



**board with sex**

Ride-along Guide  
for Relational  
Cohesion in  
"Revelations"



# DEEPENING YOUR CONNECTION

SETTING THE STAGE FOR RELATIONAL COHESION WHILE  
ENGAGING IN THE "REVELATIONS" GAME

RIDE-ALONG  
GUIDE  
FOR  
"REVELATIONS"

## WHY GAMING?

Board games have long been enjoyed as a form of entertainment, but they can also be used as a powerful tool for personal growth and self-exploration, particularly in the context of psychotherapy. The use of board games within the therapeutic setting allows individuals to tap into their playful and creative sides, leading to increased emotional expression and exploration. Additionally, board games can provide a structured and safe environment for individuals to engage in interpersonal interactions, promoting the development of communication and problem-solving skills.

Moreover, in the context of relationships, the importance of playfulness and novelty cannot be overstated. As relationships evolve and develop, it can be easy to fall into a routine and lose sight of the fun and playful aspects that initially brought individuals together. Board games provide an opportunity for couples to engage in novel and engaging activities together, promoting shared experiences and a sense of connection.

In this way, board games can be effectively used both in and out of therapy sessions to promote growth and development within relationships. Whether used as a tool for introspection and personal growth or as a way to promote playful and novel experiences within a relationship, board games offer a unique and valuable way to enhance the therapeutic process and strengthen relationships.

## REVELATIONS | AN OVERVIEW

'Revelations' by Vincent Bidault is a thoughtfully designed 2-4 player game perfect for couples or close friends looking to deepen their connection. A typical game lasts about 45 minutes to an hour, providing an ample opportunity for meaningful engagement without becoming overwhelming. Each round involves players drawing cards containing probing questions or prompts, to which they must respond openly and honestly. This mechanism fosters an environment for profound reflection and emotional connection, encouraging players to explore their feelings and perspectives. By weaving in various scenarios, the game allows participants to delve into deeper connection layers, building trust and openness. 'Revelations' is not just a game; it's a tool for communication and self-discovery that has found its way into therapeutic settings. The gentle pacing and carefully crafted questions provide a non-threatening space for players to reveal truths about themselves and their relationships. Through shared gameplay experiences, players can uncover hidden emotions and desires, creating a pathway for improved understanding and empathy. The game also includes variations to tailor the experience to the players' comfort level, making it adaptable and relevant for many relationship stages.

## SETTING UP THE ENVIRONMENT FOR PLAY

'Revelations' offers a unique and valuable opportunity for those seeking to strengthen their emotional bond and gain insight into each other's inner world. To set up the game for success, it is important to follow a few key steps.

- 1. Find the right group:** It is essential to play Revelations with people who are committed to practicing healthy communication and conflict resolution. Make sure everyone is on board with the goal of the game and willing to work together to achieve it.
- 2. Set the scene:** The game Revelations is played in three rounds, each symbolizing a unique stage in self-discovery and interpersonal understanding. Before starting each round, take a few minutes to set the scene, reflecting on what insights have been revealed so far, and anticipate the potential challenges and epiphanies that players may encounter in the coming round.
- 3. Follow the rules:** Revelations is designed to foster deeper understanding and connection, so it is important to follow the game's rules. This includes engaging with the prompts provided and taking turns reflecting and sharing, fostering an atmosphere of empathy and openness.
- 4. Take breaks when needed:** The game can be emotionally intense, so it is important to take breaks when needed. If a player becomes overwhelmed or needs to step away, allow them to do so without judgment.
- 5. Debrief after each round:** After each round, take time to debrief and reflect on what happened. This is a crucial step in the process, as it allows players to process their emotions and gain insight into their communication and conflict resolution skills.



# DEEPENING YOUR CONNECTION

## COMING TOGETHER AFTER THE GAMING EXPERIENCE

### THE IMPORTANCE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND DISCLOSURE

Emotional intelligence plays a vital role in fostering healthy relationships. Within the scope of Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), understanding and recognizing emotions form the basis for personal growth and relational harmony. One of the hallmarks of this approach is identifying the emotions that both we and our partners are experiencing, how these emotions manifest in our bodies, and what methods we employ to self-soothe if needed. The process of exploring and validating feelings allows for a deeper connection with oneself and with others. It encourages partners to be more aware of their own emotional states and those of others, thus building a stronger foundation for empathy and compassion. This focus on emotions helps build empathy, understanding, and open communication, essential ingredients for a thriving relationship. Through the practice of emotional intelligence within relationships, individuals can create more fulfilling connections by responding to emotions in a balanced and thoughtful manner. This awareness enhances the quality of relationships and contributes to personal well-being and mental health. Moreover, the skills learned through engaging with DBT strategies can be applied in various aspects of life, enhancing overall emotional intelligence and resilience. By prioritizing emotional understanding and empathy, individuals and couples can cultivate more satisfying and healthy relationships that endure and grow.

This can lead to greater understanding and empathy between players and increased intimacy.

The pillars of intimacy include emotional intimacy, physical intimacy, intellectual intimacy, and experiential intimacy. Playing board games together can help to build all of these pillars by creating opportunities for shared experiences, deep conversations, and moments of connection.

