

We Need to Talk...™

by Michael Dunsmore, Jordan Nichols and Bryan Merlonghi
Art by Annette Cate



4-8 Players, 14+, 40-60 min

Caring friends and family have all gathered “because they LOVE you”. That’s how it always starts. That’s when you suddenly realize there’s a problem - and it’s YOU. You’re shocked and clueless, which is why your loved ones have taken it upon themselves to carefully broach the subject. Naturally, no one wants to just come right out and say it. So they keep hinting at it, hoping you’ll catch on eventually. But will you? Or will this Intervention fail?

DO NOT EXAMINE ANY OF THE CARDS.

Keep them in the box until drawn during the course of play. The small mini-pack of cards contains a “Sample Problem” card for use in teaching the game to others. Always keep this card separate and available for future use.

OBJECT / Overview of Play:

Each player will take a turn as the focus of a ridiculous intervention about a nonsensical problem. This problem is unknown to THE INTERVENED player and they must try to correctly guess their problem over the course of three rounds.

- THE INTERVENED gets more points for guessing correctly, sooner than later.
- The CONCERNED FRIENDS (everyone else) gain points for giving “good” clues, but not so *good* that they give it away and lose their points.
- But if THE INTERVENED player cannot guess by the end, the intervention fails and no one gets any points at all.

Once all players have taken a turn as THE INTERVENED, the best scoring player wins.

Contents:

274 Problem Cards

1 Sample Problem Card

26 two-sided Scoring Tokens

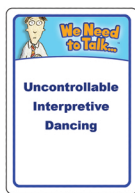
1 Hot / Cold Track and Guess Marker

7 Player Order Cards (for 7 & 8 player games)

9 Blank Problem Cards

(To fill with your own fun ideas for Problems)

8 Player Guide Cards

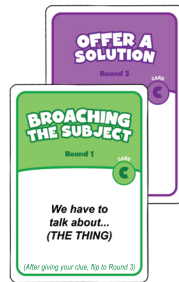


Problem Cards

Scoring Tokens



Hot & Cold Track
with Guess Marker



Player Order Cards

Set Up:

- Grab paper and pencil (not included) for scoring and write each players' name at the top.
- The owner or host of the game will go first as THE INTERVENED.
- Give THE INTERVENED a number of Scoring Tokens as shown below. These are placed in front of THE INTERVENED, with the 1 Point side face up. Place any remaining Scoring Tokens back in the box.

Players	4	5	6	7	8
Tokens	12	15	18	17	19

There are three Rounds to each intervention, each with a unique format for giving clues.

1. Broaching The Subject

2. Emotional Appeal

3. Offering a Solution

THE INTERVENED may guess their Problem after any clue. See “Guessing” on page 7.

Begin an Intervention:

WITHOUT LOOKING AT IT... THE INTERVENED player draws the front-most Problem Card from the box – and shows it to the other players before placing it face down. CONCERNED FRIENDS may always ask to see the card again at any time during play.

4 - 6 Players: Each CONCERNED FRIEND gives one clue per Round, starting with the player sitting to the left of THE INTERVENED and proceeding clockwise, until each player has given a single clue.

7 & 8 Players: See Page 8.

Round 1: BROACHING THE SUBJECT

In this Round, CONCERNED FRIENDS will take turns and gently hint at THE SUBJECT of the Problem, using **ONLY one or two words** to label the issue. Articles (your, the) and pronouns (you, her, his) don't count towards the word limit and compound words (high school, high-strung) are fine, so long as the clue itself is a “thing” or “subject label”.

It is often helpful to start with the words, “We need to talk about...” (THE THING), but feel free to play up your role with other words, so long as your clue remains SUBJECT ONLY.

We need to talk about your...
COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Use the **SAMPLE PROBLEM** card to narrate this example for the players



We Need to Talk...

Uncontrollable Interpretive Dancing

The problem is the... **WAY YOU MOVE**

Yeah, but the real issue is your **IMPULSIVE TIMING**

We need to talk about... **JAZZ HANDS**

WHAT MAKES A GOOD CLUE

- **A Clue CANNOT use any of the words actually printed on the cards.**

Synonyms, descriptions, references and other hints are allowed. If someone makes a mistake and mentions a word on the card, stop them from continuing without mentioning the offending word, announce a “Foul” and pass to the next player. A Foul gains no points.

