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## Child's Play: Cooperative Gaming as a Tool of Deradicalization<sup>1</sup>

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### **Abstract**

Research in the field of countering violent extremism (CVE) has grown significantly in the last few decades. This research project contributes to the CVE literature by studying narratives as tools of reflections on self-identity designed intentionally within gaming exercises to help contextualize and account for as much environmental complexity as possible. This paper provides theoretical understandings of narratives (and their role in our lives), discusses narratives as they relate to violent extremist ideologies, and proposes how narrative reflections may serve as a deradicalization tool within cooperative games. Additionally, this article highlights elements of narrative reflection within current CVE resources and provides a list of exercises (games) that can be used in the field to promote narrative reflections.

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### **Introduction**

Research in the field of countering violent extremism (CVE) has grown significantly in the last few decades. Many government, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations have made it a priority to focus on counterterrorism programs. For example, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) passed the Resolution 2178 (in 2014) urging member-states to establish rehabilitation measures for returned fighters from Iraq and Syria, as well as Resolution 2396 (in 2017) calling for specific measures to counter terrorism and conduct CVE activities, including counter-narrative campaigns and rehabilitation programs. In 2016, the

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UNSC presented the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism to the UN General Assembly, which included over seventy CVE recommendations, such as “disengagement, rehabilitation and counseling programs for persons engaged in violent extremism” (United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, 2016). The European Union revised its counter-terrorism strategy in 2014 with a strong emphasis on, “disengagement and exit strategies” (Revised EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism, 2014).

A CVE program is a broad term that is sometimes referred to as CVE-specific (such as counter-radicalization or deradicalization) or CVE-related (such as early prevention) (Koehler & Fiebig, 2019). Many CVE programs and research studies focus on the role of narratives in the process of deradicalization. In academic literature, narratives are defined as, “any cohesive and coherent account of events with an identifiable beginning, middle, and end about characters engaged in actions that result in questions or conflicts for which answers or resolutions are provided” (Braddock & Horgan, 2016, p. 383). Within the context of CVE literature, an extremist counter-narrative is defined as, “an effective comprehensive message that dismantles and counter-argues against every dimension of the extremist narrative” (Weilnböck, 2013, p. 2). Many CVE scholars focus on contesting extremist narratives or providing counter-narratives (Braddock & Horgan, 2016; Braddock & Morrison, 2018; Corman, 2015; Demant & De Graaf, 2010).

According to Fisher (1987), there are two approaches for contesting the narratives: narrative coherence deals with how structurally sound implied stories are, and narrative fidelity tests whether these stories are plausible with respect to experiences and values of the audience (Corman, 2015; Fisher, 1987). Practical examples of contesting extremist narratives include the research project funded by the European Commission and the Radicalization Awareness Network (RAN) called the “European Platform of Deradicalization Narratives” (EDNA). The EDNA project aims at countering extremist story-telling on the internet and evaluating which kinds of narratives work to deradicalize vulnerable youth, as well as instilling sustainable personal development and pro-social attitudes. The challenge of this project rests in its inability to create counter-narratives that actually work. Another example

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of counter-narrative messaging strategy is the U.S. Department of State program, “Think Again, Turn Away,” which was designed to counter Islamic State of Iraq and Syria propaganda by distributing stories and images that challenged claims and ideology. While researchers commend the well-intentioned first step in deploying counter-messaging strategies online, they argue that the campaign failed at the execution stage (Braddock & Morrison, 2018).

Some scholars argue that instead of focusing on large-scale systems of stories, CVE research should develop guidelines related to the production of individual, small-scale counter-narratives (Braddock & Horgan, 2016). One study offers communication and psychology theory-based procedures for analyzing terrorist narratives, constructing counter-narratives that challenge terrorist narratives, and disseminating the counternarratives to overcome barriers to persuasion (Braddock & Horgan, 2016). The success of counter-narrative campaigns is hinged upon not just the content of these messages but also by the method of dissemination; specifically, who, is delivering the counter-narrative (Braddock & Horgan, 2016). Practitioners should emphasize cultivating trust between counter-narrative targets and those perceived as the source of the counter-narrative message (Braddock & Morrison, 2018).

