

THE “HOW TO” GAME

Invitation to play: “Got 5 minutes? Here’s a hands-on tutorial on using Speakeasy Cards. Start here to get into the habit of using your Speakeasy cards. Afterwards, you’ll know what you like about the cards, and how it’ll fit in with your friends, groups, teams, or events!”

Speakeasy Cards = Playing Cards

Here’s how I like to approach Speakeasy! The cards are **versatile**, like playing cards -- they can be used for icebreaking, creative practice, deep conversations, games, and more! Each side of each card are possible conversation sparks. These games & exercises are just **starting points**, to be tweaked or reinvented!

Instructions:

1. Take the first 2 cards and look at the images. Pick 1 image, and say something about yourself using the image!



With this image, I could talk about my failed skateboarding, my favorite childhood shoes, my sense of rebelliousness, my approach to risk management, my new habit of practicing a skill... or even my interest in new commuting technologies.

2a. Pick a **topic!**

Work-life | Family | Relationships | Memories

2b. Take the next 2 cards, and pick 1 of the images -- use it to say something about the topic you just picked.



Topic “work-life” -- With this image, I could say that my work involves fun, bold, and non-normative things... or that “balancing” client’s personal wellbeing and work-to-be-done has been difficult... or that I work part-time as a yoga teacher.

3. Flip those 2 cards over to look at the questions. Pick your favorite question and respond to it. Then, answer it **again**. Then, answer it a 3rd time! You may find surprising or subtle answers come up.

4. Look at the next 3 images, and pick one of them to explain how you’re **feeling** today.



After I pick this image, I might say that I’m on a thrilling ride with a particular project, that I’m just going in circles making no progress... or that I’m feeling pretty nauseous today and must move my head slowly.

5. Flip the 3 cards over to look at the questions. Think of a close friend. Pick 1 of the questions and **guess** how your friend might respond.

6. Take the next 2 cards, and see how many ways you can connect those two images together! Just say things as they come to mind. (You could use compare/contrast, make metaphors, recall memories, create a story, etc)



“The first **connection** I see is that these images both involve an intense gaze at something. Both images could be either more serious or playful in mood. They could **represent** joy, for the future or the present. Or, either could represent a sense of longing, or temporary escape. These cats’ owner could be that person... maybe this is a **story** about returning home after a long trip, or having to leave home out of duty.”

7. [Come up with another tiny activity you can do with the cards, either now, or with a friend.]

8. Nice! You finished the tutorial! Bonus: invite a friend to join you by telling them that “I’m challenging myself to have interesting and meaningful conversations more often.”

Where would you like more creativity or deeper conversation? See next page...

USING SPEAKEASY...

With an acquaintance, friend, or partner:

**with a friend
or partner**

DIVING DEEPER
Page. 11

**when at a networking
or mingling event**

SO, WHAT DO YOU DO?
Page. 9

**when meeting a
new friend**

NEW CONVERSATIONS
Page. 10

**to practice improv
and "yes... and..."**

STORYTELLERS
Page. 3

With a group of friends or family:

**learn about others &
try to read minds**

GAME SHOW
Page. 12

**a quick round of
introductions in group**

STARTING ONE-LINER
Page. 14

**get to know friends
better in a creative way**

HEMISPHERES
Page. 11

**fun challenge to follow
train of thought**

CLUEMASTERS
Page. 4

As an event or workshop organiser:

**enjoy a thoughtful
convo with everyone**

SPEED DATING
Page. 15

**have participants bond
with many others**

WORKSHOP ICEBREAKER
Page. 16

**facilitate more useful,
interesting networking**

NETWORKING 2.0
Page. 18

**encourage rapport with
these other exercises**

NO CARD ICE BREAK
Page. 17

To practice creativity via games:

**to practice improv
and "yes... and..."**

STORYTELLERS
Page. 3

**to create many links
and non-linear ideas**

INTERCONNECTED
Page. 5

**fun challenge to follow
train of thought**

CLUEMASTERS
Page. 4

For brainstorming and creative thinking:

**think deeply about a
problem or situation**

COACHING REFLECTION
Page. 6

**broaden thinking on a
specific topic**

METAPHOR EXPLORE
Page. 7

**quickly surface new
ideas and solutions**

BRAIN HURRICANE
Page. 8

STORYTELLERS

Invitation to play: “Let’s play a quick creativity improv game! We’ll make up short stories using images. For a 4-card story, we’ll start talking about each card with a specific phrase: 1, Once there was a... 2, Everyday (they would)... 3, Until one day... 4, And ever since then...”



“**There once was a** creature who carried his house upon his back and loved to travel.”



“**Everyday he would** explore places that could fall apart any minute, because that’s what he found most beautiful.”



“**Until one day,** he met a friend who did not carry their house on their back.”



“**And ever since then,** he found ways to explore without going anywhere, by making beautiful spaces, or pretending to be different characters.”

Instructions:

1. Shuffle the cards, text-side up, keeping images hidden.
 2. Whoever’s most excited to exercise their creativity goes first!
 3. The 1st Storyteller takes the next random card in the deck, looks at the image and starts the story by saying “Once there was a...”
- Note:** You may incorporate the card by literally describing what is pictured, or by using just a tiny element of it, or by using a metaphor.

4. The next Storyteller builds on the story by flipping the next image card over and saying “Everyday (the character would)...”
5. The next Storyteller creates the plot by flipping an image and saying “Until one day...”
6. The next Storyteller resolves the plot by flipping an image and continuing the story with “And ever since then...”
7. Hooray, the story is complete! Make another one?

In future rounds, try this:

Instead of just 4 cards, Storytellers may decide together to use a longer format, or choose to add detail to a part of the 4-part story by adding an extra image or two rather than moving on to the next part.

Consider different genres of stories -- explain the origin of something, have a character learn a lesson, set up a mystery, create a romance, make the best plot twist, or try something else!

Instead of using the next random card...

try having each Storyteller keep 3 cards in their hand, so that they select from their hand to add on to the story.

OR try putting 8 images face up on the table, and having the Storyteller select from there. Do not add new cards to replace the ones that have been used. This feels collaborative in a different way!



“**There once was a** world of creatures inside our TVs. We could see them an hour weekly, but when the TV was off, they lived lives of their own.”



“**Everyday,** they got dressed up and did the same fun things they did on the TV programmes -- all very high energy and happy.”



“**Until one day,** a creature said, “this is nonsense!” “Why do we have to be happy all the time?” and started making trouble.”



