



Do you like lively, juicy, free-flowing conversations that:

...are full of laughter & life, humour & seriousness, entertainment and enlightenment?
 ...expand our awareness and our understanding of ourselves and each other?
 ...open us up to the possibilities in ourselves, in each other and in life?

Yes? Play the game!

APPRECIATION GAME PROCEDURES!

Created by Bill Hanson – Last updated Oct. 14, 2016

Please send your questions and feedback to:

ag-admin@appreciationgame.ca

GAME STYLES

The Appreciation Game can be played either socially or professionally.

These Game Procedures are for playing it socially.

Counsellors, psychologists/psychiatrists, corporate trainers, educators and/or other professionals seeing possible applications of this game in their fields are invited to [contact its creator](#) to discuss the art of the possible.

BEGINNERS PLEASE NOTE

TO TRULY UNDERSTAND The Value And Enjoyment Of This Game you have to actually play it with other people. Just reading these procedures by yourself will only give you surface understanding of it. Discussing them with others will deepen that understanding but you have to actually experience the game to truly appreciate it. The words on this paper are to playing the game as sheet music is to actually playing the music.

FAST TRACK

The fastest, easiest and best way for you to get into this game is to ignore this document and simply come to a game to play it with people who already know the basic procedures involved.

If you don't have access to an upcoming game in your area read these Game Procedures and then gather with a group of interested people from your life and get into it together. When you invite them include a link to the Appreciation Game web site so they can, if they want, review the information offered and come with some idea of how it works.

A group of inexperienced players that wants to start playing as quickly as possible can safely ignore the last two sections... "Additional Notes On Scoring and "Notes On Reaching Agreement"...until after a few rounds have been played.

There are no rules, only procedures and the game will be what you choose to make of it. The more fully and freely you put yourself into it the more fun and fulfillment you, and those you share the experience with, will get to take out of it.

GAME PIECES

QUESTIONS OF INTEREST

Usually each participant is requested to bring at least one "Question of Interest" on any topic that they would like to have discussed by their playing group.

It is also possible to set up a game focused on a specific topic with the Questions of Interest requested, or supplied, by the Host/Organizer having to be pertinent to that topic.

The Questions of Interest may be as silly, serious, casual or heartfelt as the person posing them wishes.

Participants may include their identity with their question or pose them anonymously. Since, however, the game is played in relatively small conversational groups who posed which question can become apparent in the conversational flow even though it is posed anonymously.

TOKENS OF APPRECIATION

"Tokens of Appreciation" (supplied by the Host/Organizer) can be poker chips, tooth picks, pennies, tiddlywinks or anything else of which there is a substantial quantity available and which can be easily passed from player to player.

The "Tokens of Appreciation" are kept in an "Appreciation Fund" on the playing area to be drawn from by the players at will.

To ensure a continued separation of the "Appreciation Fund" from each player's personal collection of tokens it is advisable to keep them in a bowl or other container. The tokens can also be divided among two or three such containers if that makes them more easily accessible to the players.

PREPARATION

FOR BEST RESULTS...

...gather in groups of 5 to 7 participants. Anything less than 4 players doesn't work as well for open topic social games. Games can have as many players as the group wants but anything more than 8 will make getting to the end of each round slower and more challenging.

Social games can work anywhere from 3 to 8 players but for more than 7 it is probably best to split into two, or more, playing groups.

Games with 2 players can be played socially but it is harder to develop the conversational energy and enthusiasm larger groups tend to experience. Two player games will probably work best with focused topics set by a Facilitator for professional purposes.

...arrange yourselves in comfortable seating around a table or other playing area (picnic blanket or ???) within easy reach of everyone (for giving and receiving "Tokens of Appreciation" as described below).

Preceding or following the game period with a potluck dinner, or having appetizing refreshments on hand and possibly peaceful background music during the game can add to everyone's enjoyment

DECIDE ON A MUTUALLY AGREEABLE TIME LIMIT

The game works well as a social pastime when played for 1 to 1½ hours followed by a break and then either more rounds of play or an extended period of free form socializing and conversation.

DETERMINE WHETHER A FACILITATOR IS WANTED

First time hosts, and/or groups of players should ignore both this section and go to the “Set Up The Playing Area” section below.

If playing with an experienced player functioning as a Facilitator is desired and the host/organizer of the game has not arranged for someone to fulfill that function, the members can ask for a volunteer among themselves if they wish.

SET UP THE PLAYING AREA

Make a “Appreciation Fund” of “Tokens of Appreciation” available on the table or playing area within in easy reach of all players.

Have all players give their Questions of Interest to the Facilitator if there is one and if not to the Host or have them place them in a container for random drawing.