Some CVE researchers are not convinced that counter-narratives are effective at all (Weilnböck, 2013). First, the belief that creating straightforward counter-narratives using credible information and sources (such as former extremists, victims, family members, social work practitioners) is a key to success is flawed because this method ignores individual differences among radicalized members and ignores the complexity of facilitating sustainable deradicalization processes (Weilnböck, 2013). Second, first-line practitioners maintain that methods involving arguing, contesting, and countering of positions produce results opposite to those desired. They are ineffective against radicalized individuals because they, “further provoke and harden them since radicalized individuals feed on being 'countered'” (Weilnböck, 2013, p. 3). Finally, some scholars go as far as claiming that what we generally refer to as “extremist narrative” is not really a narrative at all, because it does not include, “a process of

exchanging first-hand, personally lived-through experiences” (Weilnböck, 2013, p. 3), as a narrative definition maintains. This claim, however, is not supported by mainstream CVE researchers.

Considering the mixed reviews on the effectiveness of counter-narratives in the deradicalization process, this research project proposes to study narratives in a different light. We offer the use of narratives as tools of reflections on self-identity designed as gaming exercises to intentionally help contextualize and account for as much environmental complexity as possible.

The purpose of this project is to extend the use of narrative theory into the CVE research field and propose the use of cooperative gaming (with narrative reflection elements) as a deradicalization tool. We learn from previous studies that CVE programs are significantly disconnected from evidence-based academic literature (Koehler & Fiebig, 2019), and this project attempts to fill this gap by suggesting practical gaming tools grounded in relevant research. We will first provide our theoretical understandings of radicalization theory, deradicalization as a process, and the role of narratives in human understanding. Then, we will discuss narratives as they relate to extremist ideology. Specifically, violent extremism. Next, we propose how narrative reflections may serve as a deradicalization tool. Finally, we conclude with a discussion of sample exercises (games) that can be used as potential deradicalization tools.

### **Radicalization and Deradicalization Theory**

Research on radicalization is more robust from a theoretical standpoint than research on deradicalization (Koehler, 2017). Several radicalization models have been identified over the years. Some focus on the processual models of radicalization, such as phase models. For example, the NYPD model was developed in 2007 based on case studies of jihadist-motivated radicalization in Western countries. The four-step model starts with the pre-radicalization stage, followed by the self-identification, indoctrination, and jihadization stages (Silber &

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Bhat, 2007). Another phase model is offered by Moghaddam (2005) and is called, “the staircase model to terrorism.” It is conceptualized by a ground floor followed by a series of five higher floors, each characterized by particular psychological processes: perceived deprivation, search for opportunities, frustration and fears, moral commitment, “us versus them,” and terrorist act (Moghaddam, 2005). The benefit of this model is that it accounts for multiple starting points and motivations along the path to becoming a member of terrorist organizations, including both positive (such as honor and morality) and negative (such as revenge) factors.

The most comprehensive model of radicalization was developed through the best fit framework synthesis by Stéphanie De Coensel. The eight phases in the model cover the entire process from pre-radicalization, to five radicalization phases (awareness and grievances, solution-seeking, interest, targeting and indoctrination), to implementation and post-implementation (Coensel, 2018). Within these phases, multiple concepts that relate to grievances, cognitions, groups, and violence are identified (Coensel, 2018).

Other models address the root of radicalization, rather than the consecutiveness of the process. For example, Marc Sageman includes relevant factors for radicalization which do not necessarily follow any one, graduated sequence. These factors include moral outrage (such as reacting against killings of Muslim civilians in Syria), specific interpretation or worldview (such as an interpretation of said killings to be a part of a larger global struggle against Islam), contextualization with personal experiences (such as experienced discrimination and racism as a proof of a larger struggle), and, finally, mobilization through interactive networks (Sageman, 2004, 2007). A more comprehensive approach to review, and evaluate, empirical support for mechanisms of political radicalization suggested that a handful of factors are involved in a process of radicalization. Negative life experiences lead to fundamental uncertainty or loss of significance, which spur on the search for an identity shift towards groups with strong norms and ideals, including sacred values that enable extreme ingroup defenses (Gøtzsche-Astrup, 2018).