“**And ever since then,** TV shows and the creatures on them have become more violent, rebellious, and complicated.”



CLUEMASTERS

Invitation to play: "Let's play a quick creativity and logic game! We'll have 12 cards. The Cluemaster gives one word clues that link multiple cards together, and everyone else guesses. But guess carefully -- there is a secret 'instant end game' card, and wrong guesses are punished by swapping out the guessed card! Goal? Get as many as possible with just 3 clues."

Clue: "Precision - 4"



6. The Cluemaster thinks of 2-5 cards that can be linked by giving a one word clue... about **the meaning of the images.**

Clue: "Metal - 3"



Clue: "Farm-to-table - 3"



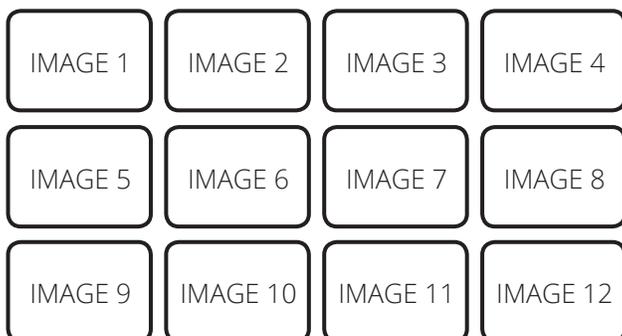
Instructions:

1. Have a table (or any surface.) Start by explaining the rules, see "Invitation to Play."
2. Select the first person to give clues, the Cluemaster. (Or, default to the most colorfully dressed person.)
3. The Cluemaster should have a **poker face** at all times! No facial expressions, gestures, or words that will give the players extra hints.
4. The Cluemaster writes down a secret number to be the **'instant end game'** card number -- if the players guess this card, the game automatically ends at the current score.
5. The Cluemaster shuffles the cards and deals 12 images face-up into a 3x4 grid, counting "1, 2, 3... 12" out loud. The Cluemaster **secretly** notices which card is the 'instant end game' card and does not give any hints to the players.

7. The Cluemaster announces their one word clue and the number of images they have in mind. Players can guess that many cards.
8. Players discuss the clue and potential cards.
9. Whenever players agree on a card, they must point to it and say "confirm."
 - + a. If it's one of the 2-5 cards the Cluemaster had in mind, it is flipped over and the team earns a point.
 - + b. If it's the "instant end game" card, the game immediately ends, and any flipped over cards are counted up for points!
 - + c. Otherwise, the guessed card is replaced with a new card from the deck and the turn ends. Players stop guessing for that clue, and the Cluemaster gives their next clue.
10. Continue playing until the Cluemaster has given 3 clues. Total up the number of flipped over cards to get the team score!

Variations:

1. Whenever players guess ALL the cards the Cluemaster specified for a clue, they are allowed to guess 1 additional card from a past clue. Players state the clue, point to the card, and say "confirm."
2. Ban clues that make the game less fun, such as "animals" or words that refer only to the graphics -- go for less obvious connections!
3. Scoring: focus on improving and generating clues! As a benchmark, aim to get 9+ points. (To get 9, use 3 3-card clues and get them right.)





INTERCONNECTED

Invitation to play: "Let's play a creativity game! We'll create a grid of images by finding interesting connections and placing cards next to each other. We'll have 6 images in our hands, and place cards next to what's already on the table by stating, out loud, how the new images and any images it would directly touch are related.

Setup:

Have a table or floor space large enough to place, at minimum, a 7x7 card grid.

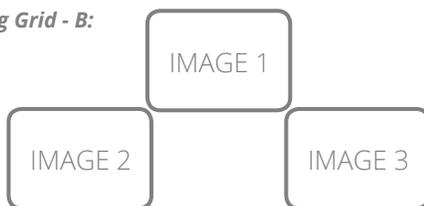
Instructions:

1. Start by explaining the rules: you may read out loud from "Invitation to play."
2. Choose one of two goals:
 - + a. Play until all players run out of cards in their card -- it may get harder and more challenging to find connections.
 - + b. Play for a certain amount of time (ie 5 minutes, 15 minutes) and try to make the biggest, densest grid possible. In this version, players draw cards so they always have 6 cards in hand.
3. Shuffle and deal 6 cards to each player. Players keep their images hidden from other players.
4. Place 1 card from the deck, image side up, as the Starting Grid A. (See options below!)

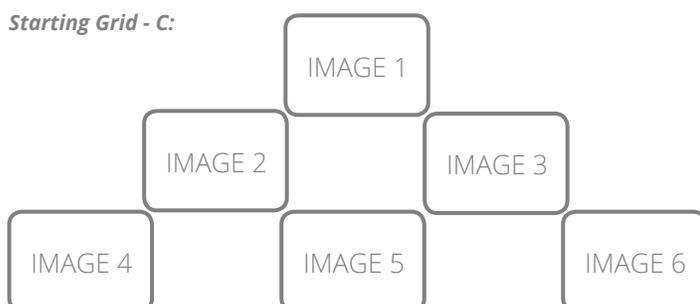
Starting Grid - A:



Starting Grid - B:



Starting Grid - C:



5. Players start placing cards! New cards must touch a card already in the grid and...
 - + a. Players must announce a connection between the card they are placing and any cards it is horizontally or vertically next to. (Players may not repeat a connection description.) If the new card is next to more than 1 card, the connection must link ALL cards.



How to play a card:
 1. Starting Card: "City"
 2. Place "Bull"
 3. State connection: "Return to a simple, rural life."

- + b. Players MAY place 2 cards at once by first placing one card diagonally, and then placing a 2nd card by stating the connection it has with ALL cards it is next to. (See example #3 & #4)



1. Starting Card
2. "Return to a simple, rural life"
3. (Diagonal placing, in order to play 2 cards)
4. "I wish I can fly"



5. "Things to do in my free time"
6. "Escapism"
7. "Different kinds of media"

Note: For groups of 2-4 people, take turns playing cards. For groups of 5-8 people, everyone contributes as soon as they are ready.

6. Continue placing -- Aim for interesting, surprising connections and play until the chosen goal is met!

In future rounds, try Starting Grid B or C to jump into making multi-card connection!

METAPHOR EXPLORE

Invitation to play: As participants walk in, invite them to join in on connecting all the images to today's topic! This is useful for expanding thoughts, surfacing discussion items, making creative connections, and engaging workshop participants in a relevant way before the programme.

