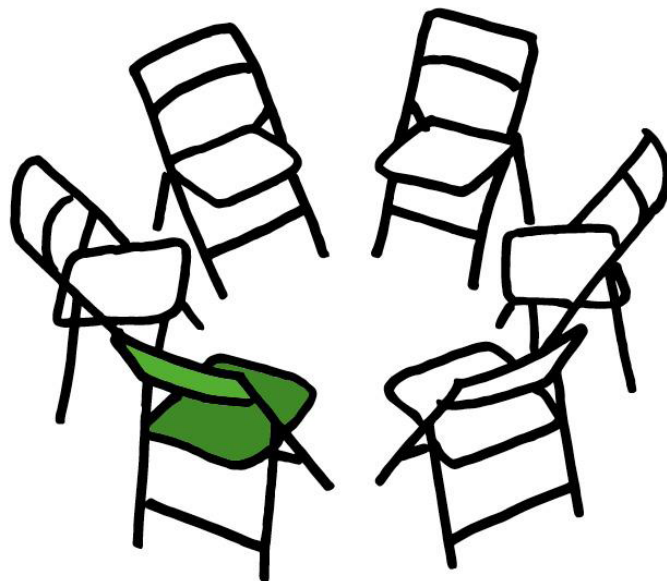


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# Live Before You Die

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*Anne Grove & Bjørn-Morten Gundersen*  
*Fastaval 2023*



Help needs a push and only works for those who are willing. A group of ordinary people meet to help each other and try to accept the cards they've been dealt instead of the life they dreamt of. Each of you - in your own way - struggle with grief and loss.

Special thanks to: Ditte Kröner, Mathias Gormsen Hansen, Thomas Dyrby Ørkilde, Pernille Pommergaard, Tore Vange Pedersen Theodore Damien Sommer Trankjær and Bruno Munk Kristensen.

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# Live Before You Die

*Nobody is truly alone. Put words to your chaos and make your own change. This is called self-help.*

*Welcome to the self-help group "A way through". At every meeting you will take turns telling about your experiences and thoughts about the Topic of the Day. A group leader will guide you through the process and together we will work our way through the impressions. We meet every second week and will maintain confidentiality. Participation is free.*

"Live Before You Die" is a scenario about understanding fate's injustice, putting oneself in others' shoes and finding a way through distress. The focus of the scenario is the characters' confrontation with themselves, where they become vulnerable, process their loss and help each other grow. This is a feel better-scenario that doesn't need a happy ending.

The scenario is a narrative semi-live where the self-help group's meetings are the primary framework. Mechanics are used to support and further reflections, and between meetings the characters' relations will develop and crisscross. You will have the opportunity to influence the direction of your role, create twists and/or shoot yourself in the foot.

Dear game master,

Thank you for choosing to run our scenario *Live Before You Die*. As the title tries to communicate (maybe a little too aggressively), the essence of the scenario is for the characters to *perhaps* realise that life is tough, but that you have to make the most of it. And when we say “perhaps” it covers the fact that it is not necessary for all the characters to achieve this opinion. It’s a “feel better”-scenario, not a “feel good”.

The scenario is designed to ask questions about life, and the scenario has been created for dramatic and intense scenes – but also created with the split-purpose of entertaining the player and prompting a bit of reflection.

We hope that you – together with the players – will explore and examine our scenario with curiosity, and who knows, perhaps the players and/or you leave the scenario a little bit wiser. Maybe you leave with just an experience and that is okay as well.

Roleplay can be many things, but first and foremost it is a game, so remember that this scenario is in no way created as therapy or to give final answers. It is created for you to play, and we have with this scenario built the frame-work for a couple of entertaining hours.

Without you, the play-director, this would just be a compendium of words.

Kindest regards,  
Anne Grove and Bjørn-Morten Gundersen

PS. We have recorded all characters and the texts that will be read during running this scenario, should you be uncomfortable reading them aloud yourself. You will find QR codes on the respective pages - they link directly to an audio file on Alexandria. We have gathered the recordings of all characters in one file. You’ll find it here:



## Overview of the characters

There are 6 characters in total. In-game they don't know each other when coming to the meeting; exactly the same terms as real life's self-help groups. Some of the people may even know about the term "self-help" and others don't. All arrive with the intent to move on in their lives because something isn't as it should be.

The 6 characters:

**You who lost your career (1):** The loss of community and career because of a skiing accident – and you know no one who understands your pain. Basically, you don't want to be part of any other communities. You had everything exactly as you wanted it, and you lost it. *Coping mechanisms: Evasion.*

**You who walk a path not chosen (2):** You cannot keep up and you are about to lose what you have. You cannot talk to anyone about it, and you lack the motivation to continue your sport. You will never be a gold-medal-winner again. *Coping mechanisms: Anger and Escapism.*

**You who got left behind (3):** Uncertainty about the future – you had it all, and you lost it because others meddled in your affairs. *Coping mechanisms: Distancing and Blaming others.*

**You who have always been an outsider (4):** You are easy to exclude. People don't include you because you are too much yourself. If you are to have close relations you need to be less yourself. You are not good enough as you are. *Coping mechanisms: Perspective shifting.*

**You who live cautiously (5):** You regret not being braver because it means you are a coward –additionally, you won't get the time back you wasted. You were sensible and missed out on life. *Coping mechanisms: Deception.*

**You who chose wrong (6):** You have gotten wiser, and you have realised you chose wrong. It can't be undone, so you have to learn to live with your mistake. There is nothing to do but be angry with yourself because of your own stupidity. *Coping mechanisms: Daydreaming and Absolutes.*

The characters are designed in pairs to make sure that their themes are directly and indirectly coupled, so they can help each other reflect and gain perspective. However, the characters are not dependent on each other to further their story and for this reason it's not something the players know of. If a player chooses to not engage, it is your responsibility as the game master to reflect with them, if they need it.

The couplings are:

- *You who lost your career (1) & You who walk a path not chosen (2)*
- *You who got left behind (3) & You who has always been an outsider (4)*
- *You who live cautiously (5) & You who chose wrong (6)*

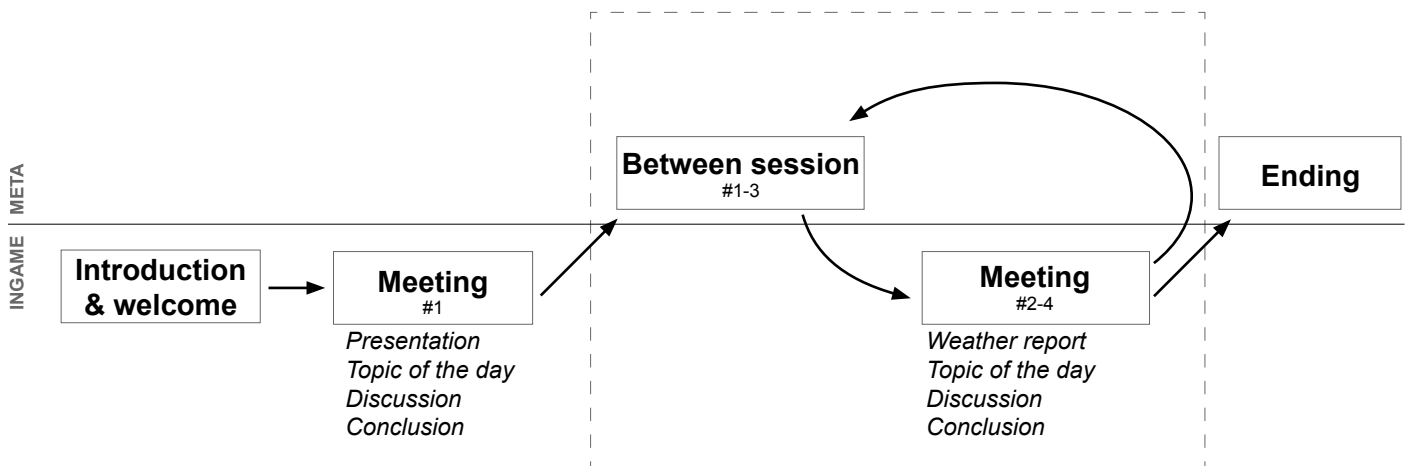
Each character has a title that highlights their grief or loss. The character consists of an introduction, a background, the core of your grief or loss, and 3 coping mechanisms. After the players have read their characters, they choose a name for themselves and answer two questions that relate to their character's issues and their state of mind.