These theories provide explanatory pathways to the radicalization process, so it is a logical assumption that by reversing the pathways or backtracking the steps, one can develop a theory of deradicalization. Unfortunately, this is not the case, and no viable theory of deradicalization exists (Koehler, 2017). However, one commonality among the discussed radicalization theories is the process of “de-pluralization” of political concepts and values that ultimately lead to violence as a valid course of action. The process of de-pluralization operates parallel to, and in the accentuation of, those pathways and steps along the radicalization process. And, it has been proposed that by reversing this process of de-pluralization and introducing the “re-pluralization” of political concepts and values, a path of deradicalization emerges (Koehler, 2017).

The process of re-pluralization includes, “a growing perception of alternative options to solve a decreasingly important (ideologically defined) problem” (Koehler, 2017, p. 81). Re-pluralization can often be triggered by rational decision-making processes (such as cost-benefit analyses), doubt and uncertainty about the correct course of action, external events that are capable of opening alternatives to violence, and/or external interventions (Koehler, 2017). External interventions are of particular importance here, and are required to satisfy two criteria: First, to be successful, external interventions (various deradicalization programs) must be hand-tailored to the individual radicalization process and individual psychological factors behind a person’s commitment (Koehler, 2017). Second, external interventions must either introduce radicalized individuals to alternative values, political concepts, definitions and options for behavior, or diffuse the individual’s conviction of the absolute priority of the ideologically framed problems (Koehler, 2017). We argue narrative reflections address both criteria for the success of external intervention based deradicalization programs. Examination of narrative can provide a mechanism for evaluating good, or “virtuous” action from the vantage point of others (Macintyre, 2007). Thus, we see narrative reflection, particularly when embedded in cooperative group exercises/games as a key tool of re-pluralization; and as distinguished from other communication strategies involving recruitment, counselling, and persuasion directed towards self-contained examinations of individual experiences.

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As Dalgaard-Nielsen (2013) notes, persuasion is an ineffective method against extremism. Instead, effective treatments employ training in things like conflict resolution and anger management, “in order to promote a different set of behaviors” (Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2013, p. 110). Dalgaard-Nielsen’s general take away is that alternate paths to purely cognitive approaches to reducing extremist views should be explored; advocating for social, practical, and economic supports to change behavior and thus weakening extremist beliefs. Braddock (2014) similarly argues against using persuasive communicative approaches, claiming narrative devices might instead be better vehicles for patterning new beliefs and behaviors (Braddock, 2014). Braddock & Dillard (2016) empirically demonstrated that narrative does exert a causal influence on persuasive outcomes, noting the mechanisms for how narrative functions in persuasion and claiming that understanding the circumstances in which narrative efforts are constructed and deployed are required for a more comprehensive narrative theory (Braddock & Dillard, 2016).

In the context of games and exercises, the mechanisms of narrative reflection necessarily include others so that experiences are understood as taking place in concert with, and through, the participation of others; providing individuals opportunities to reconcile potentially competing, conflicting, and/or complementary outside perspectives on action to their own. Said more simply, here narrative reflection is seen as a tool of re-pluralization. Further, narrative reflection through cooperative games and exercises with others is seen as serving a complementary role with other interventions such as motivational interviewing (MI); valuing each intervention for its role as evidenced-based treatment of a portion of the whole problem. Whereas MI techniques serve to, “resolve ambivalence in the direction of change” away from radicalization (Clark, 2019, p. 63), narrative reflection techniques in the context of a shared gaming practice help to resolve self-centeredness by allowing the participant to see their relations to others; toward shared understandings of good (Macintyre, 2007).

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### Theoretical Understandings of Narratives

Narratives are defined as “story-telling accounts of first-hand experiences and actions that an individual has personally lived-through and/or committed” (Weilnböck, 2013, p. 3). In all of our reflections on self and identity, we are forced by the human mind to think of ourselves in terms of story. This is because stories are the basis by which trajectory and the rank order of things to achieve and desire are positioned; without such ordering, life, and the objects encountered within that life, would be a meaningless assortment of random encounters (Fisher, 1984). Stories, and the overarching narratives guiding them, weave together the random assortment of objects we encounter into some kind of structured, sensible web, furnishing the motives for our actions (Burke, 1969). Even if that web is hastily constructed to justify action at the moment, a story is still formulated when explaining the unfolding sequence of actions.

