

What can games do to create meaningful friendships?

Daniel Cook's *Game Design Patterns for Building Friendships*

A proven model for friendship formation.

anonymous players  
empty areas  
anti-patterns  
many gameplay modes  
player tiers



Match-based systems create transitory relationships.

Viral systems = marketing resource

Restricted on screen chat will create deep relationships.

Large numbers of shallow, status-based relationships lead to increased depression.

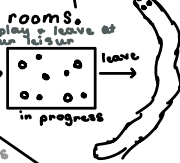
Making Happiness  
Games are a tool to make happiness and represent the spectrum of humanity

A small number of deep friendships leads to greater happiness in life.

design tools  
offline communities  
persistent identity  
daily incentives

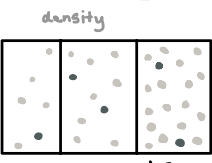
EVENTS

repeat, serendipitous interactions



Proximity

build new friends out of strangers



to maximize interactions keep the cohort together

positive fictional identities

players in faction

design tools  
shared experiences  
shared goals

Similarity

people make friends w/ people like them

a strong filter

no real world references

make a friendly offer, give a positive response

Reciprocity

each interaction builds trust (shared social norms)



allows us to increase the stakes of each interaction

levels of friendship



power differentials

anti-patterns

deceit

lack of predictability

free loaders

grows slowly but crashes quickly

the ability to disclose risky information without rejection

Disclosure

timing of disclosure of information is incredibly important

real name

real money

real location

voice chat

anti-patterns