Example: "Let's connect every card to the topic of 'design'"



"playing for or designing for the audience" "anticipate expectations" "reading mood" "can be separate or participative"



"look for features that are non-functional" "strong but easy to circumvent" "things that don't really solve the issue"



"fight for all sides of an argument" "supporting what you disagree with" "testing hypothesis brutally later on, to find potential issues"



"close the computer and do your research in person" "roleplay" "remove glasses: don't look so closely, go for big picture"

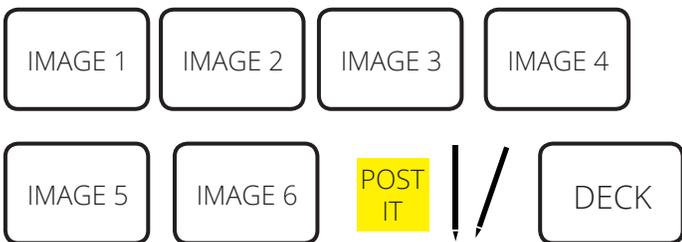
Setup:

Prepare a Speakeasy deck, table, pens, and post-its (a stack of at least 54 post-its). You can **start** this exercise with just 1 person -- it is easy for newcomers to join.

NOTE: For bigger groups of 15+ people, you can do this exercise by having more than one deck and table available.

Instructions:

1. Take 6 cards, image side up, and spread them on the table. Place the remaining deck nearby, image side down, to draw more image cards from later.



NOTE: If you have more than 8 people, or it's difficult to all look at 1 set of cards, you may want to split into groups and spread out the entire deck of cards on separate tables or walls.

2. All participants examine the images and think of ways to connect them to the topic. (This could be a discussion topic, something being learned, a problem to brainstorm, etc.)

3. As soon as any participant has an idea, they write it on a post-it and attach the post-it to the connected image card.

4. Make sure there's always 6 post-it-free image cards on the table!

5. If at any time a new participant joins the group, invite them by saying *"join us in connecting all of the image's to today's topic! Just write on a post-it and stick it to the card, or add on to post-its already stuck to cards."*

6. Participants are welcome to share their insights out loud at anytime -- this sometimes sparks a useful, pre-workshop conversation.

7. Continue until you run out of images or time!

Next steps?

You may like to formally wrap-up this exercise by asking for surprises and insights, displaying all of the cards and post-its prominently, or incorporating participants' metaphor associations into the your next activity.

"What connection surprised or humoured you?"

"What did you find to be a good metaphor or analogy for the topic?"

"What patterns did you see in the post-its?"

What's an area you'd like to keep exploring?"

"What thought or image did you find challenging or unsuitable?"



BRAIN HURRICANE

Invitation to play: Let's do a 10 minute exercise to broaden our team's approach to a problem, making space for more innovative solutions. Each person gets 5 images, and spends 2 minutes on each image, writing down any associations, ideas, tangents, and solutions that comes to mind. We'll focus on idea generation and exploration (NOT critique or practicality) and end with a round of sharing!

Topic: "low-average team morale and productivity"



"acknowledge that work requires effort and kneading, that we'll break a few eggs along the way. We need to experiment with the mixture of ingredients -- it is unlikely to work well the first time. Track our experiments and take an objective view."



"Showcase the work we've already done, feel pride and a sense of forward movement and momentum. The view of success is so brief -- the feathers just close up and we moved on. Tell people really specific things they did well, notice their colors."



"we do long-haul, long-term projects. Need to find places in the snowy forest to take care of the people on the journey. Horses remind me of physical movement and physical relaxation -- team stretching or meditation lying down or back pain relief tools"



"this looks like bringing more playfulness to the project. Can we make working together more of a simple game? No leashes -- give people more freedom even when they are just new (puppies), and invite them to ask for deadlines or guidelines or help."

Setup:

Prepare a table space or surface. Have paper (or post-its) and pens for writing. Setup a timer, ideally on a projector or other visible place.

Instructions:

1. Explain the exercise -- see Invitation to Play!
2. Make sure each person has 5 sheets of paper (1+ sheet/image) or lots of post-its.
3. Shuffle and give each person 5 cards.
Note: 1 deck accommodates 10 people. For 11+ people, put people into groups to share cards or use an extra deck.
4. Every person puts their first image in front of them and prepares to write.
5. Start the timer for 2 minutes. *(Feel free to experiment with different amounts of time.)*



Topic: "low-average team morale and productivity" "have materials prepared in a bag in advance, no rushing for meetings or clients. Have tools we want to use within view and reach -- make it frictionless. (ie brainstorming and creativity tools, drawing tools, notetaking materials, games and team bonding activities.)"

6. Repeat 5 times -- brainstorming each image.
Tip: Remind people of the intention every round: **"Remember, we're going for breadth and tangents, not fully fleshed out ideas. Write down any associations that come to mind, and don't evaluate them just yet!"**

7. Give everyone a moment to look through their notes and circle what was interesting: **"take a minute to review what you wrote, and highlight anything that's new, useful, unique... anything that gets your attention."**

8. End with a discussion of what came up, but prevent evaluation at this raw stage. **"Let's share out a few things we wrote down -- don't evaluate or add detail to any ideas until everyone who wanted to share has shared."**

9. Synthesize and make sense of the ideas people shared. **Ask:** "what patterns do you you notice in our team sharing?" "What new perspectives can you use to approve this problem?" **"What new potential solution component would you like to explore?"**

COACHING REFLECTION

Invitation to start: "Let's explore this situation/problem/issue with some new perspectives, and see if useful insights come up! Metaphors or analogies are an effective way to do this because they give us new ideas to play with. We'll be using images to trigger metaphors for the current situation, desired situations, challenges, (and potential solutions)."

1st Card - Current Situation



"Right now, I feel unmotivated to work. I'm pretty comfortable here with this tree and chair -- it's easy to stay and not be ambitious. There's lots of pages left to go... I don't know how many, and it's all blank -- no ideas in progress. However, this comfort is also blocking the view, it's a barrier."

3rd Card - Challenges



"A challenge is that I'm not experienced in leadership. I'm just rising, floating above. Like these ducklings, many people are new. A challenge is to inspire people enough to be inspired by them back... to feel energy and driving force, rather than urges to relax in the grass."

4th Card - Potential Solution



"This reminds me of mastery, constantly trying to be better, solo performance... so maybe I could focus more. I could focus by choosing more specific issues to tackle. I could focus on improving myself and lead by example, rather than by management?"