This requirement of a story to rank order actions in relation to the environment presents significant limitations. First and foremost, false, misleading, and completely random objects, actions, and activities encountered are still woven into our realities by mere contact; taking form within the so-called “life narrative” of each individual (Ulric Neisser, 1994). This places an extraordinarily high burden on the individual to know how to properly order the experiences of reality they live, reflect, and act on. It is an important consideration that the rank ordering of the external world offered through a story can be quickly learned, assumed, and dismissed. How quickly and dramatically the elements of the external world are ranked and reranked through the mental role of adoption and incorporation depends upon perceptions related to the stability of environmental roles and control of role assignment. Driving and altering how an individual understands themselves within the various roles they assume are factors related to environmental mastery (stabilities and efficiencies), which require various types of practiced and learned reflections on a story. In practices of narrative inquiry, such learned reflections revolve around issues of relationship, identity, and power between the storyteller and their environment (Clandinin, 2006).



However, the practical realities of existence mean the stories we tell about ourselves, and the rank ordering there within, are not often reflected upon. We are bound by necessities of achievement, both for survival and for attainment, that our particular set of life circumstances outline; increasingly universalized by the competition and individualism inherent in Western-gear market economies (Spence, 1985). We are limited in our exposure to ways of thinking about ourselves and our actions, as well as to other interpretations of narrative roles and actions within our environment. Most importantly, the boundary between, “what we reveal and what we do not, and some control over that boundary, are among the most important attributes of our humanity” (Nagel, 1998, p. 4). That is to say, we guard our stories of the world in our most private places and make them accessible to accomplish a purpose; not merely to lay bare our own truths.

The result, arguably, is that the human mind relies upon justifying actions in reality through an assignment of broadly understood, self-centered, narrative roles. The results can be, and are, widely problematic for how human beings treat themselves and the environments around them. As Dwoskin (2003) points out, meaning involves thought; it, “evolves from the reflective process of thinking, of speculative reason, as it then connects to the world of interaction with others” (Dwoskin, 2003, p. 109). Thought as contemplative judgement manifests itself in action, and such action carries moral consequence to be considered and interpreted by others. True morality rests on the shared interpretation of action that must itself be grounded in reflective thought considerate of others.

It is from this ability to form shared interpretation that Arendt’s notion of power arises as a potentiality; described as “the ability to agree upon a common course of action in unconstrained communication” (Porter, 2015, p. 3). Narrative reflection is therefore a critical mechanism in considering outside perspectives and inputs on action, and possible actions, toward the potential for collaborative human effort; power.

*Narratives and Extremism*

When we discuss extreme actions, it is important first to note we are speaking of disagreement in an interpretation of the ordering of actions between individuals whose interpretations of reality will necessarily vary to some degree based on differing points of exposure and reflection. Clarifying the dimensions of allegedly, “acceptable” non-violent extremism and “unacceptable” violent extremism is a complex discussion (Schmid, 2014). Schmid concludes that both violent and non-violent extremism are two sides of the same coin; that is to say that radical self-certainty, in and of itself can become exceedingly dangerous (Schmid, 2014).

In the case of violent extremism, we are speaking of extremism that both condones and seeks to enact violence with deliberate and/or ideological intention (DHS, 2019). Thus, extremism occurs both as an intentional assumption of a narrative role and, simultaneously, through an inconsideration of the potential alternative narrative role interpretations of others. That is to say, extreme action occurs because the individual has intentionally decided to act out such a role toward the environment and lacks the ability to account for other rank orderings of the environment or interpretations of their actions. Violent extreme action has as its intention to harm elements of the outside environment seen in opposition to one’s invested narrative role.

Some individuals face existential crises more directly and more frequently than others, and they are forced to reconcile their understanding of narrative role and narrative interpretations of reality more regularly and in ways that will vary by factors of speed, ability, and intention. Violence and forced displacement, for example, can transform how people memorialize themselves and their actions within the narrative, embedding fear and other emotions to be reconciled with as they attempt to restructure a sense of identity, personal rights, and place within a broader social landscape (Riaño-Alcalá, 2008).

Without an education into how to properly reflect upon such required re-rankings and re-orderings associated with narrative role transition, it is not difficult to understand why young, refugee children would be susceptible to violent extremist ideologies. Violent

extremism offers a clear foundational ordering of role assignment and perceptions of control over that role assignment. It can help to order a chaotic environment quickly. It provides convenient and broadly interpretable narrative trajectories of victimization, villainization, and righteousness toward intelligible and justifiable actions.