The characters have a QR-code which leads to the scenario's page on Alexandria. Here they will find – among other things – a recording of the character, if they need it read aloud. Remember to inform the players of this before they get their characters.

## Overview of scenes

The scenario alternates between In-game scenes at a meeting in the self-help group, and Between sessions where the players are off-game. This is where they find out what happened between meetings in the group, so the characters have more to play on in the next In-game scene. This is also done to make the narrative stretch over weeks and mimic the real world.

After 4 In-game scenes the game reaches The End, where the players put words to what their characters have learned in the self-help group and where their story goes from here. The last thing that happens, is “The End Text” being read aloud by the Game Master OR read aloud through digital means (A link for the audio file can be found in Additional material). After that the scenario is over.



*Weather report* = The group leader starts a quick round where the characters can tell how they are feeling, what is on their minds at the moment and what has happened since the last meeting.

*Topic of the Day* = Each meeting has its own topic which is the framework for the discussion.

*Discussion* = In this part of the meeting the group leader can pair the participants two-by-two and those two are to discuss with each other, before everyone meets for a group discussion about the topic. Alternatively, the group leader can skip the use of two-by-two and start the group discussion immediately.

*Conclusion* = The group leader takes charge and finishes the meeting by summing up what has been talked about today and what the topic was. The group leader makes everyone say: “Thanks for today”. Preferably all at once.

### Special: “Between sessions”

When a meeting (the In-game scene) ends, everyone takes a metaphoric step back from their character to answer some quick questions.

These questions are episodes from daily life between meetings and can be used to build a personal narrative for the character and to build relations between the characters. The players opt in by raising their hand and making sure that everyone sees their character

is involved in that particular episode, and if the question needs calibration or a longer answer than “yes, I would like my character to join that episode”, then that is resolved before moving on to the next question.

This is meant to be quick, as the goal is to define episodes to further the play and storytelling between characters during the meetings. If no players opt in on a question, the Game Master is free to suggest two characters whom this episode might benefit – but a no thank you should be respected. The players, and only them, define their characters.

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## Scenario

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## Roleplaying vs. Reality

This scenario differs from reality's self-help groups in 2 crucial ways.

### Drama

Where the energy of a real-life self-help group will not be to provoke conflict and drama, the characters of *Live Before You Die* have been designed specifically to give as well as take from each other, and thereby create friction and conflict. It is intended for drama to arise during the scenario.

Roleplayers will naturally increase the level of drama, so it is important that you keep an eye on the balance of the drama, and help the players do so, should it be needed. We have trust in your ability to sense and control it accordingly.

It is okay for a situation to get hairy. It is okay for ugly sentences to be uttered or the characters to be nasty to each other, but the scenes are not meant to cross-over into a big confrontation with a lot of yelling at each other. If this happens, it needs immediate de-escalation.

It is important that before the game starts, you make it clear to the players that if drama occurs, the situation is free to be explored, but also that calmness should be found relatively fast after that. As the Game Master you have a simple Escalation Technique, where you as the group leader can direct the drama and escalate and de-escalate the intensity. (See *Tools*).

### Themes

In a typical self-help group all participants have similar problems. E.g. *Divorce* or *Relatives of a Terminally Ill*. In this scenario, we have chosen that the self-help group "*A Way Through*" revolves around Grief and Loss, but the characters have various problems, so as to have different stories presented. This requires that you – you the Game Master and the players – together, explore and relate their issues and stories to each other. As opposed to solely focusing inwardly. If the players are struggling, it is your task to help them find correlations and similarities between the characters' themes and problems.

You will find a full overview of the characters including themes as a print-out in additional materials.

### Cultural background: How self-help is understood in a Danish context

Self-help started with Alcoholics Anonymous in the 1930s in the USA, which in its original form was rule-constricted and ritualised. The norms of Danish self-help groups are built upon this, but are also influenced by patients associations and social movements, and therefore are more loose and flexible in its form. *Live Before You Die* uses a very simplified ritualised structure for the meetings and is meant to be recognizable and easy-to-use.

To make the scenario reflect the Danish self-help culture, it is important for the ritualised elements to only be where it is mentioned. E.g. "Thanks for today" said in a chorus.

## Your role as the Game Master

It is you who controls and leads the scenario's progression and breaks. It is you who helps the players if they come to a dead end. You have the responsibility to set the frame for your players, both physically and mentally, and thereby it is also you who sets the tone of the scenario. The scenario needs a serious tone, and if you are serious the players will be as well. If you are humorous and silly the players will copy that, be cautious about this.

Your influence in supporting the feel of the scenario is big but that having been said, we know you will make it awesome and worthwhile. Keep it serious and enjoy it.

## The group leader (*In-game*)

When you are in-game you will be referred to as The group leader. You present to the group as a facilitator. You do not have your own issues to talk about and you do not have a conflict to resolve – but you are in-game and the characters can interact with you directly.

As the group leader your task is to steer the self-help group through the tasks and topics of the meeting, and to help further the characters' reflections and perspectives.

"When you say ..., do you really mean ..?" could be a sentence you use to give a statement another perspective; maybe even intentionally misunderstanding and completely flipping the statement to provoke discussion or drama. This could also give an idea of how the group leader *may* sound like. You can also find these inspirational sentences as a printout in *Additional materials*.

- "So, what I hear you say is ..."
- "Am I to understand it like ...?"
- "When you say ..., do you really mean ...?"
- "I see. That is very human and something all of us know about – right?" (Look around on the other people in the group)
- "Oh, oh? I can see this gets to you. Tell us more." (Forcefully escalate the feelings of a character.)
- "There, there. We are all friends here. Your emotions are not meant to be taken out on us." (Forcefully de-escalate the feelings of a character.)
- "You need to remember that we are no longer alone with our problems. We have each other's backs."
- "Ah, but is that so bad? What do we think?" (Ask the others in the group about their opinions on the said statement.)
- "Mm-hmm. That's tough."

## Tone and balance

*Live Before You Die* is a realistic scenario. The goal is human depictions of everyday problems. It can be tempting to be very caricatured in one's portrayal of a character, but it is important to keep a serious tone. Of course, sometimes we humans use laughter to handle our flaws and shortcomings – this is very real – and during the scenario this will likely occur and must be allowed. But caricature and one-dimensional portrayal should be avoided. If you find the players need help with inspiration or perspective, make use of the tool *The Mirror* (See *Tools*.)

We experienced during the playtests that instructions that focus on realistic elements are most effective. It became apparent that it is best not to use the word "humour" and

“humorous” when you introduce the players to the game because unnecessary attention on these words made it easier for the players to unwillingly use humour as an element.

It is your responsibility as the Game Master to make this apparent and to direct the game away from unnecessary humoristic elements.

