

USER IS TYPING
/////////////////MESSAGE SENT



A GAME OF INSTANT MESSAGING AND ANXIETY

By Nevyn Holmes @ForkTwenty



A Game for one player with a deck of playing cards, 3 six-sided die, and either a lighter, scissors & tape or a red marker & a black marker.

It's Tuesday, after lunch, and it's already been a long week. Today's been difficult, for one reason or another, and you're sitting at your desk feeling not quite as good as you could. Maybe you're upset about something, maybe you're reading a bit too much into something someone said. Maybe it's just not a good day.

You open up your instant messaging app to chat with some friends, hoping it'll either help or make the day go by faster. You're pretty sure they won't mind- you chat with these people pretty often, pretty much like this. You're pretty sure you're not getting on their nerves. They're your friends, right? Chatting is what friends do, right?



CONTEXT //////////////////////////////////////

UIT//MS is a game about dealing with the social anxiety around interacting with the same people day in, day out, over the course of who knows how long. The game itself takes place on a single day in one person's life and represents the last hour or so before their work day ends.

During play you build a spread of cards that represents both the people you're talking to and the conversations you have during that time frame. You roll dice to determine how your character perceives the impact the conversations have on their friends, and how they themselves feel after. You answer question prompts to determine details, and you try to make it to the end of the day.

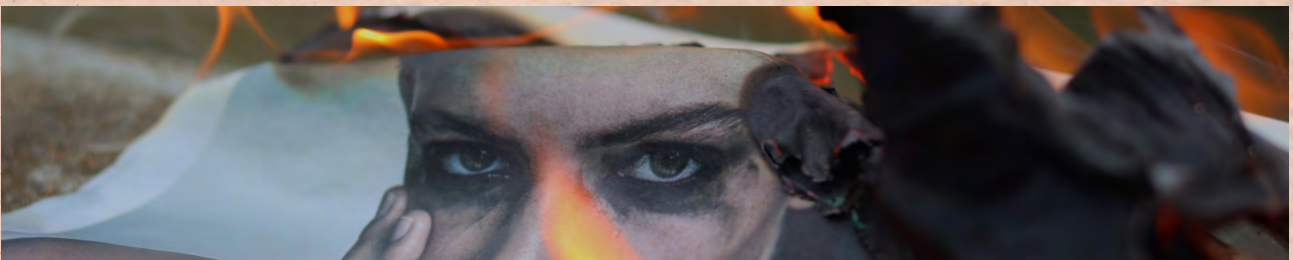


CLARITY & SAFETY //

I feel that it's very important to note here that these die results are not statements of fact, they are your perception of the effects of the events. No die roll that results in destroyed cards, energy gain/loss, or the removal of a card from play is a factual statement that the person involved is actually upset, but how you feel about the events that transpired.

It's a game about how your character feels, and does not state facts about how others feel beyond their bios.

Since UIT//MS is a game about anxiety, it should be stated here that playing it can lead to a headspace related to those kinds of feelings. I wrote this game to express my own social anxieties, and it's built upon feelings of loneliness, sadness, depression, and generally thinking nobody wants to talk to you. It's a game about exploring these feelings, so it discusses them and can instill them.



UIT//MS also involves scissors, tape, and in some instances fire. You cut cards and tape them back together, and sometimes have to burn them. Do not use these elements if they make you uncomfortable or you cannot do them safely. Burn things in a sink with a working faucet or a cup of water nearby, and be careful to not burn yourself.

If you do not wish to use these elements, you can still play! There are rules for replacing these facets with markers and writing.

It's worth noting that there will still be about 30 cards from a fresh pack of playing cards left untouched after you play this game for the first time. You can use those to play more, so half a deck doesn't go to waste!



DEFINING THE TERMS ////////////////

Your **Spread** is the drawn and laid-out cards that you'll be playing with. It's made up of **Chats**, **Friends**, and **Conversations**.

A **Chat** is an individual column of cards in your **Spread**. It's made up of a **Friend** in the top row and a stack of **Conversations** in the bottom row.

