FEARLESS JOURNEY

v 1.0 (cc)   downloadable at http://sn.im/FearlessJourney

Audience and Objective

This game teaches **teams** to **address obstacles over which they have no authority**, using 48 influence strategies from Linda Rising and Mary Lynn Manns' book Fearless Change. It should also **increase optimism** that a particular, important goal is achievable. Side-effects can be the teaching of **consensus decision-making** and **appreciation**. The game is designed for a team, or a group in process of becoming a team. Up to 6 may play, or more in pairs or teams.

Before beginning, the team must already have identified a challenging goal. For example:
- A team uses "Circles and Soup" to identify an important problem over which they have influence but no control;
- A management team, unsatisfied with project outcomes, agrees upon on an ideal future state using a Solution Focused exercise. Then they use a Forcefield diagram to identify the forces (potential obstacles) working against reaching the goal

Preparation

- *Obtain 100 blank, very small index cards (DIN A8-size, or 7.4 x 5.2 cm). A colour other than white would be helpful, but white is also ok.*
- *Print and cut the Strategy Cards. (colour printer not required, just nice-to-have) including a few blank cards.*
- *Print and cut the Game Board (only odd numbered pages are essential. Or, print all pages with "duplex" option, for double-sided cards with "FearLess Journey" on the back.*
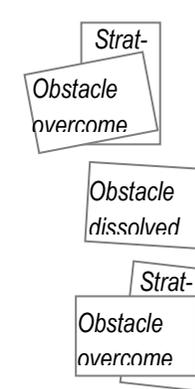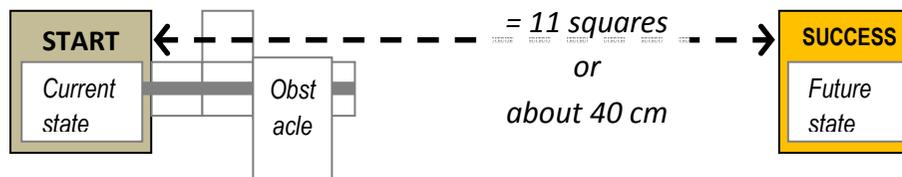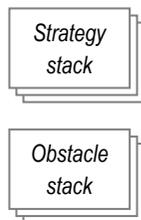
Setup

- Distribute the 100 blank index cards approximately evenly between players (or teams).
- Players create from 1 to 6 obstacle cards. An obstacle card lists an issue which they consider likely to block the path to Success. Avoid cards with *only* the name of a person or role: expand these to also name the issue involved. Players will have blank cards left over. Written and blank cards together will become the Obstacle stack.
- Lay out the playing surface (see diagram below) with Start and Success cards to left and right on the playing surface, separated by 11 Path cards (or about 40cm)..
- Write the title of the team's predetermined Current State and Challenging Goal on A8 index cards and place them on top of Start and Success cards respectively.
- Shuffle Obstacle cards well to mix blank and written cards. Place the stack on the playing surface, face down.
- Shuffle the Strategy cards and deal 5 to each player. Place the remainder in a stack, face down.
- Place the Path cards in a bag or container. Players will pull cards from this container without seeing them (for example, by holding a box under the table).

Each player :
5 Strategy Cards

Strat-egy

Game board :

Strategy stack

Obstacle stack

START
Current state

Obst acle

= 11 squares
or
about 40 cm

SUCCESS
Future state

Strat-
Obstacle overcome

Obstacle dissolved

Strat-
Obstacle overcome

Each player:
Current difficulty of reaching Success

(upside down)

...only while testing game ?

Testing the game

While we are developing the game, it is recommended to have some measure **of game success**. The game designers chose two: fun and "how blocked are you?".

- Fun can be observed while playing (or not ;-), and by asking a non-leading question at the end, like "How was it to play this game?".
- The feeling of being blocked from reaching success is measured at the start *and* end of the game, expecting that players will feel less blocked (and hence, more optimistic) after playing. At both the beginning and the end of play, players are asked "how blocked is the path to this Successful outcome right now, *in your opinion*?" For consistency, higher numbers should indicate the path is more blocked.
  Some ways to do this:
  - use a practice like Fist of Five to get the information publicly and then have each player write it down on an index card, called the Difficulty card.
  - or just have each player write it privately on the index card.
  Each one keeps their Difficulty card, turned face down, until the end of the game, when the question is asked again. Note the difference between start and end Difficulty numbers as a measure of success.