A way to direct this, is to use the Tools to guide the players' focus. Especially the tool “There, there” worked to minimise the humoristic elements.

## Character distribution

The game can be run with 4 or 6 players, and does not work with 5, because the group leader cannot be part of two-by-twos.

If the game is run with 4 players, you need to remove Characters 1 and 6 (*You who lost your career* (1) and *You who chose wrong* (6)). With 4 players the couplings are (2)+(5) and (3)+(4). We have gathered this information on a single sheet called *Character overview* which you will find in *Additional material*.

If you sense that two players have a good dynamic it could be an idea to give them characters that are coupled. But check in with the players first.

Go over all characters before anyone chooses, as shy or introverted players can miss out on the opportunity of a character they want to play, only because someone else was faster and more vocal.

## Tools

There are 4 tools that you actively can use to guide and steer the game.

### Conflict: Escalation and De-escalation

1) “Oh, oh?” - Escalation

The group leader can choose to make a character become more annoyed/angry about something they are talking about, by interrupting with the comment: “Oh, oh?” and lean towards the person in question.

2) “There, there” – De-escalation

The group leader can prompt a character to be more calm by saying the words: “There, there.” This is a hint to the character, who is riled up, to calm down a bit. If more calm is needed, say “There, there” again.

## The Paper

A character is given a piece of A4 paper by the group leader, and is told to rip it in as many pieces as needed. While the character rips the paper to pieces, the character puts words to their frustration (e.g. about their issue or another participant in the group. Or even the frustration directed towards the group leader.)

The one ripping the paper apart can do it slowly to really show their anger/frustration. Or they can rip it apart with strength and speed, to underline a more explosive anger.

When they are done, all the pieces are thrown into the middle of the circle.

*When and how to use this tool:*

- 1) Right after a “The Mirror” session (see the next tool) the character is given a piece of paper by the group leader, and told to put words to what they have on their mind. Maybe something has changed.  
When they rip the piece of paper apart all words spoken are part of the game, and not meta.
- 2) (Silent use) During a group discussion a character can ask for a piece of paper. This is used to physically show and underline to others that something is brewing in the character and can be poked at. Maybe the discussion is really uncomfortable? When the character rips apart the paper, they are not allowed to say a word. When they are done, they throw the pieces in the middle of the circle.

*Important:*

*Ripped pieces of paper are NOT cleaned up between meetings.*

*The more mess, the more emotions and doubts have been worked through.*

## The Mirror

A character is given a mirror by the group leader and asked to put words to their inner thoughts. These need to be the character’s worries, doubts, fears etc., and each time a character makes a statement to the mirror, it is the other players’ job to contradict them. Practise this tool before the game starts, so it progresses naturally once you are in-game.

*Important:*

- 1) *Everything that happens when the character speaks to their mirror-image are internal thoughts and reflections, and therefore not something spoken out loud in-game. The answers from the other players are also inner thoughts and reflections in the mirror-holding character (and therefore also meta).*
- 2) *All answers to the mirror-holding character need to be opposite to the worry.*

Examples:

Mirror-holding character: “I loathe that I cannot do my sport anymore.”

Answer: “You should be happy that you can still do other things.”

Mirror-holding character: “I finally feel happy again!”

Answer: “You have no reason to be happy. You lost your dream!”

## Between sessions

When a meeting is over, you, the Game Master, manage a round of questions. Here the focus is building relations between meetings.

This is where the players can opt in (by raising their hand) on what could be awesome for their character to experience. These are scenes that give the characters relationships, drama and stories/episodes to act upon, to influence their individual narrative.

Again, it is opt-in, which means if NO ONE opts in, you just move along to the next question. If a question creates interest, but they need a little time to think it over, give them time.

*These Between sessions are meant to be quick – but – it is not meant to be rushed through.*

## Progression of Scenes

### Meeting #1

Welcome by the group leader to "A Way Through". The Introduction is read aloud.

Presentation of yourself

Topic of the day: **How do you feel about something new?**

DISCUSSION

CONCLUSION

Chorus: "Thanks for today"

Between session #1

*Opportunities for budding relations*

### ***What has happened in between meetings?***

1. Has anyone friend-requested each other on Facebook?
2. Has anyone bumped into each other on the street?
3. Who has had an argument with a friend? (Only 1 player)
4. Has anyone written an angry email to their employer/boss?
5. Who has had an argument with their parent(s)?
6. Has anyone been writing back and forth online? Talk to each other and agree on what you have been communicating about.
7. You met by happenstance at a fitness centre. Who met each other?
8. There has been an opening of an exhibit at "Gallery Look". Who is interested in arts and could have bumped into each other here?
9. Two of you had a disagreement before you left the meeting. Who and what did you disagree on?
10. Has anyone used their time on engaging and "winning" online discussions about equality on Facebook?

Meeting #2

*During this meeting the tools “**The Mirror**” and “**The Paper**” must be used.  
Preferably 50% of the players must use them.*

Introducing the concept of Weather Report

Topic of the Day: **Expectations**

DISCUSSION

CONCLUSION

Chorus: “Thanks for today.”

Between sessions #2  
*Deepen the relations*

***What has happened between meetings?***

1. Has anyone actually become more than Facebook-friends?
2. One of you feels like the self-help group isn't really working for you. Who and why?
3. Has anyone met for a cup of something at a cafe? Why did you meet?
4. Who among you had a really bad experience in the Mall when you went shopping? What happened?
5. Your friends had a party but didn't invite you. You chose to write to one from the group to vent. Who got left behind by their “friends” and who did you write to?
6. You really like going to IKEA and you bumped into one from the group. When you said your goodbyes you said something really stupid. What was it?
7. Gallery Look had a cocktail night and an evening dedicated to Van Gogh. Did some of you go? Alone? Together as a pair? As a group?
8. A night on the town. Two of you have enjoyed an evening of partying together downtown, and you really overdid it. Who was it? Did it strengthen or worsen your relation?
9. One of you is moving to a new place. Who is it and why? Did you get help to move from someone in the group?
10. Two or more of you leave the meeting together, out onto the parking area/to the bus stop. What are you talking about?

If needed, take a short break.

Meeting #3

*The rest of the players must use the tools “The Mirror” or “The Paper”.*

WEATHER REPORT

TOPIC OF THE DAY: **Control and loss of control**

DISCUSSION

CONCLUSION

Between-Session #3

*Deepen the relations*

***What has happened between meetings?***

1. One had a problem that needed solving. What was the problem and who from the group helped to solve it?
2. One of you almost arrives late for the next meeting. You are obviously annoyed when you arrive. Why?
3. One of you invites two from the group for a movie night. Who invited people? Who got invited? Why did the others not receive an invitation?
4. You are sad about something another character said during the last meeting, and it really hit you when you got home. You have decided to confront that person at the next meeting.
5. You have gotten a huge electricity bill and your budget is under duress because of it. Have you told anyone in the group? If yes, who?
6. A night on the town. Two of you have enjoyed an evening of partying together downtown, and you really overdid it. Who was it? Did you become better or worse friends?
7. During the last meeting you said something that you think may have been too harshly phrased. You really want to talk about it during the next meeting's discussion phase – whether you are too harsh in your statements. Have you discussed this concern with someone from the group? If yes; who?
8. You think one from the group is a jerk. You know you are all supposed to be equals but this person just has the wrong opinions, and you are going to tell that person that at the next meeting.
9. The group leader has invited all of you out for a bit of bowling. Who showed up? Was it a nice day?
10. You sent an SMS to someone from the group, but haven't received an answer. Who did you text? What did you text?