2nd Card - Desired Situation



"A desired situation could be a shared space with a team to sit and enjoy. The record is progressing, playing the next tracks -- the record will eventually end... and it's good that it's not infinite. It's good that the end is known."

Instructions:

1. Start with a specific situation/problem/issue.
2. Shuffle the cards, image side down.
3. In this process, you use 3-5 images. Each image is chosen in 1 of 2 ways. Decide now if you will... broaden thinking & invite surprising ideas (draw cards randomly), or facilitate verbalising existing thoughts (place 5 images faceup and choose the most suitable).
4. The first 2 images represent Current Situation and Desired Situation. Get two images and place them faceup -- for each image, do what was decided in #3.
5. The client/reflector examines the **Current Situation** card, and uses the image to describe the situation or problem at hand! They could start by describing the details of the image, and follow-up with what the details could represent.
6. At any point in this **process**, the coach can ask questions about what details in the image could signify, what else the client is noticing, where or when the image is taking place, what could be changed about the image, and so on.

7. Next, the client/reflector examines the **Desired Situation** card, and uses the image to share possible ideal outcomes or impacts. If desired, add another card to flesh out the Desired Situation(s) more.



2nd Card for Desire Situations
"A desired situation is to be competitive in the marketplace, at the place where it's challenging -- not dominating, not relaxing, not underpowered."

8. Get a card to represent Challenges, and place it face-up in-between the Current and Desired cards. The client/reflector uses the new **Challenges** card to share what's in the way, difficult, or potentially blocking progress.
10. Get a card to represent **Potential Solutions**. The client/reflector uses this card to brainstorm ways to overcome the challenges. If desired, add a 2nd card to for another Potential Solution.
11. Close the process by reflecting on what was learned! Ask "what's something that's been useful?" "what's something you did not expect?"

SO, WHAT DO YOU DO?

What To Say: after someone asks you what you do (or something similar), say “...actually, I’m doing this creativity challenge to not repeat myself at networking events or when meeting someone new. I’ll try use one of these images to answer!”

Instructions:

1. Wait for someone to ask you a typical question, such as “what do you do,” “what are you working on,” “where are you from,” “how are you today,” “why are you at this event,” “what do you hope to learn at this event,” and so on.
2. Share that you’re doing a creativity challenge -- see “What to say” above!
3. Take 3 cards and pick 1 image. Respond to their their question using the image in some way.

NOTE: you do not have to literally answer their question! Tangential details or ideas often spark topics both people find more interesting.

“What do you do for work?”



“My work involves making choices between similar things -- so the nuances are pretty important. Sometimes, the tools look every different “in the box” versus “in use” (like crayons on paper.) It’s a pretty collaborative job -- I’m sharing from the same pool of tools.” (Finance)

“How are you doing today?”



“I feel like this koala today, very close to my daughter. Just spent the day hanging out together, visiting our favorite places, indulging in small treats as we rested!”

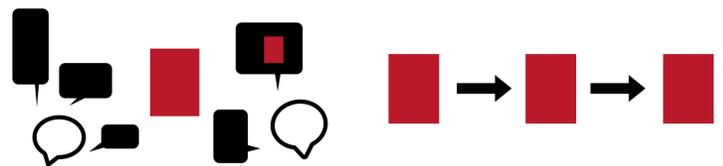
“What brings you to this event?”



“I hope to get ideas for how to practice this skill. But more importantly, I think events are such different experiences from being in the office, and would like see if something from the set up, space, atmosphere, and activities can be used in the office.”

4. Have the deck of cards where you both can see them -- you do not need to ask them to try, but make easy for them to reach the cards if they want them!
5. If they are interested, you have a few options:
 - + a. Continue asking each other questions and trying to answer with images
 - + b. Decide to use the cards as needed, say: “want to decide that we bring in a question or image set if we’ve reached the end of a topic?”
 - + c. Invite them to play one of the other 2-player games in this guide!

Do you prefer to follow a specific set of rules (like playing a game from the guide) or to make it up as you go (improvising based on what’s happened)?



Freeform

OR

Structured

If they’re not interested, do not worry! Keep intending to have as interesting or useful of a conversation as possible (with no cards), or keep using cards to trigger your own creativity!

NEW CONVERSATIONS

Invitation to play: "Want to skip the small talk? Here's a card game that involves being introduced in different ways and finding new topics that we're both interested in!"

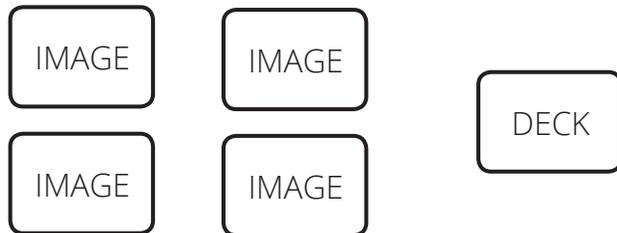
Print out this instruction page, or say these quick rules out loud:

"These are 2-sided cards with thought-provoking questions and different images. We'll place 4 images face up, take turns picking images and sharing things about ourselves until we each have 2, then picking one of our questions to discuss. Let's see what we find!"

Instructions:

Setup: if you have a table (or surface) nearby, use it to place cards on. If not, don't worry -- this game works just fine without one!

1. One person deals **4 cards** onto the table, image side up. Place the deck nearby.



2. The most colorfully dressed person starts by picking an image, and sharing something about themselves using the image. Keep the card you used in your hand.

3. The second person picks an image, and says something about themselves using the image. Keep the card you used in your hand.

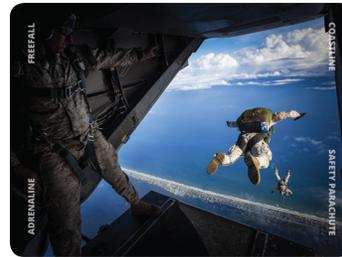
Note: If a conversation is sparked, pause the game and continue that conversation instead!



"Male peacocks are known for being beautiful and upkeeping their appearance. This image reminds me of how I care what people think about me... I wouldn't try to do things to boost my reputation, but I have certainly avoided risks or decisions because of how I imagine others might think of me."



"This ride reminds me of the swing set. When I was young, maybe 7-10, I was very excited about the swings and kept asking my dad to push me higher... until I tried to jump off and scraped up my whole back. Got stitches. I've been lucky though -- I haven't been injured more than that since."



"I'm working a stable job and am currently thinking of getting my PHD. It's like leaping out of a plane. I think it'll be good, but it's paralyzingly scary. I've never done it before, and I don't really know where I'll land."