PLAYING PROCEDURES

BASED ON THE GAME’S FIRST DEFINITION OF APPRECIATION:

An increase in value

To increase the value that we offer to, and receive from, each other through sharing and discussing our individual ideas about any of the multitudinous aspects of life!

FACILITATOR

First time hosts, and groups of players, should also ignore this Facilitator section for now and go to the Other Players section below.

The facilitator’s function is to:

1. Collect, place in an order, read and if requested re-read the Questions of Interest during the various rounds of the game.
2. Assist the other players to come to a mutually agreeable answer to whatever Question of Interest is being discussed. She/he must fill that function only by asking questions (no statements allowed)...questions to draw out the reticent, to bring the wordy to an ending, to clarify a fuzzy point or to otherwise move the discussion forward in some way.

The function of Facilitator can...

...remain with one player throughout the game or

...be passed from player to player in each new round of discussion, or

...(if there are no anonymous questions) having each player Facilitate the discussion of their own question might prove interesting and possibly uniquely helpful to the deliberations of the rest of the group.

Like any other player, however, the Facilitator is always free to participate fully in the scoring procedure as described in the Scoring section below.

OTHER PLAYERS

All players, except the Facilitator (if there is one), can participate in the discussions using questions or statements.

For the first round of discussion a Question of Interest is selected either by a Facilitator, the Host or drawn randomly by any player willing to do so and then read out loud to the group.

At any time during the round it can be re-read silently, or out loud, by any player feeling it would be helpful to do so.

Any player can suggest a possible answer to the Question of Interest selected and all players may discuss the all the answers put forth by comparing, adapting and blending them until the group can agree on one mutually acceptable one sentence answer.

Any player can abstain in any round and leave the decision on an answer to the remaining players.

There is no single right answer to any Question of Interest only the group's mutual answer!

(see also "Notes On Reaching Agreement")

SCORING PROCEDURES

BASED ON THE GAME'S SECOND DEFINITION OF APPRECIATION:

An awareness of, and gratitude for, value

To show our awareness of, and gratitude for, values
that we give to, and receive from, each other!

The game is scored by the players, including the Facilitator, by giving "Tokens of Appreciation" to each other, for any reason that suits the giver. Each token given is usually accompanied by a brief explanation unless the circumstances make the reason obvious or it seems to the giver that the flow of the discussion would be detrimentally interrupted.

Tokens can be given to more than one player at a time, and even to the group as a whole, for any single reason common to all.

Be silly and serendipitous as well as serious. For example you might say "I'll give a "Token of Appreciation" to...

...you for so clearly expressing your point of view."

...you because the bright colours you are wearing add life to the room."

...the group for how smoothly the discussion is flowing.

...you for the great laugh you just gave me."

...you for the incredible insight about my life that your thought stimulated in me."

...you because you listen to understand."

...each of you for letting me get to know you all better."

...you because I like how easily I can make you laugh!"

...??????????

PLEASE NOTE:
This is the key to great appreciation games!

The more frequently and enthusiastically “Tokens of Appreciation” are passed around by everyone in the game the better the game will get for everyone. Make it happen! From the beginning of the game intentionally look for reasons, silly or serious, to appreciate others in the game. Each game will become whatever the players make of it! Experience Appreciation to the fullest!

To give a token of appreciation the giver simply takes one, or more, from the “Appreciation Fund” and hands it, or them, to the intended recipient or recipients (one to each recipient only).

Since appreciation inevitably inspires appreciation in the person appreciated the giver of the token, or tokens, then takes one for him/herself to represent whatever appreciation he/she may have attracted by being appreciative.

Silly or serious, relevant to others or not, each player’s right to give a “Token of Appreciation” to any other player, or to each in group of players, at any time in the game for any reason is absolute.

(see Also Additional Notes On Scoring)

FINISHING EACH ROUND

Reaching a mutual agreement on an answer to any round’s Question of Interest marks the end of that round of discussion. Please note the goal is to find “an” answer that everyone can agree on not “the” answer.

Any player may choose to abstain from the discussion in any round and leave it to the rest of the player to reach a mutually agreeable answer.

FINISHING THE GAME

TIMING

The game ends at the mutually agreeable time, or number of rounds, set by the players before the beginning of play unless the players mutually agree to an extension.

DETERMINING THE WINNER

The reality is that everyone who plays actually wins since we all leave the game with a broader awareness and understanding of each other, ourselves and life in general.

For the purposes of the game however the player who has received the most “Tokens of Appreciation” by the end of the game is considered the winner.

PRIZE PROCEDURE!

Usually by the end of a game nobody really cares very much who won but the awarding one of the prizes listed below offers a fun, appreciative and casually ceremonial way to mark the end a game.