Friends are the face cards (kings, queens, and jacks) that make up the top row of your **Spread**. They are given more detail in a table later in this book. They're the characters you interact with.

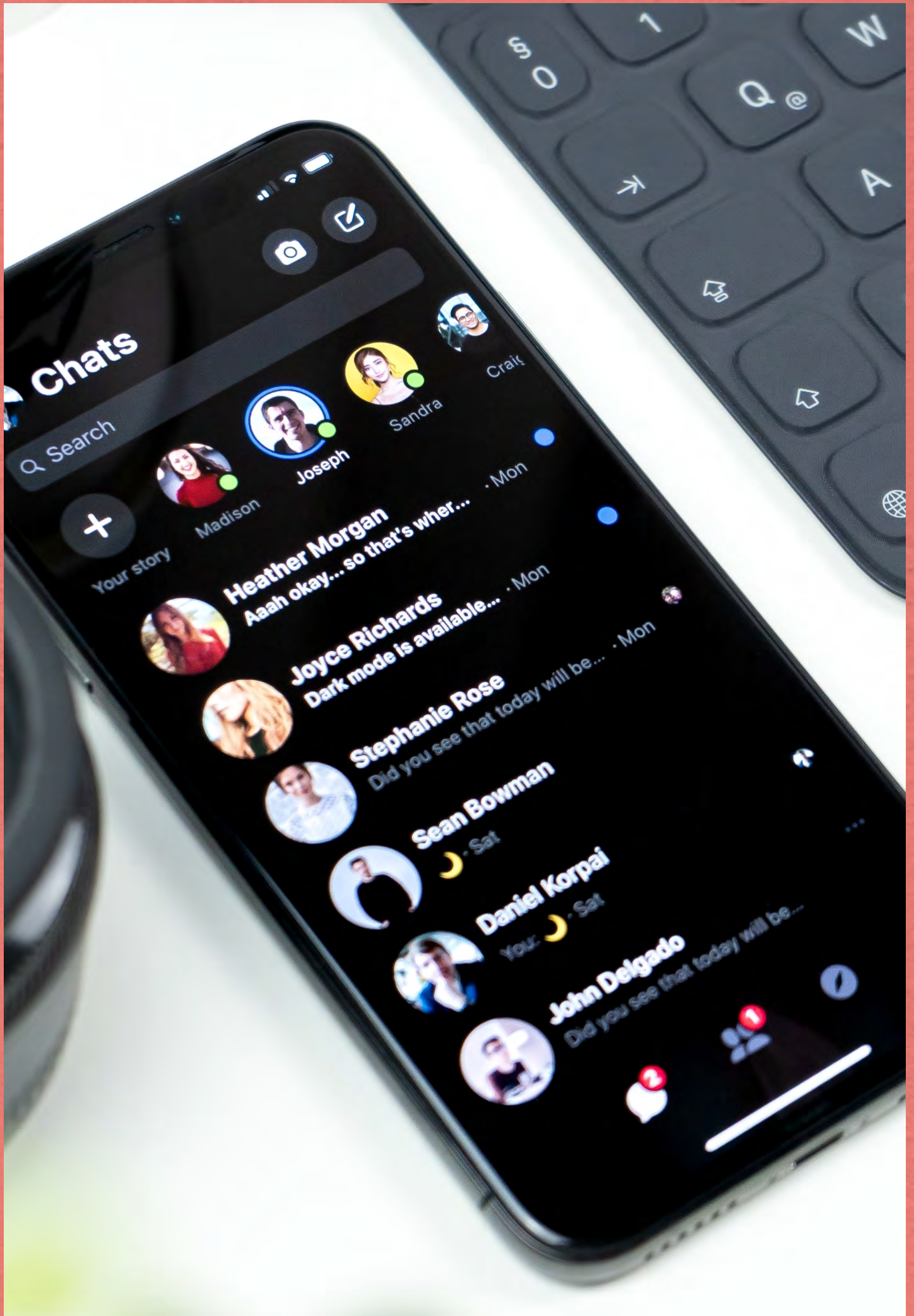
Conversations are the cards in the second row of your **Spread**. There's a stack of 4 **Conversations** per **Friend**.