- 4.** Add 2 images face up, so there's 4 again.
- 5.** Take turns picking an image to introduce yourselves again, so that each person ends up with 2 cards in their hand.
- 6.** Each person selects a question from the 2 cards that they have in their hand.
- 7.** Whenever someone is ready, they use their question to start a discussion!
- 8.** The discussion lasts for as little time or as long as you would like!
- 9.** All cards are put into a discard pile. 4 new image cards are placed face up in the center.
- 10.** Repeat from #2! Try this for 3 rounds and see if you'd like to continue playing.

"What's something you want to see being taught in tomorrow's schools?" can lead to a discussion about emotional intelligence, "adult life skills," why people value trivial knowledge, why cheating is an issue to different stakeholders, and how a programme could made cheating pointless.

"What book or movie has shifted how you see the world? In what way?" can lead to a discussion about the rational aspects of religion, tv shows that build empathy (specifically, a prison drama), and why "snitching" is perceived as a bad thing.

Variations:

Before you both pick images to share about yourselves, decide on a topic. *For example: Work, Not-work, Friendship, Family, Memories Relationships, Sexuality, Social Media, Education*

DIVING DEEPER

Invitation to play: "Let's play a game about us! We'll take turns leading. Whoever's leading has 3 choices: select a topic to explore, revisit memories we've made together, or guess each other's thoughts. We'll use these images and questions to trigger interesting thoughts!"

Instructions:

1. Shuffle the cards and place them image side up. Whoever's dressed most colorfully becomes the first Leader!
2. Leader chooses one of the following options:
 - + A. Deeper topics
 - + B. Shared memories
 - + C. Guess each other's answers

Note: if a discussion is sparked at any point, pause the game and continue the conversation!

Option A: Deeper Topics

1. Announce your choice: "let's explore a topic -- we'll each pick a card and share something about... [sexuality]!"
(Topics might include: relationships, passions, goals, fear, morality, family, happiness, friendship, work, purpose, death, politics, etc.)
2. Place 3 image cards face up.
3. Pick an image and use it to share something about the topic! Challenge: say something new.
4. Invite your partner to pick an image and share. Welcome questions!
5. When exploring topics deeper, it's sometimes useful to ask **"how does this relate to you personally?"** This moves the conversation into a more intimate space.



"This reminds me of how sex and violence are related in the brain. I think the appearance of violence or roughness in sex is exciting -- but in order to participate, I need to be close enough to trust that it's not real violence or not experienced as real violence."



"I think of pornography, specifically of dirty talk. When I say something similar in bed, I'm unsure if I want to say it, or because I just learned to say it. Do people in porn speak that way because viewers like it, or are they mostly creating sexual culture?"

Option B: Shared Memories

1. Announce your choice: "let's each pick a card and share a memory that involves each other."
2. Place 3 image cards face up.
3. Pick an image and use it to trigger a memory, maybe one that you haven't recalled lately.
4. Share your memory and invite your partner to share as well! Add more details, if you want.



This reminds me of... "the Seahawks, Seattle, when we were driving around in Seattle, eating Goldfish crackers I felt really nostalgic and carefree." "our poor attempt at a pillow fight." "learning martial arts together. It's funny but we only did that once. I think it's because I'm afraid to lose to you."



This reminds me of... "those old doors at the farm. Beautiful details." "getting the wrong hotel key from reception and almost walking into someone else's room." "the first time I gave you the key to my place, because you were sleeping over and I needed to leave for work before you."

Option C: Guess each other's answers

1. Share what you picked: "let's try to guess each other's responses to questions! Let's not worry about being right and just focus on making detailed (rather than vague) guesses."
2. Deal 3 cards to EACH person, image side up. Each person reviews their 3 questions privately.
3. Each person selects a question and suggests how the other person might respond!
4. It's useful to start with **"I think..." "I imagine..." "I feel..."** Be curious about any new perspectives and surprises about yourself and your partner.
5. Discard all 6 cards.

Instructions - next round:

3. Now it's the other person's turn to lead! Pick from the 3 options above (or simply do them in order). Feel free to make up your own options!



GAME SHOW

Invitation to play: "Let's play Game Show! We'll each secretly respond to a different card. Then, we'll focus on one person at a time, and everyone tries to guess that person's response. That person picks their favorite answer (and shares what they wrote earlier)!"

Setup:

Prepare sheets of paper or post-its and pens for people to write down their secret answers. Have a table or surfaces (like clipboards) for writing and placing cards on.

Instructions:

1. Shuffle the cards, image side up. Deal 1 card to each player!
2. At the same time, each player will respond to the card and write down their secret answer(s). Each player individually chooses either to...
 - + **a.** answer the question,
 - + **b.** or look at the image and write down a memory and/or idea that comes to mind!

Imagine that your past decisions have been made by a panel of different creatures. What is that group like?

Player's secret answer:

"In my head, there's a robot, chugging forward, looking at how to make things more efficient. There's a dog, getting randomly excited about tiny things. There's a zen master, taking a back step to be reflective, philosophical, and sometimes vague."



Player's secret answer:

"Cross-pollination: mixing ideas from different industries to be innovative. I used to organise community events on this topic, and found that people report having more fun and applying more learnings when we created wacky group projects rather than just inviting brilliant speakers."



Player's secret answer:

"This reminds me of how I like when life experiences or people are like art, sophisticated, though (unfortunately) less real. I am conflicted about this -- it would be authentic to appreciate what's honest and raw, yet I am drawn towards life being art, and every moment written like a novel."

3. Check-in to make sure everyone has written. (Players share what they wrote later!)

4. The most colorfully dressed person is the first Judge!
5. The Judge shows their card, and reads their question or describes their image.
6. Then, other players take turns guessing how the Judge answered their question, or what the Judge thought of when looking at the image.

NOTE: Players respond as soon as they are ready -- no need to go in a circle!
7. After everyone has responded, the Judge shares a few of the answers they liked, what they initially wrote, and awards a "point" to whomever they choose.

NOTE: The Judge can choose favorite answers for accuracy, imagination, fond memories, humour, being completely opposite, or ANY other reason.
8. The Judge gives their card to the person they choose. (This card is worth a "point.")
9. The person to the right of the Judge becomes the new Judge! The new Judge shows their card, invites guesses, and picks a favorite.
10. After everyone has been Judge once, deal out one card to everyone to play a new round.

