the way, the growth and the falling outs.

TASK: *Create a new folder or discussion thread. All players should be able to access this folder and put things into it. Call it [YOU, MEME AND THE TEAM]. Together you must now fill this folder with content that will represent what the entire process meant to you, personally and as a group. A memorial to the whole experience, to the people who partook in it, the emotions it stirred and the bonds it shaped.*

Any player can now copy a piece of media from their SECRET PROJECT folder into the joint YOU, MEME AND THE TEAM folder.
When a player does so they must explain their choice: what does this content represent to them? How does it represent an aspect of the project or their relation to it or the people on it?

No player can prevent other players from adding content to the joint folder.

IMPORTANT: Once a player has added a piece of content to the joint folder, they cannot add new content until at least two other pieces of content have been added by other players.

Keep in mind that: There is no limit to the amount of content that can be put into this folder.
Content not put in the joint folder is not revealed to other players at the end of the game.

>> PHASE 8 - DEBRIEFING

You, Meme and the Team is over. We hope you enjoyed playing the game!

Although the debriefing phase is entirely optional, we recommend you take the time to discuss your personal and group experience with the game.
Were you surprised by what ended up being in the joint folder? Did you discover things, emotions, other players' experiences you had not noticed during the course of the game?
We especially recommend discussing how using non-verbal media affected communication and relationships, as well as what players shared openly and what they hid - and why.

Once the time is up, review and browse through the content in your YOU, MEME AND THE TEAM folder.

This is your game - what it means to you, as a team and as individuals, summed up in the content you've shared over the course of the game.
That meme shared in a moment of frustration, the music you put on to power through, the GIF sent to congratulate a team member... **THESE ARE NOW YOUR HISTORY.**

YOUR GAME.

YOUR STORY.



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