- **A Clue MUST be generally thought of as a valid clue, by the other CONCERNED FRIENDS who know what the Problem is.** If a clue is too misleading or off-topic, Friends are required to say so. If a majority vote of the CONCERNED FRIENDS agrees, the clue is declared a “Foul” and play passes to the next player. A Foul gains no points.

- **A Clue must be substantially unique from others given this round.** If not, the other players may ask them to offer a new clue. This is NOT considered a Foul.

- **A Clue should not give away the answer too easily** - or that player will lose ALL their points for this intervention, should THE INTERVENED guess correctly after that clue.

After each (valid) clue is offered, THE INTERVENED player gives the clue-giver one of their Scoring Tokens, flipping it over to the 2 Point side as they do so. This effectively reduces THE INTERVENED’s scoring pool by 1 point per clue and grants 2 points to a CONCERNED FRIEND for giving that clue. If a CONCERNED FRIEND cannot think of a unique clue, they may PASS. However, a Passing player will not receive a Scoring Token for that turn.



Round 2: EMOTIONAL APPEAL

Again, taking turns, use one or more sentences to **describe how this Problem makes you feel**. How has it negatively impacted your life and your relationship with THE INTERVENED?

Have fun. Play it up. The more **real** your 'make pretend' is, the funnier it will be. As with the previous round, continue until all players have given a clue or THE INTERVENED player has correctly guessed.

2.



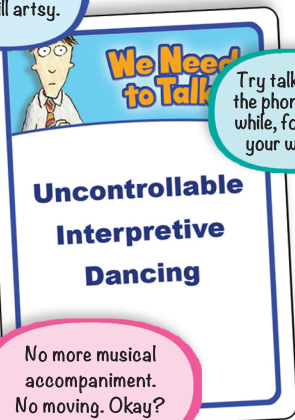
I feel like you are trying to embarrass me in public. It's like I'm on stage with you and I hate it.

It is really frustrating that I can't ever get a straight answer. I have to read into everything!

Last week, at the funeral... you could have just talked about your feelings. But then you started gyrating - and it made ME want to die.

Maybe try poetry instead. It's still artsy.

3.



Try talking on the phone for a while, focus on your words.

No more musical accompaniment. No moving. Okay?

Round 3 - OFFERING A SOLUTION

In this last round, each CONCERNED FRIEND now **proposes an idea, an action, or a simple step** that THE INTERVENED might try to help them overcome their Problem. This should be just a sentence or two in length.

After two rounds of trying to be oblique and sneaky with your clues, this round really needs to help them understand their Problem... or it is possible that no one will score points. BUT you still don't want to be the one to give it away.

GUESSING:

After hearing each clue, THE INTERVENED has the option to try and guess their Problem. If they decide to guess, they give another 2 Point Token to the player who gave the most recent clue. If the guess is **correct**, proceed to “Scoring an Intervention”.

If the guess is **incorrect**, play continues along to the next CONCERNED FRIEND in clockwise order.

NOTE: it is unlikely that THE INTERVENED will state the problem exactly as written. It is up to the CONCERNED FRIENDS to agree that the guess was sufficiently accurate. Be fair-minded in this judgement, but if an important nuance has been missed, the guess must be judged incorrect.

Hot or Cold Scale: Sometimes THE INTERVENED’s guess is dead wrong. Sometimes it is clearly correct. For cases that are not so clear-cut, the CONCERNED FRIENDS may use the Hot / Cold Scale to indicate how close to correct the guess was. As a group, they will position the circular Guess Marker on the Scale which ranges from Hot (more correct) or Cold (less correct) by general consensus.



Running Out of Tokens: If THE INTERVENED runs out of Tokens before the end of the 3rd Round, they may make no further guesses about their Problem until after Round 3 ends, in iTHE FINAL GUESS. CONCERNED FRIENDS will continue to give clues and receive points, but the Tokens are taken instead from the extras placed in the box at the beginning of the game.