11. Continue for 2 rounds (until everyone has been Judge twice), and then decide if you want to keep going! If you're keeping track of points, congratulate the person with the most cards.

Questions or Images?

Instead of giving players a choice, you may ask them just to use the question or image! To surface a lot of thought-provoking topics and personal sharing, limit to questions. To invite more creative, surprising memories (and welcome young children), limit to images.

HEMISPHERES

Invitation to play: "Want to play a get-to-know-you-better game that engages the whole brain? We'll be creatively & quickly answering questions using images."

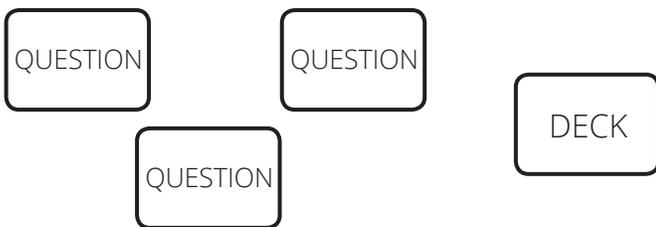
"Quick rules" script:

If the instructions are not printed out, then use this script to explain the rules!

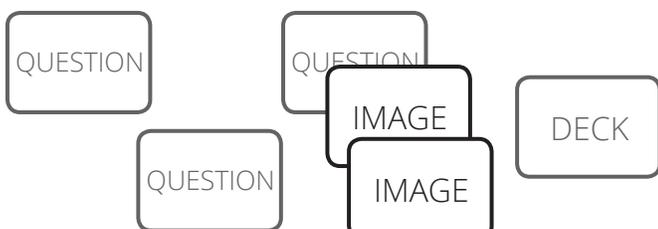
"We'll each have 3 images in hand. There will always be 3 questions faceup on table. Whenever someone is ready, they use an images to answer a question. Then, anyone answer that SAME question with their own image OR choose to discard an image and draw a new one. We'll replace the answered question, and continue until all our hands are empty!"

Instructions:

1. Shuffle deck. Place deck image side down.
2. Place 3 questions in the center of the table.



3. Deal each player 3 cards - each player looks at their own images and keeps them secret.
4. Check-in to make sure everyone has read all the questions in the center.
5. As soon as any player is ready, they can answer any question with any of their 3 images.
6. Players now have an opportunity to answer that SAME question with their own image!



Imagine a clone with your personality, preferences, experiences, etc. What's it like to be teammates or friends?



1st responder's answer:

"I think one of the things that sometimes makes it difficult to interact with me is my sensitivity -- I over-analyse what people say for feedback, and am hyperconscious of what I say to others to not be misunderstood. My clone would also be conscientious and we would often send each other clarification emails... and I think that's a good thing."



2nd responder's answer:

"I really like to take a top-down perspective when looking at problems, and discuss the big picture. One of my pet peeves is talking about details. My clone and I would focus on the big picture, which I like, but we have trouble getting things done, and making sure all logistics are figured out."

7. Players who choose NOT to answer that question MAY discard one of their images and draw a new one.
8. Discard the answered question and used images (or put them at the bottom of the draw pile, for future use.)
9. Reveal another question so that 3 questions are seen. Continue answering with images!
10. First person to use all their cards get bragging rights! Continue play until everyone is done (no cards left in their hand).
11. Decide if you want to play again!

STARTING ONE-LINER

Invitation to play: "Let's do a quick icebreaker! Here are a few images -- in your mind, secretly pick one that you could use to introduce yourself. An image that you can relate to yourself in the most ways, or represents something about you or your work. Alright, who picked this first image? A quick self-intro using the image, please!"

Instructions:

Setup: prepare a surface to place cards on -- a table, floor, chair, or anywhere else.

1. Shuffle the cards, text side up.
2. Place a number of cards, image side up, on the table. Place less cards than people so that some people pick the same card.

We recommend using cards equal to slightly more than half the number of people.

3-4 people = 3 cards

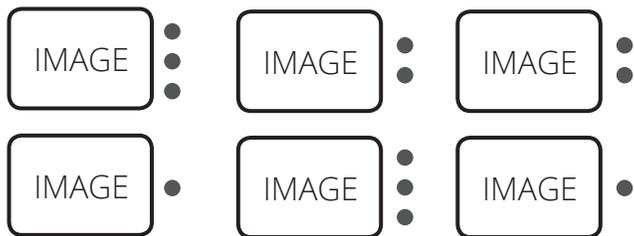
5-7 people = 4 cards

8-10 people = 5 cards

11-13 people = 6 cards

14-15 people = 7 cards

3. Invite everyone to secretly pick an image that they could use to share something about themselves. (See "Invitation to play" above.)



We place 6 cards because there are 12 people. Each ● indicates a person's secret card choice. You can see that 3 people chose the 1st image.

4. After everyone has picked, point to the first card and have everyone who picked that card give a quick self-introduction using the image.
5. Continue until people have all given self-introductions!
6. Wrap up this exercise by acknowledging (repeating or summarising) what was said or asking the group to share what patterns or contrasts they noticed!



Person 1: "I host many social get togethers -- not always BBQs, but always casual and fun events. I think people usually assume I'm extroverted... but that's not the case. I wouldn't be comfortable attending a social event -- I find it intimidating -- but if I'm the organiser, I have a role, and I know how to behave."

Person 2: "The words on this image "time to marinate" really resonated with me, because when I have new projects, I love to absorb content and ideas, and not feel pressured to create something immediately. Without that lazy incubation period, I feel very uncreative."

Person 3: "There are lots of veggies, meats/tofu, different ingredients all put together, which reminds me of my background. I grew up in a conservative western family, with an outcast best friend of a sister, and lived in a collectivist culture after that. I feel like a mess, but also quite worldly."

Building on this exercise:

a) Engage the group in discussing a random and interesting topic, flip over the popular image cards (or all of them), and see which question(s) people are most excited to discuss!

b) Do several rounds of "pick a secret card" -- with new images and/or different prompts.

If you're encouraging **bonding** and rapport, try: *Secretly pick an image that you...*

"feel is most different from you"

"could use to describe your work role"

"could use to describe your family"

"associate with your life outside of work"

"would use to share part of your history/past"

"feel relates to what's on your mind today"

If your event has a specific **topic** or purpose, try: *Secretly pick an image that you...*

"represents a curiosity you have for today"

"explains more about why you're here today"

"offers a new perspective on [the topic]"

"you feel is most related to [the topic]"

SPEED DATING

Invitation to play: "Let's get to know everyone in the room (or at least, as many people as we can!) This may feel pretty energetic, even hectic, so just stay with it! We'll spend 5 minutes in a game/conversation with every person. There are some specific instructions so that everyone can meet everyone -- listen carefully..."