Meeting #4 (Last round)

WEATHER REPORT

TOPIC OF THE DAY: **Forgiveness**

DISCUSSION

CONCLUSION

The End

*The players remain seated.*

- Tell us what your character has learned from the self-help group and shortly outline what the future looks like for them.
  - Read aloud The End Text  
(either from text or use the audio-file)



## You who lost your career

You are a person who found your life's passion in your sport early on. With help, support and maybe a few too many expectations from your parents. You are young and have finished high school at a sports college. It took you four years to get your diploma, because there needed to be enough time for your sport - you thrived and had fun. You were blissfully content and thoroughly enjoyed your fellow teammates. The community was intoxicating.

You were the centre of this community, because not only were you a prodigy in your field, but you were likeable and kept the team spirit high. You have always been able to feel how others are and what they need – but you have never been good at understanding what *you* need.

### Background

Your sport has always been your main priority; your honour and your pride. You were really good, and you trained many times a week. You enjoyed it. Not only did it make you break a sweat, but you achieved something new every day. You became stronger with each day – and it made you dream of your future. Your sport was your happiness and a big part of your identity.

That's why The Accident hurt twice as much. One week skiing, three weeks in the hospital, two operations and now you can't endure "enjoying" your sport for an hour without it hurting too much. Damned snowboards!

*It's been four years since the accident*, and in the beginning, you received professional help because the wise doctors foresaw a crisis. And it went as they foresaw. You broke and you took out all your anger on the world around you, but you got through it. You were as angry as you had ever been, and your injury was no one's and everyone's fault – but you hated yourself most of all, because you went on that trip. Your sport requires functionality in both knees – damn it all – you should have been wiser! Everyone – or at least the majority – of athletes who have ruined their career, has done so skiing.

But you thought you knew better back then. How bad could it go? You needed to remember to live a little and you needed to enjoy life like people your own age. You shouldn't only socialise during your sport – but you should have known better.

You are still angry at the world, and those who try to tell you that you "can still do so many other things" or "nothing is as bad as it seems" have obviously not lost their dreams. Jerks who think they understand you. Damned hobby sports people. They have NO IDEA what it means to put all your eggs in one basket. You were brave. You were rocking it! You were good – and you will never get that back.

... Yes, your social circle was your teammates. And the sport continued for them. Their careers continued and because yours couldn't, they slipped away from you.

It's been four years now, but it feels like a lot more. You are in need of a community that understands you and therefore your parents suggested this self-help group, "A Way Through", which should be really good. You don't know anyone who has been through what you have, but maybe it could be good for you to meet others who might know.

Maybe it would even make you feel seen?

### The core of your grief or loss

The loss of community and career because of a skiing accident – and you know no one who understands your pain. Basically, you don't want to be part of any other communities. You had everything exactly as you wanted it, and you lost it.

## Coping mechanisms - Evasion

### 1. Avoid talking about The Accident

You don't like talking about The Accident. Mainly because you are convinced that you could have prevented it. The sun was low and you didn't see the fallen tree-trunk. You knew that you shouldn't be snowboarding in deep snow, and you actually did reconsider, but it was thrilling. The adrenaline, snow half-way up your shin.

You were certain you would make it. What was the worst thing that could happen?

No. You find it really hard to talk about and often use sentences like: "Anyway, it's hard to explain" or "Can we talk about something else?" just to get away from the subject.

### 2. Changing hobbies

You have, since you moved back home to your parents, spent your time on finding new hobbies. It's not the same – far from it – and you change from one hobby to the other continuously. One moment you collect branches to decorate your room, and in the next you play computer games, and shortly after that you use all your energy on procuring an aquarium big enough for four tortoises that you noticed were for sale on Marketplace.

You feel how talking about these hobbies gives you a shred of joy and it keeps your head occupied from thinking about the loss. Use this time in the self-help group to talk about your hobby and why it's so very interesting.

### 3. Talk about someone else

You like talking about others' problems. It gives you a peace of mind and calms you, because it's a way to distance yourself from yourself, and to focus on others. And people like talking about themselves, so in way too many instances it has proven to be an effective technique. Ask questions like: "Oh, oh, tell me more, that sounds interesting/sad" or "And what happened next?" or "How did you feel about that?"

## Answer these questions in your head before going in-game

- What is your name?
- What is your elite sport? It needs to be physical and involve team spirit.
- What feeling rummages in you as you walk through the door to the self-help group for the first time?



This QR-code links directly to the audio file. If the code doesn't work, follow the link below to this scenario's subpage on Alexandria. Here you will find audio files of each character. To listen to your character select the file:

1 You who lost your career

<https://alexandria.dk/en/data?scenarie=13351>

## You who walk the path not chosen

For as long as you can remember, you have always been your parents' "little star". The adjective "little" fell away with time, but you are still your parents' pride, and it is always highlighted during family gatherings how fantastic and amazing you are, and how happy they are for your success – but it doesn't sit with you, because you have never chosen this path for yourself, and you are slowly getting sick and tired of the fact that you can't get out. You can't continue doing something you don't like doing.

There has never been a moment where your time hasn't been managed and regulated, and you know more about scheduling, motivation and priorities than you know what it means to be a child on the playground or "hanging" with your friends... Or generally what it means to have spare time. Your parents are more like secretaries and coaches.

### Background

You only have fleeting relations, and the whole concept of having a childhood friend or a best friend is something you know nothing about. You have never had the time to immerse yourself in getting to know another person well, unless they share your talent.

You are in your early twenties, and your time in high school is long over. You took the longer road to your diploma, just to be sure you had time to practice six times per week, and you often said no thanks to invitations to parties or events – and sometimes, when you really wanted to go, you checked with your parents, but they usually said no.

Your parents have kept eyes on the grand perspective of your life, and it started almost before you can really remember. Your father is a world-renowned star, and when you began to walk in his footsteps it filled you with happiness and pride. One thing lead to another, and when you won the first trophy it was monumental; the next trophy a triumph, but at the third trophy – in your young heart – you could sense it was *expected of you*. Of course, you win. You are a winner. You must be a winner.

During your childhood, you have had many short birthdays, and the calories and the sugar-intake has been monitored. And thank heavens, because if you ate two slices of cake you would get sick, and the scolding that followed because you were not on top of your game would linger in you for days. But this scolding would motivate you to do better, to become better, learn faster and make your parents proud.

The years went by; you have won more prizes than your acquaintances have drunk beers. You have more trophies than any child you know, but your parents have started to change their attitude towards you. What used to be: "This you will learn when you get older" has become: "Goddammit, you should already know this by now!".

It hurts that you can't live up to their expectations and you are starting to see your results have worsened. You are slowly making your way down the ladder, but paradoxically it's not because you're bad. Far from it. You're just not good enough, and being here in this self-help group is already a waste of time. The only reason why you made it to that meeting is because your friend Marjorie – your "colleague" and friend, has made you go. "You must also remember to train and stretch your mind," she has often said.

Your parents do not know you're here, and it must remain that way. And you don't even know if this is going to help, but you remember that one time the team had a round of talking and speaking your minds, where you could open up about your insecurities, and it was *fucking awesome!* It was like that sugary treat you knew you were not allowed. Simply amazing.

## The core of your grief or loss

You cannot keep up and you are about to lose what you have. You cannot talk to anyone about it, and you lack the motivation to continue your sport. You will never be a gold-medal-winner again.

## Coping mechanisms - *Anger* and *Escapism*

### 1. *People are stupid*

What do people even know about being an elite athlete? Maybe they should keep the ball on their side of the playing field and ask questions instead of telling you how you should feel about something, or how you should think.