Scoring an Intervention:

An INTERVENTION ends immediately should THE INTERVENED guess their Problem correctly, or at the end of the 3rd Round, after a FINAL GUESS is made.

Correct Guess during a Round of Play:

THE INTERVENED scores 1 point for each Scoring Token they still have.

CONCERNED FRIENDS score 2 points for each Token they have earned, except for the player who gave the last clue before THE INTERVENED guessed their Problem correctly. That player loses all the Tokens they earned during this intervention, for a score of zero.

The FINAL GUESS: At the end of the intervention, an INTERVENED player, who has been unable to guess their Problem through all three Rounds of play, gets one last attempt. No further hints of any kind are allowed, but all players now want this Final Guess to succeed if they are to score any points at all.

Final Guess Incorrect:

The intervention has failed. Neither THE INTERVENED nor any of the CONCERNED FRIENDS receive any points, regardless of how many Tokens they earned. They should feel properly ashamed for not being able to help a friend in need.

Final Guess Correct:

Phew! THE INTERVENED takes one Token back from each CONCERNED FRIEND and scores them as 1 Point each. CONCERNED FRIENDS score 2 Points for each remaining Token in their possession. Some points are better than nothing!

Record all player scores on the score sheet. Collect all Scoring Tokens from all players and pass them to the new INTERVENED player to the left of the previous INTERVENED. Remember to remove and place back into the box any extra Tokens added during play and place the Problem card at the back of the card sleeve. Begin a new Intervention.

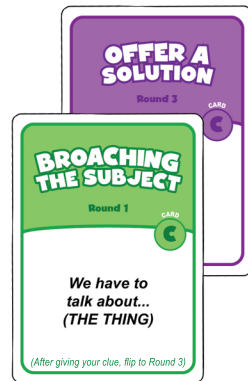
ENDING THE GAME:

The game ends after each player has taken a turn as THE INTERVENED. Tally the final scores and declare the highest point total the winner. If there is a tie, the player who scored the most points guessing their own Problem wins. If still tied, share the win as all good friends do.

7 & 8 Player Games:

At higher player counts, each player will instead give a single clue for **TWO** of the three Rounds, as determined by the **Player Order Cards**. Use all seven cards for an 8 Player game and remove the card labeled “G” for a 7 player game. Deal one to each Concerned Friend, starting with card “A” and proceeding clockwise sequentially, at the beginning of each new intervention..

The front and back of each card lists the specific Rounds that player will give clues during. Have players place their card so the earliest Round is showing face up. Instead of moving clockwise around the table, any player with a current Round card showing can jump in to give their clue. After doing so, they flip their card over for the next Round. Play is otherwise identical to 4 - 6 player games.



SEQUENCE OF PLAY:

INTERVENED DRAWS A CARD,
SHOWS IT TO OTHERS

ROUND 1: BROACHING THE SUBJECT

ROUND 2: EMOTIONAL APPEAL

ROUND 3: OFFERING A SOLUTION

THE FINAL GUESS (if needed)

SCORING

BEGIN NEW INTERVENTION

END OF GAME / FINAL SCORES

CREDITS

Designers

Jordan Nichols
Michael Dunsmore
Bryan Merlonghi

Illustration

Annette Cate
Development / Graphic Art
Curt Covert

Additional Writing

John Brieger, Keith Byrd, Curt Covert, John Velgus, ENVOY Heralds (Greg Barry, Jonathan Lundberg, Megan Gonzalaez, Justin Sward, Rich Ohlson, Gary Stitely), S&D Instigators (Chris Canary, Andrew Wurm, Daniel Dow, Melodee Smith, Wyatt Wilfong, Jonathan Lavallee, Nya Ruta Em Brodbeck, Shawna Bourne, Kendra Steele, Drew Oldfield)

Special thanks to the following people who made this game possible

Brandon Raasch (Final Guess Scoring), Kevin Craft, Nicole Craft, Bay Area Board Game Boosters and Designers, Bay Area Tabletop Devs, and all of our playtesters.

S&D 1004

© 2019 Smirk & Laughter Games, an imprint of Smirk & Dagger Games. All Rights Reserved.