The winner gets to pick from a list of "Warm Fuzzy" Prizes that are easily (and always) deliverable on the spot such as:

three cheers from the rest of the group,
 a high five line past the winner
 a hand written appreciation of the winner from each player,
 an individual hug from each player,
 a group hug with the winner in the middle,
 a round of "For he's/she's a jolly good fellow/fella"
 a massage from the whole group,
 a written out favourite quote or happy thought from each player,
 a toning circle with the winner in the middle,
 a pat on the back from everybody,
 or ???????.

New suggestions that fulfill the "warm fuzzy" and "always deliverable" criteria can be added to the above list at any time before or during the game. .

Any game participant is welcome to suggest a new prize to be added to the list for their current game.

Any Host/Facilitator is welcome to amend the above list to suit themselves for their group's on-going games.

Any player may opt out of giving the prize selected by the winner if it is something they aren't comfortable with. In such a situation it would be good if the player opting out would select something else to give from the list that they are comfortable with.

Submitting such additions for possible inclusion on the above list in this document for the benefit of Appreciation Game players everywhere would be appreciated. To do so please [click here](#)

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON SCORING

GIVE APPRECIATIONS GENEROUSLY!

Remember to look for reasons to recognize and reward each other and yourselves. The more enthusiastically the "Tokens of Appreciation" are flying back and forth among the players the more fully you will all be participating in the Appreciation Game and the more fun you will have.

The more Appreciations you give out the more you will get.

The more of yourself you put into the game the more you will find in it and the more you will get out of it!

If your group proves to be enthusiastic "Appreciators" you will probably need a "Appreciation Fund" of 20-50 tokens per player in the game.

If the "Appreciation Fund" of tokens gets depleted at any point in the game the group can give back a mutually agreeable number each to replenish the fund but the number agreed upon should always leave each player with a least one "Token of Appreciation." Nobody should ever be left completely unappreciated.

ALTERNATE SCORING POSSIBILITIES

If stackable tokens are being used it works best if everyone receiving them stacks them up in a single pile as they receive them. This visually demonstrates how "highly appreciated" each person is getting by appreciating and by being appreciated.

When playing in a car, or in some other circumstance where tokens are impractical, keeping score with pencil and paper will work. Other alternatives to stackable tokens might include

something that can be strung or hung on cords worn around the player's necks or beans in a glass. As in every other aspect of the Appreciation Game you are welcome to do whatever your group finds mutually agreeable. The possibilities are as unlimited as your group's imagination. Whatever alternative method you choose to use you will, however, find that being able to see everyone's current level of appreciation simply by glancing at their tokens will add subtly but positively to your experience in the game. It can also lead to some interesting realizations as the game progresses but you will have to come to them on your own.

Feel free to try whatever you think will work for your group!

If you come up with something new that you feel adds positively to the game submit it for possible inclusion in this document.

NOTES ON REACHING AGREEMENT

Seeking agreement on a single, mutually agreeable answer to a specific Question of Interest is simply a way to create an interesting and enlightening round of discussion. Having a mutual goal of coming to agreement keeps the discussion from getting lost on sidetracks. Reaching such a mutual agreement provides a natural end point for the round of discussion and frees the group to start a new round based on a different Question of Interest.

Reaching a mutual agreement is not about invalidating all other answers by making one right and all the rest wrong. Every answer suggested will have some validity or no one will think to bring it into the discussion. The Mutually Agreeable Answer in any round is the one that the group decides will either:

-1) encompass the widest range of the other ideas,
-2) logically precedes the other ideas,
-3) make the other ideas possible,
-3) offer the highest degree of effectiveness, or will
-4) best fulfill whatever other criteria the group decides to apply.

A truly mutual agreement is not reached by dictatorship, sacrifice, manipulation, compromise or even majority vote. It is reached through a simple commitment to achieving that result.

When we make such a commitment we free ourselves to create synergistic answers and solutions that we might never have come to by ourselves. Answers that address the concerns of everyone in the group, as well as our own.

Don't waste your time and energy arguing against another player's answer. Instead suggest alternatives of your own. Seek answers that unify group's various ideas, awarenesses and understandings. Define your terms and otherwise clarify your communications with each other in every way possible. Blend your individual ideas. Give examples out of your personal experiences, tell stories, make jokes, have fun.

Above all have fun. The lighter you take yourselves, and the more you enjoy each other's company, the more comfort you will have in sharing your heavier experiences, perceptions, thoughts, beliefs and feelings with each other.

Any participant, at any point, is free to abstain from any round of discussion and thereby accept the answer agreed to by the other participants.

Your group is free to interpret any Question of Interest in any way that you find mutually acceptable.

You are also free to reach agreement on stopping any round of discussion at any time for any mutually agreeable reason.

The Beginning

There is no end to where appreciation will take us!
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Accentuate the positive....pass it on!

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To be notified of updates to these procedures or of
other news of the game and its development
Please email: ag-admin@crucible.ca
Subject: "Update Notifications"
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