“What the hell do you know about it?” is a good sentence to counter any “well-intentioned” arrogant comment from people ‘trying to help’.

“Do you have experience with that?” is almost as good. It really shows the people how stupid they are.

### 2. *Training becomes scrolling TikTok*

There are moments where you don't train for as long as your parents would want you to. You go to the gym, sure enough, but after two hours you find yourself sitting down, surfing TikTok on your phone. There are so many small, stupid clips that can make you smile, and it just feels good to get a breather, you know? You get a break from thinking about all the things you are expected to achieve. It feels nice to just be.

“I am having fun. Is that so bad?” is a phrase you use to justify your bad habit.

### 3. *You never chose to become a star!*

You never got to choose if you wanted to invest your time in the sport you do. You ended up doing it, because your father was a star, and you continued because it was expected of you. How can your father be so blind and not realise you are living *his* dream? You have your own life to think about!

You have decided to use the self-help group to complain vigorously about your father's selfish way of being a parent.

## Answer these questions in your head before going in-game:

- What is your name?
- What is your elite sport?
- What feeling rummages in you as you walk through the door to the self-help group for the first time?



This QR-code links directly to the audio file. If the code doesn't work, follow the link below to this scenario's subpage on Alexandria. Here you will find audio files of each character. To listen to your character select the file:

2 You who walk the path not chosen

<https://alexandria.dk/en/data?scenarie=13351>

## You who got left behind

You are a person who has always known what you wanted and who you wanted it with. You *were* a person who acted, you were ambitious, and those were your strengths. You really liked that side of yourself and lucky for you, your partner found those qualities admirable as well. You were together 14 years before your lives went in different directions. Your separation was riddled with fights and it was quite a painful process to move away from each other, but you got through it and so did your ex. That you got through it was the only good thing that happened in a while, and you still have a thousand words you want to vocalise about that part of your life.

Recently you lost your job (not more than 3 months ago). There was no longer a need for you and the company had to let you go to save money. But why did it have to be you they let go?! It's just not fair. You reason that someone had to get fired, but why did it have to be you? You were so certain you actually meant something to the company. Why is bad luck just following you around?

You have gotten 7 months of severance pay, so you have little over half a year to find yourself again – whatever that means. You are who you are, and that person is obviously not good enough for keeping or sharing a life with.

It's been a couple of months since you got fired, but you have started the process of working through the myriads of emotions inside you, and you find that it might not be as easy as you thought. The break-up haunts you and the loss of your work has left you insecure. Who are you now, without your job and your partner? What's your identity?

### Background

You met your ex in a park where you and some of your friends were throwing around a frisbee. You saw them looking your way and planned on boasting and showing off a bit, so you threw the frisbee extra hard and it hovered right over the park's fence, out into the streets and got run over by a truck. Your friends were pretty annoyed by your "presentation", but they quickly pieced together the love puzzle and forgave you instantly. It was apparent that you would be together forever.

Your ex and you used a lot of time on defining and building your lives, but something always irritated you and it was the ever-looming presence of your in-laws. They were always butting in and always against your ideas. A summer cabin? *No, no. Way too expensive.* A dog? *You will be exhausted by a pet.* A new car? *Can you afford a new car?* Nothing was ever good enough – and the mere thought of them makes your anger stir within you. They always wanted to show off they were better and make sure that you two had a handle on things. Just to be sure... Your favourite example is when your ex and you bought a house, you had to explain to them that they weren't allowed to come along for the tour and see the house for the first time. It was to be you and your ex's home, not theirs. The in-laws were very offended and didn't call for two months... It was actually really nice with some peace and quiet.

You started your career by being nobody of importance and easy to ignore. But you got better and more skilled, as you were stubborn and diligent, and the support from your partner helped a great deal – now you are a jobless nobody, single and alone. You live in an apartment and you eat fast food, because why bother? You feel like a loser, so why give a damn? You know, it was fun cooking dinner when you were more than just you. Cooking food for yourself is just a hassle and it seems like a waste of time.

Most nights you sit in front of the TV and disgruntled you yell at the news anchors or incompetent hosts on the silver-screen that a monkey could do their jobs better. YOU could do it better. What a bunch of amateurs this world has come to. What a joke.

You do understand why you are a part of the self-help group, but you keep telling yourself that everything's going to be okay. You've got it all under control, and you wouldn't have come if you hadn't promised your close friends to give this group a chance. But hey, if it doesn't work it's not your fault, okay?

### **The core of your grief or loss**

Uncertainty about the future – you had it all, and you lost it because others meddled in your affairs.

### **Coping mechanisms - *Distancing and Blaming Others***

#### *1. Everything's going to be okay, it just takes time.*

You have a core-conviction that everything is going to sort itself out. Many before you have lost their job and partner and they still got a good life and good careers. Everything's going to be fine – if people just gave you some space.

In the self-help group you are going to use your time to argue that time heals all wounds. Even in darkness there's a light, as the phrase goes. It just doesn't feel like that sometimes.

#### *2. Wishful thinking*

"If only..." is a sentence you use quite often to explain why injustice befell you. If only those nosy in-laws hadn't ruined your relationship. If only your ex had understood that the relationship would get better again. If only things were different!

#### *3. Changing your mind and cancelling*

You often sign up for things or accept offers to socialise and then when the day comes you cancel, because energy is low or you are overwhelmed. And almost instantly you get annoyed at yourself for cancelling, but you had to. It couldn't have been any other way. People have to understand that. There is nothing wrong with you for cancelling. People do that more and more. You're not the only one – and cancelling is actually a way of prioritising your health. That's a good thing! People need to accept this fact.

In the self-help group this will present itself as you accepting an offer of something and bailing on it. "Something came up," is a good excuse... Even though the thing that got in the way was *you*.

### **Answer these questions in your head before going in-game:**

- What is your name?
- What job did you get fired from?
- What feeling rummages in you as you walk through the door to the self-help group for the first time?



This QR-code links directly to the audio file. If the code doesn't work, follow the link below to this scenario's subpage on Alexandria. Here you will find audio files of each character. To listen to your character select the file:

3 You who got left behind

<https://alexandria.dk/en/data?scenarie=13351>

## You who have always been an outsider

You often use your time in big gatherings or get-togethers to observe and guess what made people say or do as they do. Emotions are intriguing but they are complex, because a smile can mean sincere happiness, but also be used to hide pain. It's actually fascinating how much a person can lie to themselves.

You have always kept an eye on people, and it started when you were a child, and never have you used that skill to perceive yourself and look inward, mainly because you're content with who you are. You are an introverted happy person who has found their place in life on the periphery of friendships and social constellations. But lately you've started asking yourself this question: "Is it good enough?"

### Background

You're in your late twenties.

Life has treated you fairly well. Your work is fine and yields the level of socialising you need. Sometimes a bit too much, and if you could choose you would be just fine with a book at home or going for long walks by yourself with noise-cancelling headphones. You enjoy stimulation and sensations, but on your terms, and lately you've realised you say "no thank you" instead of "see you there" to friends' invitations. It has always been this way, but you've also noticed the time between invitations has increased and even family gatherings have become a thing you hear about *after* it happened. "Why weren't you at your cousin's birthday party?" could be a question, and the answer is quite simply; you hadn't heard about it. They had forgotten to invite you.

It's tough being you right now, because life is bustling away at top speed – but you are not part of it. Your friends become parents or get married. Some find new sides of themselves on adventures and trips or become who they feel like they always were trying to be. You want that too, but every time you look in the mirror you see nothing you want to change. Not really at least. There are imperfections to your person, but none grave or cruel. And even though you feel content, there is something you want to change. Something just beneath the surface that keeps rearing its head. A question: "why aren't you enough?" What on earth are you to do? This is so confusing!