### QUESTIONS FOR POST-PLAY DEBRIEF

It is imperative to come together after the completion of game play with your partner and give the relationship a chance to externalize and for individuals to promote self-disclosure and vulnerability. When asking debrief questions after playing Revelations, it is important to approach the conversation in a way that is respectful and non-judgmental. Here are some guiding thoughts to help ensure that the conversation is productive and positive:

1. Be curious, not critical. Approach the conversation with a sense of openness and a desire to learn more.
2. Be aware of your tone and body language.
3. Use "I" statements instead of "you" statements. This helps to avoid placing blame.
4. Be mindful of your partner's feelings. Pay attention to their body language and verbal cues, and be willing to take a break or change the subject if things start to feel tense.
5. Take responsibility for your own feelings. If something your partner says or does during the conversation triggers a strong emotional response, take a step back and reflect on why you are feeling that way. Try to communicate your feelings in a non-blaming way.

Questions to pose to the self or each other after gameplay:

1. What insights did you gain about yourself and your partner through this game?
2. How did the game impact your understanding of your emotional responses? Is there an emotion that you gravitated to more often?
3. Were there any surprises or unexpected revelations? Do some emotions look/feel the same for your physical expression of them?
4. What did you learn about your partner's emotional needs and expressions?
5. How will you apply what you've learned to your daily interactions within your primary relationship?
6. Were there any challenging moments, and how did you navigate them?
7. How did the game foster a sense of intimacy and connection? What are 3 things that you found interesting or curious about yourself and/or your partner?
8. What would you like to explore further in your relationship based on this experience?
9. How has this game changed your perception of emotional intelligence within your relationship?
10. What steps will you take to continue building emotional intelligence and connection?



# ABOUT THE 'BOARD WITH SEX' PROJECT

## LEARNING MORE ABOUT THE WORK OF PSYCHOTHERAPY IN RELATIONSHIPS

### BOARD WITH SEX

The 'Board with Sex' project is a novel initiative aimed at exploring the therapeutic potential of board games for promoting sexual health and wellness. Led by psychotherapist and gaming enthusiast Joshua Littleton, the project seeks to bridge the gap between gaming and sexual health by creating a series of custom-designed board games that are specifically tailored to promote self-exploration, intimacy, and communication around issues of sexuality. Through a combination of research, collaboration with other experts in the field, and extensive playtesting with a diverse range of individuals and couples, the 'Board with Sex' project aims to develop a series of innovative, engaging, and effective board games that can be used both in and out of therapy sessions to promote sexual health and wellness. Key themes that the project explores include sexual communication, boundaries, consent, desire, and pleasure, with an emphasis on promoting healthy and positive attitudes towards sexuality.

Ultimately, the 'Board with Sex' project represents an exciting new frontier in the field of sexual health and wellness, offering a unique and innovative approach to promoting greater self-awareness, relational cohesion, and sexual fulfillment for individuals and couples alike.

### ABOUT THE PSYCHOTHERAPIST

Joshua Littleton is a licensed psychotherapist, credentialed clinical sexologist, researcher, and avid gamer based in Tampa, Florida. With over a decade of experience in the mental health field, Joshua is passionate about exploring the intersection between gaming and therapy to promote greater self-exploration and improved relational cohesion and intimacy within relationships.

Joshua's interest in the therapeutic potential of gaming began early in his career, when he noticed the profound impact that playfulness and novelty could have on his clients' emotional states and ability to engage in therapy. He began experimenting with integrating games and other playful activities into his sessions, and soon discovered that they could be powerful tools for promoting growth, insight, and connection.

Today, Joshua is recognized as a leading expert in the field of gaming and therapy, and has published numerous articles and research papers on the topic. He is also a sought-after speaker and presenter, and has presented at conferences and events around the world on the therapeutic potential of gaming and the importance of play in promoting emotional wellness. In addition to his work in the mental health field, Joshua is also an avid gamer and collector of board games, card games, and video games. He believes that games have the power to bring people together, foster meaningful connections, and provide a safe and supportive space for self-exploration and growth.

Through his innovative work in bridging therapy and gaming together, Joshua is helping to transform the field of mental health and promote greater emotional wellness and relational cohesion for individuals, couples, and families alike.

### DISCLAIMER

The board game Revelations, designed by Vincent Bidault and featuring art by Mike McCain and Hollie Mengert, published by Act in games, is designed as an entertainment product and not specifically intended for therapeutic purposes. However, as a therapist, I have found that the game can be utilized as a tool for enhancing relational cohesion and intimacy within therapy sessions. It is important to note that the use of Revelations as a therapeutic tool should be guided by a qualified mental health professional who is trained in the use of games and play therapy techniques.

Furthermore, I want to express my gratitude and respect to Vincent Bidault, Mike McCain, Hollie Mengert, and Act in games for creating such an engaging and insightful product. The game offers a unique approach to exploring relationships and emotions, which can be beneficial for many people. As a therapist and a board game enthusiast, I value the contribution that Revelations makes to the world of games and entertainment.