A **Round** includes engaging in a **Conversation** with each of your **Friends**. At the start of the game, a **Round** is 4 **Conversations** from left to right, but the length can shorten as **Friends** are removed.



ENERGY IS TWO THINGS

- ▶ For you, it's a factual representation of how you're feeling. Lower energy means you're more tired or burned out. Higher energy means you're feeling more positive or energetic.
- ▶ For Friends, it's a perceived representation of how they're feeling, not a factual one. It's something you're assuming based on how the game plays out.







SETTING UP YOUR SPREAD // // // //

1. Separate the Face cards (Kings, Queens, Jacks) from the Value and Joker cards.
2. Shuffle the Face cards and set them face-down so you're looking at the backs.
3. Pick 4 cards from the stack of Face cards and, without flipping them over, lay them face-down in four distinct columns.

These are the Friends you'll chat with during the game

4. Shuffle the Value and Joker cards together
5. Deal 4 stacks of 4, still face down, in a second row beneath the first.
6. Flip your Friends to reveal their Faces. Use the Relationships table to learn their screen names and who they are.

These are the Conversations that you'll have with your Friends

7. On a piece of paper, write down the Name of each friend. Leave enough room to take notes and track some numbers!
8. Below their name, write their starting Energy. This will change throughout the game, so either use a pencil and eraser or give yourself enough room to write!
9. Write your own starting Energy down as well, it will be tracked in a similar manner. **Your starting Energy is 12.**

CHAT #1

CHAT #2

CHAT #3

CHAT #4

FRIEND
#1

FRIEND
#2

FRIEND
#3

FRIEND
#4

CONVO
#1

CONVO
#2

CONVO
#3

CONVO
#4



HOW TO PLAY //

During play you'll likely need to reference these steps, and the tables further in, regularly.

1. Create your spread and note down your Friends using the steps in the Creating Your Spread section. Once you've done that, you're ready to play!
2. Before you flip a Conversation, ask, consider, and answer one of these four questions. You can only answer each question once per Friend, and should aim to answer them all for each Friend.

- a. Where did we meet?
- b. How long have we been friends?
- c. When was the last time we fought?
- d. When was the last time I told them I love them?

3. Starting with Chat #1 (the leftmost column), flip a Conversation over. Find its meaning on the Conversations table using its Suit and Value.

- ▶ If the Conversation's value is even (2,4,6,8,10), roll 2d6.
- ▶ If it's odd (1,3,5,7,9), roll 3d6.

4. Once you've rolled, add up the Evens and Odds separately.

For example: a roll of 3,3,2 would be two totals:

- ▶ The Evens total is 2
- ▶ The Odds total is 6

5. Add the Odds total to your Energy. If all of the die roll Odds, subtract half the total instead.
6. Subtract the Evens total from your Friend's Energy.
7. Answer any questions prompted by the Conversation in the Conversations table

8. After you flip a Conversation, ask, consider, and answer one of these four questions. You can only answer each question once per Friend, and should aim to answer them all for each Friend.

- a. What, specifically, did we talk about and why did the conversation go this way?
- b. How do I think they're doing?
- c. What do they do for a living?
- d. What's something we both like?

9. Using your scissors, cut the Conversation into two pieces. It doesn't need to be perfect, down the middle, even, or pretty.

10. Tape it back together. Again, this doesn't need to be pretty or perfect.

Alternatively to 9 and 10, you may mark the Conversation with a line from a black marker.

11. Put the Conversation at the bottom of the Stack it came from.

12. Have a Conversation in this way with each person going from left to right. This is a Round.

13. At the end of a Round, you can choose to give some of your own Energy to your friends.

You may give in whatever amounts you want, but the total you give is removed from your pool of Energy. If you give two friends 3 and 5 energy, you must subtract 8 energy from your own total.





JOKERS & ACES //

Jokers and Aces are special cards. They represent impactful conversations, with mechanics to represent this.

If you draw a Joker, you feel that you were too intense with your Friend and may have been too much for them.