Game Play

- **The player chooses a Path card without seeing it**, and lays it on the playing field. At the start of the game, he or she lays it next to the Start card, connecting to the path there.
- **The player also draws a card from the Obstacle stack** (unless the Path card drawn is a Dead End, in which case play immediately passes to the next player).
  - If the Obstacle card drawn is blank there is no Obstacle and play passes to the next player.
  - Otherwise, the player reads the Obstacle out loud and places it over the just-placed Path card, blocking progress on multiple Paths because Obstacles are larger than Path cards. (Path cards blocked fully or partially by an Obstacle become unavailable until unblocked).
- **The team may decide to take action on an Obstacle**, see Addressing Obstacles.
- **The current player draws replacement Strategy cards**, if needed to maintain a total of 5. When the stack is depleted, he or she may choose a card from any other player's hand.
- **Play passes to the next player.** Play continues until Success is reached, or a pre-defined time-box expires, or no Obstacles remain, or the players are bored.

Addressing Obstacles

- Several actions are possible after the Obstacle card is placed on the Path, blocking it.
  - **Players collaborate to find a Strategy** (or a combination of Strategies) from any team member's hand that could eliminate one Obstacle on the playing field. It may be the current player's Obstacle, or any other Obstacle on the board.
    - **Any player proposes a Strategy** (or combination of Strategies, from any player's hand) by saying something like "I have an idea" or "This might work".
    - All players must agree, see Reaching Consensus. If no agreement, the proposal is withdrawn and the team continues to deliberate.
    - Once agreed upon, the Obstacle and related Strategy cards are placed together to the right of the Success card as a reminder of success.
    - Players who contributed Strategies receive replacement Stretegy cards from the hand of the current player, along with a statement of appreciation (ex: "Thanks for your suggestion" or "I appreciate your help".)
  - **The team may disagree that it is (still) an Obstacle** at the current point in the game. Again, all players must agree, see Reaching Consensus.
    - Once agreed by all that the Obstacle is no longer an issue, it is placed the right of the Success card as a reminder of how Obstacles sometimes Dissolve. If this effect can be directly relate to one successful Strategy/Obstacle pair, place the Obstacle with those cards, otherwise it stands alone.
  - **The team may decide to do nothing (for now)** and pursue a different Path in subsequent turns.

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Reaching Consensus

- A turn is only ended when the whole team agrees on whether to act and what to do. This may be difficult if the team does not have a good culture of discourse and decision making, and the facilitator should be prepared with simple ways to improve these discussions.
- One recommended consensus process which involves proposal + discourse + voting is **a Sociotratic vote**, which may also use Thumb Voting (also called Roman Vote).
    - **In English:** http://www.shino.de/2010/11/26/xp-days-germany-who-is-going-to-be-our-next-scrummaster/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+mgaertne+%28Markus+G%C3%A4rtner%29
    - **In German:** http://www.oose.de/teamblog/team/wer-wird-unser-nachster-scrum-master/
        - **Prezi:** http://prezi.com/j-5f1fqdw26p/wer-wird-unser-nachster-scrum-master-rollen-konsensbasiert-verteilen-xpdays-2010/
- Another method is called the **Decider Protocol**
    - it can be found in the book *Software for Your Head* and online at: http://liveingreatness.com/the-core-protocols/decider.html
- Agreeing together not do do anything is also a decision and is acceptable.
- The team may have trouble with this step, and things may take too long, killing the fun of the game.
    - In this case, the facilitator could ask the team to name a reasonable timebox (say: 5 minutes), after which the facilitator will end the turn with an outcome of "no action".

Optional Step: Debrief

The facilitator can watch for patterns and frame questions to make players aware of these patterns afterwards. Some fictional examples:
- What was the fun part of the game? What roles did people play in decision making? How hard was it to come to consensus?

The facilitator can also point out team learning, by asking open questions like:
- What was difficult? What was easy? What surprised you? How was this different from your usual way of making decisions? How would you change your work as a result?

Optional Step: Action Planning

The team has now agreed on some strategies that *might* be successful to reach a challenging and important real-world goal! To move this learning into reality, an Action Planning step lets the team consider the successful strategies and identify up to three which the team wishes to try right away. They may tackle the most important problems first, although it may be more comfortable to build some experience and get some successes by starting with a few "quick wins" before moving on to harder obstacles.

Action planning should identify:
- the **problem** to solve (so you don't lose track of the "why" once you get into the details)
- the action planned (**next step** or steps)
- **who** will do it (or facilitate it and track its progress if multiple people are involved)
    - who else wants to be involved, or should be invited
- target **completion date** for at least the next step

Also include the date **when this plan will be reviewed** together, and who will facilitate that meeting and make it happen.

Credits: At the first international Play4Agile.org 2011 in Germany, Ole Jepsen instigated the workshop & helped Katrin Elster, Ellen Grove, Martin Heider, Melanie Meinen, Christine Neidhardt, Deborah Hartmann Preuss, Sebastian Schürmann, Andreas Thier & Nancy Van Schooenderwoert to dream up the basics. Antti Kirjavainen advised on game creation. Deborah Preuss www.deborahpreuss.com & Ilja Preuß subsequently created this version of the game.