You heard about the self-help group "A Way Through" from an acquaintance who used this group to work through their identity crisis and insecurities about their future. Your acquaintance has become radiant and confident, and compared to her you have realised you're a dull, grey wall in a 70s flowery-infested tapestry. You need to be radiant.

Fudge. Why hadn't you seen this before? You're actually boring. There is nothing about you that says 'adventure' or 'surprise'. You have a routine, your daily meals, your known rhythm, and just six months ago you were content and happy with this. Now you have become annoyed by this – but the true fear is: *can* you change it? And if so, HOW?

You thought you were content. You *are* content. Or are you? Gosh, this is so confusing.

### The core of your grief or loss

You are easy to exclude. People don't include you because you are too much yourself. If you are to have close relations you need to be less yourself. You are not good enough as you are.

## Coping mechanisms – *Perspective shifting*

### 1. *Huge gratitude*

You have everything you need so you should stop dreaming about more. It's spoiled that what you have isn't enough. No one can demand more without being greedy, and if there's one thing you aren't that's greedy.

"I am content, really," is something you often say without actually meaning it.

### 2. *Pleaser*

The easiest way to be of value is to help others. So whatever needs fixing or a helping hand, you offer it gladly. Does anyone need a cup of coffee? Maybe a tissue? You'll get it, so others don't have to burden themselves with getting up.

"Let me do it," you often interrupt when someone is going to do something.

### 3. *Doubts - ask questions*

You have used your life to scan and better understand situations and people, but right now you're at a crossroads that just doesn't make sense. There is no correct answer it seems, and you find yourself asking a lot of questions to be sure. Otherwise, perhaps you'll misunderstand what has just been said?

"I understand it like this, is that correct?" is a sentence you use to make sure that you are not ... stupid. Wow, that's an ugly thought.

## Answer these questions in your head before going in-game:

- What is your name?
- What is something you can never make a choice about?
- What feeling rummages in you as you walk through the door to the self-help group for the first time?



This QR-code links directly to the audio file. If the code doesn't work, follow the link below to this scenario's subpage on Alexandria. Here you will find audio files of each character. To listen to your character select the file:

4 You who have always been an outsider

<https://alexandria.dk/en/data?scenarie=13351>



## You who live cautiously

You have always been on top of things, decisions and consequences. It could be that you think things through too much or worry a bit too much, but to you why is not of any concern. The main thing is you have lived 40 years being the smartest person in the room, because you are good at anticipating and understanding what will happen if you do something. You've had a good life up until now, because you've been cautious and weighed your options. That's not a bad thing, is it?

You have never taken a risk. You have made tough decisions and "gambled" with an outcome, but only when both outcomes were in your interests. Risk is something that can – in worst cases – kill you, and risk most commonly ends in debt and discomfort. That's why one has to think things through. Why risk something when it could have been avoided with a bit of common sense, hmm?

### Background

You have spent 40 years on this planet, and you are slowly getting to the point where you are worried and restless, even though you have nothing to worry about – it seems. Your job is good, well-paid, your partner loves you and supports you and your oldest child is enjoying a year at a boarding school. Generally, you are pretty well off.

... But.

You have chosen to attend the self-help group "A Way Through" because things just don't feel right. There is something wrong; you can feel it, but you don't know what. There is a shred of you that yearns and screams for more, something else, and you've heard self-help groups are less dangerous or invasive than psychologists or cognitive therapy. No thank you to the dangerous stuff, so you've decided to dip your toes gently in the Font of Self-help to see if that helps you to some rest. Because this restlessness makes you uneasy, and uneasiness makes you restless and worried, and worry makes you uneasy.

Your partner has started to treat you more roughly, and when you answer her, she takes it as you talking back. You've started fighting a bit, and that doesn't feel good at all. Well, generally your life is good, but it doesn't *feel* good, you know? And if this self-help thing is not working, at least it's a break from home. You can relax there.

Actually, you've tried to step through the door to "A Way Through" quite a few times, but have always changed your mind at the last moment. You've turned around, went to your car and driven home and watched a movie with your partner instead. That seemed like a good fix at that time.

Your work is your salvation right now because you're skilled and it makes you feel good. And you love it when your boss compliments your work. The compliments have gotten rarer and rarer though, so you have taken it upon yourself to ask the questions: "Is this good enough?" or "What do you think about this?" and the answers have never hurt you directly, but your boss's comments used to be: "I really, really like this" and now they are not-so-invested words like: "that looks decent" or "I'm not against it. Have fun with it."

You find yourself at the door to "A Way Through" once more and are about to turn back. You really don't want to go in there, because what if it... what if it uncovers something about you that you don't like? That would mean you were wrong about who you are and what happens then? The thought of change scares you.

## The core of your grief or loss

You regret not being braver because it means you are a coward – additionally, you won't get the time back you wasted. You were sensible and missed out on life.

## Coping mechanisms - *Deception*

### 1. *Afraid of conflict – it must never be your mistake!*

You remember vividly a couple of years ago when your boss scolded you for a disaster that was your fault. You had made the wrong decision – you had been tired after a long night with a sick child. Come on, anyone could see you weren't bringing your A-game, so for your boss to snap at you in such a way was unfair!

You hate the words: "It is your fault."

"Yeah, yeah, it wasn't on purpose," is a sentence you use often to avoid conflict. It seems people get annoyed with you because of it, and that just adds to the discomfort.

### 2. *Lies*

During the last decade you have developed a bad habit of telling half-truths – and during the last year this has turned into full-blown lying, to cover up that you don't feel like a particularly interesting person. Of course, you were at the premier! And you understand this particular topic that you have *no idea* about. You have experience with it; of course you have (no you don't).

But you're not all bad. You hate when you lie and feel ashamed. In the self-help group this will manifest itself as you saying something, then changing what you said a couple of times until it doesn't make sense.

End this lie with "and that's how it is."

### 3. *Stubbornness*

Even when you are in doubt if you are doing a good enough job, if you fake it, people will believe it 95% of the time.

"That's just how it is," is a sentence that can answer most questions and it stops people from asking more or prying into the answer. If that is how it is, then that's all there is to say about something.

"That's how it has always been," is another good sentence to shut someone up.

Use these sentences to make people stop asking you questions in the self-help group.

## Answer these questions in your head before going in-game:

- What is your name?
- Where are you most comfortable?
- What feeling rummages in you as you walk through the door to the self-help group for the first time?



This QR-code links directly to the audio file. If the code doesn't work, follow the link below to this scenario's subpage on Alexandria. Here you will find audio files of each character. To listen to your character select the file:

5 You who live cautiously

<https://alexandria.dk/en/data?scenarie=13351>

## You who chose wrong

You have made a lot of decisions in your life and you know some choices are more important than others. That's why the act of thinking it through is crucial. But you also harbour the conviction that one can think too much. If one thinks too long the answer always ends up negatively – or the opportunity has passed you by.

That's your experience at least because it happened to you while you attended the first year of university. You had an extraordinary chance, but you thought it over too much. The regret burns like cinders in your stomach, and no matter how you think about it, daydream and hope, you will never have an antidote for your regret. You cannot go back in time, you cannot be as smart as you are today in the past, and it's really exhausting and hard for you. It's not okay that some choices in life cannot be changed! It sucks so much, and if there is a divine power, you condemn this entity for having made you so insecure.