1. Roll 3d6.
 - a. If the Evens total up to more than the Odds, your Friend is removed from play.
 - b. If the Odds total up to more than the Evens, you must burn the Friend and remove it from play.

You can instead choose to take a red marker and scribble, scratch, and cover the face of the card with chaos, then remove it from play

2. You do not cut or mark the Joker. Instead, shuffle it back into the stack of Conversations and divide the cards up as you would any other time one of your Friends is removed from play.
3. Lower your Energy to half of its current value, rounded down.

If you draw an Ace, you decide if you feel the conversation was Light or Intense.

- ▶ If you choose a Light conversation, you roll 1d6 and adjust Energy as usual.
- ▶ If you choose an Intense conversation, you roll 4d6 and adjust Energy as usual.







THESE ARE YOUR FRIENDS // // // // //

You met everyone at different points in your life, and they're all important to you. You think you're important to them, too, but you may not have ever explicitly asked.

You know their online screen names. But have they told you their real names? Have you told them yours?

People on the same columns and rows know each other- so **Thoughted29** knows everyone on the Jack row and Hearts column.

	HEARTS	DIAMONDS	CLUBS	SPADES
JACK	Thoughted29 20 Energy SHORTHAND TYPING, LIKES BAGELS, DISLIKES AUTHORITY.	_sh4d3s_ 15 Energy GROGGY, A LITTLE RUDE, "DO NOT DISTURB"	LuToters29 10 Energy 2ND CUP OF COFFEE, PESSIMISTIC	SunXMoon8 7 Energy SUPPORTIVE, BUT KINDA SENSITIVE
QUEEN	1SionTatur2 15 Energy A LITTLE SELFISH, UNFOCUSED	isHELLOdio 10 Energy SEEMS CALM, DISHONEST	Beadmeepl5 7 Energy NEEDS A NAP, REALLY INTO RETRO RPGS	ErrorTin33 20 Energy LOVES! TO! BE! EXCITED! LOVES! THEIR! FRIENDS!
KING	DARYPlate 10 Energy TRADITIONAL, FAMILY FIRST	Summer94 7 Energy NEEDS YOU, TERRIBLE LIAR	ReCALcium 15 Energy RECKLESS, WRECKS SHIT	shrechdad 15 Energy GENTLE, WITTY, COULD USE A HUG



CONVERSATIONS //////////////////////////////////////

After you flip a Conversation card, find its meaning on this table. Roll the appropriate amount of dice, then:

1. **Add the Odds total** to Your Energy. (If all of the die roll Odds, subtract half the total instead.)
2. **Subtract the Evens total** from your Friend's Energy.



	HEARTS INTERPERSONAL	DIAMONDS MONEY	CLUBS ENTERTAINMENT	SPADES HOBBIES
ACE (1d6 or 4d6)	SOMEONE NEW How do you feel about them?	TAKING TIME OFF What are your plans?	INDUSTRY NEWS What's the latest?	A NICHE INTEREST What's a fun fact about your hobby?
ODDS (3d6)	A MEMORY How much do you share?	SOMETHING AT WORK How does it affect you?	A MOVIE OR SHOW How did it make you feel?	SOMETHING YOU MADE How long have you wanted to make it?
EVENS (2d6)	A NEW EXPERIENCE Was it worth it?	A MISTAKE How were you at fault?	A NEW ARTIST Do you like their work?	A NEW HOBBY Why haven't you started?



CREDITS & THANKS //////////////////////////////////

WRITING & DESIGN by Nevyn Holmes

Twitter: [@ForkTwenty](https://twitter.com/ForkTwenty)
bytes.rip/links

COVER & LAYOUT by Jamila R. Nedjadi

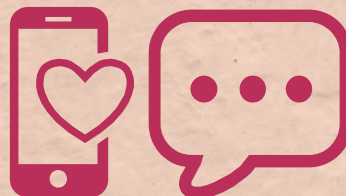
Twitter: [@temporalhiccup](https://twitter.com/temporalhiccup)
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REMEMBER

You are loved and
you deserve it