Setup:

Space: Have enough **chairs** (or floor spaces to sit on) for everyone to sit in pairs. One person from each pair will be moving each round, so arrange all the pairs of chairs into a circle. Or, number each sitting space so there's no confusion of where to move.

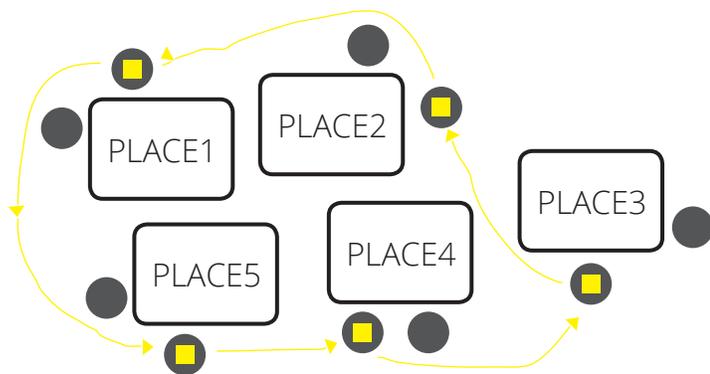
Materials: Prepare some **post-its**, or any other way of marking some of the people in the room -- this is for the rotation that allows everyone to meet everyone. One must be able to easily give the "mark" to another person.

Instructions:

1. Tell people what to expect by saying the Invitation to Play, see above.
2. Pair people up. Give each person 2 cards. Give each pair 1 post-it. (If there's an odd number, the facilitator joins in or steps out.)



3. One person in each pair sticks the post-it on their shirt. Explain how rotation works. **"Every round, whoever has the post-it will move, and those without post-its stay where they are."**



4. Have people sit down. Make sure everyone knows the direction of rotation. **"After each exercise, people with post-its will move clockwise [gesture at each table]"** OR, if spaces are numbered, **"People with post-its will go to the table with the next number."**

5. In order for everyone to meet everyone, a post-it switch needs to happen each turn. **"Today, we'll be meeting everyone in the room, so listen to this special instruction. If you are the pair sitting [at this specific place], at the end of the exercise, the person with post-it will give it to their partner, and new person with the post-it will move to the next place. This happens at the end of each exercise, so no one will sit here for more than 2 rounds."**

6. Do an exercise -- set a timer for 5 minutes! **"Put your 4 images faceup in front of you. Take turns picking images and sharing something about yourself using the image. Once you've used all images, pick a question to discuss."**

7. Facilitate the rotation. **"First, trade cards with your partner. For the pair at the special table: if you have a post-it, give it to your partner. Now, everyone with a post-it, move to the next spot."**

8. Repeat and rotate as needed! If your event has a specific topic, have people share on that topic using the images: **"Take turns sharing something about the topic using one of the 4 images. Afterwards, pick a question to discuss."**

If you are having everyone meet everyone, you will need to do this N-1 times -- 1 less time than the total number of people. If there are 24 people, you do 23 rotations & exercises. If there are 10 people, you'll do 9 rotations.

More exercise suggestions?

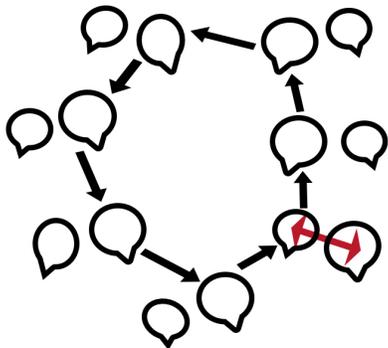
See "Workshop Icebreaker" for quick card activities, "Storyteller" for a 4-card creativity game, and "No-Card Icebreak" for bonding!

WORKSHOP ICEBREAKER

Invitation to play: "Let's start by warming up creativity and getting to know who's in the room! You'll be pairing up your peers for a variety of quick activities! This will be pretty energetic, so please pause your conversations immediately whenever we prepare to rotate.
(optional: *Each of us will be meeting everyone else!*) Here's what we do..."

Instructions:

1. Set expectations with the Invitation to Play.
2. Form 1 big circle. **"Let's make 1 big circle."**
3. Count the number of participants -- you'll need an even number! If there's an odd number, have a facilitator join in or step-out.
4. Form 2 concentric circles and partner people up. **"Every other person step in. We now have an inside and an outside circle! Inside circle, turn to face your partner. Say hello!"**
5. Do a practice round so that everyone understands the rotation. **"Practice round: Tell your partner about an article you've read recently. I'll ask you to pause & rotate in a min!"**
6. Wrap-up the exercise and rotate the group: **"Pausing your conversation... alright! Outside circle, stay there. Inside circle, take one step to the right and greet your new partner!"**



 In order for everyone to meet everyone else, one person switches between inner & outer circle each round.

Important: in order for **everyone** to meet everyone, one person has to switch between inside circle and outside circle every round. You can do this, or give instructions to one person: "every round, whenever you greet your new partner, switch places with them, moving between inner and outer circles."

You can give a specific example as well: "You're on the outer circle right now. Next round, you'll get a new partner from the inner circle. When you greet them, you switch places, so they become outer, you become inner, and you would move with the inner circle next round. When you meet your new outer circle partner, you would switch places again!"

7. Split the cards and pass them to your left and right. Make sure each person has a card: **"Everyone, take 1 card and pass it down."**
8. Lead a self-introduction exercise: **"tell your partner something about yourself using the image."** Allow about a minute for this exercise. *Tip: If you intend to pair up with more than 5 others, I recommend starting instead with exercises from "No-Card Icebreak."*
9. Have people trade images every round to heighten creativity: **"Wrapping up this conversation... trade images with your partner."**
10. Facilitate the rotation -- if you are having everyone meet everyone, make sure the swapping between inner and outer happens. **"Inner circle only, one step to the right and greet your new partner!"**
11. Lead a creativity exercise: **"look at the two images you have, and find lots of ways to connect the images together. Compare and contrast, make up a story... connect them in any way!"** People will slowly get louder and then quieter again -- when they have started to quiet down, ask them to wrap up!
12. Have people trade images and rotate. Lead a topic-centered exercise: **"share a few ways that your image relates to [today's topic]."**
13. Switch cards, rotate, and lead exercises as many times as needed!
If you are having everyone meet everyone, you will need to do this N-1 times -- 1 less time than the number of people. 29 rounds to meet 30 people.