### Background

There was this time when you flirted aggressively with a stranger. You were both riddled with wanderlust, this person more than you it seemed, because before the night was over, they had offered you something as mind boggling as a trip around the globe. You only had to show up at Esbjerg Harbour the following Friday, and this trip would be yours.

You hadn't even known each other for 8 hours and you were taken aback by this. You two were flirting, yes, but you didn't know this person at all, so you respectfully declined. Weeks and months at sea with a stranger, even though the person was handsome and sexy in your opinion, the thought of travelling around the globe with a stranger wasn't *that* compelling. Imagine if you got sick of each other in the middle of the ocean? No thanks. That would have been awful!

But on the other hand, you two were flirting and enjoyed each other's company. You would have gotten to know them quite well in that time. The adventure would have been the centre of many a talk, and even if you had ended up going your separate ways, you would have been a wonderful experience richer.

No, wait, stop. It doesn't help you to think that way.

You chose to finish the first year of university. Then you took half a sabbatical year. Your partner from that first year of university is still your life partner, and since then you have gotten married. It's four years since your wedding, and your thoughts are starting to have their own life it seems. They return more fiercely and more violently, and they all beckon you to answer the same question; the only question: *did you choose wrong?*

Where would your life have taken you, if you had gone with that flirt on an adventure? Would you two even be together today? Probably not and that is also a scary thought. You like who you are today, but by everything that's holy, you would give almost anything to have experienced that trip.

Your life today consists of everyday tasks, work from 7.30 a.m. to 4 p.m. You get up, go through your tried routine, dinner, bedtime, sleep. Sometimes you can sneak in half an episode of your favourite series, or maybe read a little.

Or... You used to read. There is no time for that either now. Generally, you find that you do not have the time for everything, and you have realised that you certainly don't have time for a trip around the world as your life is today. That thought is unbearable, because it's a result of the choices you made along the way.

It would be so lovely if you could go back and choose differently. Your life right now is not that glamorous! It's just more of the same, day after day. Come on! Something needs to happen! You need to feel you're alive!

## The core of your grief or loss

You have gotten wiser, and you have realised you chose wrong. It can't be undone, so you have to learn to live with your mistake. There is nothing to do but be angry with yourself because of your own stupidity.

## Coping mechanisms - *Daydreaming* and *Absolutes*

### 1. *"I would have loved to ..."*

You use this sentence very often. You would have loved to have more time. You would have loved to be invited by friends to attend things, would have loved to rip out a year from your calendar and just travel. You would have loved it if you could go back and change your decision.

### 2. *The role as a mentor*

You are a quite reasonable and understanding individual. People ought to listen to you. You listen to the others in the group and propose solutions to their problems. You know what you are talking about, so your solutions are actually really good.

"You just need to..." is a sentence you use often to underline that you actually know what you are talking about.

### 3. *People need to stop whining!*

The more you think about life only going one way and that's forward, the angrier you get. Nothing can be undone. Everything you do has a consequence.

Nonsense. There is nothing that cannot be undone. Have you chosen the wrong partner? Leave them. You don't like your education? Change it. Stop whining and do something about it instead!

## Answer these questions in your head before going in-game:

- What is your name?
- What specific thought has occupied your mind recently?
- What feeling rummages in you as you walk through the door to the self-help group for the first time?



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6 You who chose wrong

<https://alexandria.dk/en/data?scenarie=13351>

## Preparations on the day

### The Room

Any room that comfortably can fit 7 chairs in a circle with a table to one side. A classroom or any other room with a community centre, communal or anonymous feeling to it is ideal. If there is furniture in the room, move it to the side.

On the door to the room you place the paper with the logo and the text "A Way Through". 7 chairs are placed in the middle, one for the group leader and one for each of the 4-6 characters. Not too close together so it gets cramped, and not too far from each other so you lose the feeling of a group circle.

To one side place a small table with a jug of water, paper/plastic cups and tea/instant coffee. Somewhere in the room – maybe on this table – you place blank paper, a marker and blank name tags. These items are meant to be visible and easily accessible.

### Preparations - listed

- Sign for the door printed + tape
- Chairs in a circle
- A mirror
- Community centre feel:
  - Thermos with hot water
  - Instant Coffee
  - Tea bags
  - Single use cups (preferably in a recycled materials)
- Nametags
- Something to write with
- A4 paper, blank
- Characters printed
- Introduction Text + The End Text
- Cheat sheet printed
- Audio equipment if you want to use the audio files

### Checklist: Ready to begin?

You are almost ready to start playing.

Before you all start, we recommend you – the Game Master – to go through this checklist to double check if you remembered it all.

- Prepared the room
- Introduced the scenario to the players
- Explained the structure of the meetings
- Explained the 4 tools in the game
  - Conflict management
    - "Oh, oh?" – Escalation
    - "There, there" – De-escalation
  - The Paper
  - The Mirror
  - Between sessions
- Distribution of characters (informed about QR-codes and audio files)
- Come up with a name for the group leader
- Write on the name tag and put it on

## Inspiration for what to say as a group leader

“So, what I hear you say is ...”

“Am I to understand it like ...?”

“When you say ..., do you really mean ...?”

“I see. That is very human and something all of us know about – right?” (Look around on the other people in the group)

“Oh, oh? I can see this gets to you. Tell us more.” (Forcefully escalate the feelings of a character.)

“There, there. We are all friends here. Your emotions are not meant to be taken out on us.” (Forcefully de-escalate the feelings of a character.)

“You need to remember that we are no longer alone with our problems. We have each other’s backs.”

“Ah, but is that so bad? What do we think?” (Ask the others in the group about their opinions on the said statement.)

“Mm-hmm. That’s tough.”

# A Way Through







## Introduction

*Bid them welcome and read these rules aloud.*

### Rules for “A Way Through”

- Everyone in this group are equals. You are the experts of your own lives and therefore well-suited to find solutions to your own problems.
- This group functions because of mutual respect. You receive help while you try to help others. The more you give, the more you receive.
- Self-help can only happen if you truly want to change.
- Self-help is *NOT* therapy or treatment by a professional.
- Remember that we are all bound by confidentiality in all aspects that are personal and private. That means we do not share others' stories outside this group.
- In the group we share contact information, but those are not distributed to others outside the group.
- Last but not least, what needs to be said is said to the group.



This QR-code links directly to the audio file. If the code doesn't work, follow the link below to this scenario's subpage on Alexandria. To listen to this document select the file:

Introduction

<https://alexandria.dk/en/data?scenarie=13351>

## How to end the game – *MUST BE PRINTED*

*Read aloud this text as the last thing of the scenario.*

And hereby the meetings of “A Way Through” came to a close. The group leader had closed the door behind the participants one last time and was picking up the ripped pieces of paper from the floor.

The participants had gotten to know each other over the last couple of weeks, but most importantly, they had each gotten to know themselves better. The mirror stood a bit lonely in the middle of the room and looked at the group leader; the group leader smiled to themselves.

There was something reassuring in knowing that even though grief and loss could have such a strong consequence on one’s inner and outer world, there was always a way through – and always another day tomorrow.

“Live before you die,” the group leader whispered to themselves and stored away everything for next week, where another self-help group would begin.



This QR-code links directly to the audio file. If the code doesn't work, follow the link below to this scenario's subpage on Alexandria. To listen to this document select the file:

End text

<https://alexandria.dk/en/data?scenarie=13351>

## Character overview - cheat sheet

Couplin: 4 players  
Couplin: 6 players

Character	Core	Coping mechanism	Themes
<b>1 You who lost your career</b>	The loss of community and career because of a skiing accident – and you know no one who understands your pain. Basically, you don't want to be part of any other communities. You had everything exactly as you wanted it, and you lost it.	<i>Evasion</i>	Friendship Dreams (broken) Purpose Regret Loneliness
<b>2 You who walk a path not chosen</b>	You cannot keep up and you are about to lose what you have. You cannot talk to anyone about it, and you lack the motivation to continue your sport. You will never be a gold-medal-winner again.	<i>Anger and Escapism</i>	Dreams Let down by parents Loss of control Control Purpose (or lack there of)
<b>3 You who got left behind</b>	Uncertainty about the future – you had it all, and you lost it because others meddled in your affairs.	<i>Distancing and Blaming others</i>	Dreams (broken) Blame Identity Pride Shame
<b>4 You who have always been an outsider</b>	You are easy to exclude. People don't include you because you are too much yourself. If you are to have close relations you need to be less yourself. You are not good enough as you are.	<i>Perspective shifting</i>	Contentment Identity Friendship Self worth
<b>5 You who live cautiously</b>	You regret not being braver because it means you are a coward –additionally, you won't get the time back you wasted. You were sensible and missed out on life.	<i>Deception</i>	Security Courage Pride Regret Self deiept
<b>6 You who chose wrong</b>	You have gotten wiser, and you have realised you chose wrong. It can't be undone, so you have to learn to live with your mistake. There is nothing to do but be angry with yourself because of your own stupidity.	<i>Day-dreaming and Absolutes</i>	Doubt Pride Shame Regret Security

## Progression of scenes - cheat sheet



Meeting #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome</li> <li>• Introduction is read aloud/played</li> <li>• Presentation</li> <li>• Topic of the day: <b>How do you feel about something new?</b></li> <li>• Discussion</li> <li>• Conclusion</li> <li>• Chorus</li> </ul>
Between session #1	<i>Opportunities for budding relations</i>
Meeting #2	<p><i>During this meeting the tools <b>The Mirror</b> and <b>The Paper</b> must be used. Preferably 50% of the players must use them.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of Weather report</li> <li>• Topic of the day: <b>Expectations</b></li> <li>• Discussion</li> <li>• Conclusion</li> <li>• Chorus</li> </ul>
Between session #2	<i>Deepen the relations</i>
If needed, take a short break.	
Meeting #3	<p><i>The rest of the players must use the tools <b>The Mirror</b> or <b>The Paper</b>.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weather report</li> <li>• Topic of the day: <b>Control and loss of control</b></li> <li>• Discussion</li> <li>• Conclusion</li> <li>• Chorus</li> </ul>
Between session #3	<i>Deepen the relations</i>
Meeting #4 (last round)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weather report</li> <li>• Topic of the day: <b>Control and loss of control</b></li> <li>• Discussion</li> <li>• Conclusion</li> <li>• Chorus</li> </ul>
The End	<p><i>The players remain seated.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell us what your character has learned from the self-help-group and shortly outline what the future looks like for them.</li> <li>• The End Text is read aloud/played</li> </ul>



## Between session #1

### *Opportunities for budding relations*

#### **What has happened in between meetings?**

1. Has anyone friend-requested each other on Facebook?
2. Has anyone bumped into each other on the street?
3. Who has had an argument with a friend? (Only 1 player)
4. Has anyone written an angry email to their employer/boss?
5. Who has had an argument with their parent(s)?
6. Has anyone been writing back and forth online? Talk to each other and agree on what you have been communicating about.
7. You met by happenstance at a fitness centre. Who met each other?
8. There has been an opening of an exhibit at "Gallery Look". Who is interested in arts and could have bumped into each other here?
9. Two of you had a disagreement before you left the meeting. Who and what did you disagree on?
10. Has anyone used their time on engaging and "winning" online discussions about equality on Facebook?



## Between session #2

### *Deepen the relations*

#### **What has happened between meetings?**

1. Has anyone actually become more than Facebook-friends?
2. One of you feels like the self-help group isn't really working for you. Who and why?
3. Has anyone met for a cup of something at a cafe? Why did you meet?
4. Who among you had a really bad experience in the Mall when you went shopping? What happened?
5. Your friends had a party but didn't invite you. You chose to write to one from the group to vent. Who got left behind by their "friends" and who did you write to?
6. You really like going to IKEA and you bumped into one from the group. When you said your goodbyes you said something really stupid. What was it?
7. Gallery Look had a cocktail night and an evening dedicated to Van Gogh. Did some of you go? Alone? Together as a pair? As a group?
8. A night on the town. Two of you have enjoyed an evening of partying together downtown, and you really overdid it. Who was it? Did it strengthen or worsen your relation?
9. One of you is moving to a new place. Who is it and why? Did you get help to move from someone in the group?
10. Two or more of you leave the meeting together, out onto the parking area/to the bus stop. What are you talking about?



## Between session #3

### *Deepen the relations*

#### **What has happened between meetings?**

1. One had a problem that needed solving. What was the problem and who from the group helped to solve it?
2. One of you almost arrives late for the next meeting. You are obviously annoyed when you arrive. Why?
3. One of you invites two from the group for a movie night. Who invited people? Who got invited? Why did the others not receive an invitation?
4. You are sad about something another character said during the last meeting, and it really hit you when you got home. You have decided to confront that person at the next meeting.
5. You have gotten a huge electricity bill and your budget is under duress because of it. Have you told anyone in the group? If yes, who?
6. A night on the town. Two of you have enjoyed an evening of partying together downtown, and you really overdid it. Who was it? Did you become better or worse friends?
7. During the last meeting you said something that you think may have been too harshly phrased. You really want to talk about it during the next meeting's discussion phase – whether you are too harsh in your statements. Have you discussed this concern with someone from the group? If yes; who?
8. You think one from the group is a jerk. You know you are all supposed to be equals but this person just has the wrong opinions, and you are going to tell that person that at the next meeting.
9. The group leader has invited all of you out for a bit of bowling. Who showed up? Was it a nice day?
10. You sent an SMS to someone from the group, but haven't received an answer. Who did you text? What did you text?



# Pitch

*Nobody is truly alone. Put words to your chaos and make your own change. This is called self-help.*

*Welcome to the self-help group “A way through”. At every meeting you will take turns telling about your experiences and thoughts about the Topic of the Day. A group leader will guide you through the process and together we will work our way through the impressions. We meet every second week and will maintain confidentiality. Participation is free.*

*Live Before You Die* is a scenario about understanding fate’s injustice, putting oneself in others’ shoes and finding a way through distress. The focus of the scenario is the characters’ confrontation with themselves, where they become vulnerable, process their loss and help each other grow. This is a feel better-scenario that doesn’t need a happy ending.

The scenario is a narrative semi-live where the self-help group’s meetings are the primary framework. Mechanics are used to support and further reflections, and between meetings the characters’ relations will develop and crisscross. You will have the opportunity to influence the direction of your role, create twists and/or shoot yourself in the foot.

## **Type of player**

You like the epic in the mundane and find joy in experiencing and telling a story, where you get to the root of the character. You are a player who doesn’t need to be right, and who would rather have an awesome experience with others than winning. It doesn’t require any preparation to participate other than an open mind and a want to create.

## **Type of game master**

You like to catch leads, support and guide players through a living story. You must facilitate and be part of the game as a guiding force, but also be able to listen actively and be able to take a step back to let the story unfold – right up until the moment, when you mercilessly cut the scene right after its peak.

Amount of players and game runners: 4 or 6 players + 1 game master

Duration: 3-4 hours

Languages: Danish and English

Age limit: 14+

Burden of reading: approx. 2 page, and the roles will be available as audio.