More exercise suggestions?

See "No-Card Icebreak" for a variety of quick bonding activities, "Speed Dating" for a deeper version of this. Use a mix of exercises for laughter, different kinds of bonding, energetic & quiet moments, and faster & slower rounds.



NO-CARD ICEBREAK

Invitation to play: Here are some quick games that pairs can play! These games encourage laughter and bonding, and help deepen the card exercises you do afterwards. Start pairs off with these for a warm-up, and/or weave them in in-between card exercises to keep things fresh and surprising, to change up pace! Switch roles & repeat as needed.

Improv Games / Creative + Energetic

Fast Rhythm

"We'll be saying words on a rhythm, like 'word' 'word' 'word' 'word.' Keep a steady beat, and don't repeat what's been said. First round, let's say [category.]"

You can pick a generic category [fruits, food, places], one related to people in the room [names, professions], something happy [hobbies, tiny happy things, things you're grateful for], or something creative [nonsense words, fictional characters.]

Clap a Song

"[Inner circle/post-it people], think of a popular song. Don't tell your partner what it is. Now, clap the rhythm. Partner, try to clap along."

Mind Meld

"We'll play an improv game called Mind Meld. On the count of 3, you and your partner will say a random word at the same time. Then, count to 3 again, and say a word related to those two words. Keep saying words at the same time -- the goal is to say the same word at the same time!"

Physical Games / Energetic

High Fives

"Both people, both hands up! Give your partner 5 high fives!"

Rock Paper Scissors

"3 quick rounds of rock-paper-scissors!
...Alright, now, two-handed rock-paper-scissors.
Score each hand separately."

Thumb War

"Quick game of thumb war! Curl your fingers together and try to catch your partners thumb. Alright, two-handed thumb war!"

Mindfulness Exercises / Calm

Lead a Breath

"[Inner circle/post-it person], lead a breath. Raise your hand for inhale & lower for exhale."

Mirror, Mirror

"New exercise! [Inner circle/post-it people], you'll be mirroring your partner's movements. [Outer circle/partner], make some moves!"

I'm Noticing

"New exercise! You'll take turns saying things that you're noticing -- it could be a sight, sound, smell, taste, thought, feeling, etc. Keep a good rhythm... 'I'm noticing...' 'I'm noticing...'"

Lead a Movement

"Both people, put up a hand, either hand. Almost touch hands, either side of hand is fine. [Inner circle/post-it people], lead a movement.
...Alright, switch, [outer circle] lead a movement. [inner circle], follow. ...Now, both people follow.
20% lead, 80% follow."

If people are comfortable touching, have them touch wrists (either side) or hands. If they want, they may close their eyes.

Reaction

"Quick game of fast reaction! [Inner circle/post-it people], hands on top, palms down. You'll be trying to get out of the way. [Outer circle/partner], hands on bottom, palms up. Try to touch the top of your partner's hand!"

Tip: the best way to dodge your partner's hand is to put your hands down (rather than to pull your hands up and towards your head).

Karate Chop

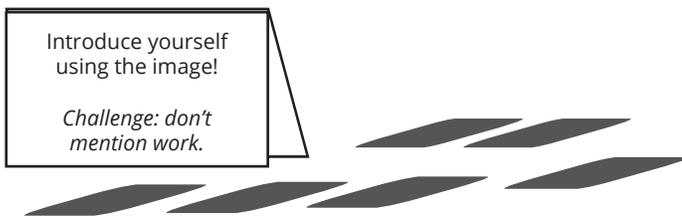
"[Inner circle/post-it people], face away from your partner. [Outer circle/partner], hold out your karate chop hands, and make a little rain storm massage on their back!"

NETWORKING 2.0

Invitation to play: Hosting a larger event with networking, reception, or mingling timeslots? Here's a way to encourage more useful and interesting conversations. Set up the cards on tables with signs instructing people to "introduce yourself using the image." Officially facilitate a few rounds of networking by giving people 2 minutes and a prompt.

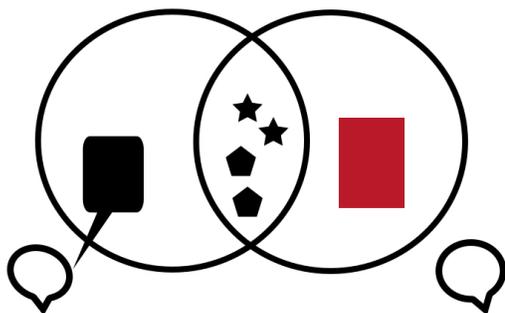
Spaces that encourage conversation:

1. Place the cards on a table by reception, tables around the event, or other location where attendees can easily see them.
2. Have 1-2 signs per location inviting people to use the cards, particularly the images. Using multiple signs with different prompts is fine and allows people a choice. For example: "introduce yourself using the image" "share how the image relates to [today's topic]" and "challenge: don't ask 'what do you do?'"



Note: We find that prompts instructing people to use the image side work better because 1) images are versatile and can relate to a range of topics, 2) images don't force people to talk about a very specific topic, and 3) people who want to ask the question on the card will ask them whether or not there is a sign.

3. You may choose to stop here for your event or move onto the facilitated networking.



Facilitated networking:

1. Before the event, prepare a way for people to check the time -- for example, by projecting a 2 minute timer on your powerpoint slides. This is helpful by not necessary.
2. Get the attention of the attendees.
3. Let them know what to expect with the facilitated networking. *"Let's start by meeting those around us/our peers. Please listen carefully, as there's a lot of us. In a moment, you'll find someone you don't yet know, and use your image card to introduce yourself. I'll put up a timer for 2 minutes and give a 1 min warning. If you don't have a card, please raise your hand. Alright, find someone you don't yet know!"*

2:00

4. Give a 1 minute warning.
5. At the end of 2 minutes, you may choose to run this activity X more times: "Let's do this twice more. Find someone else you don't yet know and introduce yourself using the image."

Prompt variations:

You can use various prompts to facilitate the 2-minute networking!

For example, you may give the **non-work challenge**: "Introduce yourself using the image... Challenge: don't talk about work" or "Challenge: start by talking about anything besides work."

Or, you might start getting attendees to **connect with the topic**. "Share how the image on your card reminds you of [today's topic]" or "How is your image a metaphor or analogy for [today's topic]?"