While these are significant strengths, the adoption of violent extremism is foundationally rooted in having some oppositional external system it functions against (Schmid, 2014). That is to say, violent extremist narratives could not functionally exist without the commitment of overcoming some system. There is an element of justifiable revenge and/or righteous justice in the destruction leveled against the system to be overcome. What allows the destructive action to be justifiable and intelligible is the extraordinarily low-rank order given to the oppositional system within the narrative, as well as the high-rank order given to self. The simplicity of the narrative elements allows for a clear and extreme spectrum of goods and evils to emerge. It is important to note that violent extremist narrative roles are adopted because of the conveniences and stabilities afforded, not because the narrative has survived techniques of reflection.

### *Personality Traits and Mindsets*

The simplicity of narrative elements and the clear dominance of the one narrative over others is often linked to the self-centeredness of an individual. Researchers analyzing the relationship between mental health and radicalization state that violent extremism is linked to narcissism (Corner & Gill, 2018; Weenink, 2015) and low levels (or lack) of empathy (Marazziti, Veltri, & Piccinni, 2018; Misiak et al., 2019).

One study, for instance, maps the minds of suicide bombers using linguistic methods and finds that the most frequently used linguistic marker is that of, “a relational wish to attain paradise and be close to God and the prophets,” (Cohen, 2016, p. 767) which is personal attainment and not necessarily their commitment to the cause. Another study was an experiment testing whether radical participants had the same metacognition abilities (abilities to reflect on cognitive processes) as nonradical participants (Rollwage, Dolan, & Fleming,

2018). The findings suggest that radical participants do in fact have unjustified certainty in their beliefs, and thus the resistance to recognizing and revising incorrect beliefs can be a potential driver of radicalization (Rollwage et al., 2018).

Some researchers even argue that self-centeredness is a key feature of any extremist state of mind (Weilnböck, 2014). First-line practitioners also agree with this notion:

...task of working with young radicalized individuals [is] nothing other but engaging with an extreme state of self-centeredness. In some cases, this preoccupation with oneself – and some key identity issues – may be so severe that almost any concept of the other and of the self-in-relation-to-the-other has been lost (Weilnböck, 2014, p. 5).

#### *Narrative Reflection as a Deradicalization Tool*

Deradicalization efforts that focus on re-building or “re-socializing” the sense of the self and others seem the most promising. Previous empirically-tested studies, for example, showed that perspective-taking techniques with radicalized and threatening Palestinian targets could successfully be induced among Israeli participants and, most importantly, could lead to their improved motivation to forgive the target (Noor & Halabi, 2018).

Certain techniques of reflection on narrative identity are designed intentionally to help contextualize action by accounting for as much complexity on the environment as possible. For example, in discussing solutions to so-called ideologically motivated cognition, described by Kahan (2012) as, “a form of information processing that rationally promotes individuals’ interests in forming and maintaining beliefs that signify their loyalty to important affinity groups” (Kahan, 2013, p. 407), scholars such as Galef (2016) argue for approaches that cultivate curiosity, pleasure, and intrigue. These emotions are associated with valuing the processing of new information, and the correcting of position, toward recognizing greater truths, as virtuous. Galef’s defined “scout mindset” is grounded in an understanding of self-worth outside of particular views held by the individual (Galef, 2016). This sought-after complexity is seen as required in order, “to induce individual[s] to process information in a different, and morally and politically superior, way” (Kahan, 2013, p. 435).

Ideologically motivated cognition is rooted in the individual's aligning of information to pre-existing beliefs, in order to make internal political worlds into political realities (Leeper & Slothuus, 2014). Overcoming such individualism and information distortion is not simply a matter of extreme open-mindedness that is accepting of all other beliefs, thereby ruling out the possibility of objective truth (Galef, 2009). Instead, overcoming motivated cognitive reasoning seemingly requires a way of seeking complexity of information with others toward a commonly held standard, or course of action; per Arendt's formation of power. That is to say, overcoming motivated reasoning seems most likely to occur in the context of shared practice with others where narrative reflection is learned.

Narrative reflection techniques, within-group exercise and games, provide pathways to cultivate, as a matter of practice, the "scout-mindset" of Galef; seen here as a utility of re-pluralization toward de-radicalization. Exercises that allow for, and reflect upon, co-creation of meaning within narratives and narrative roles help individuals tolerate, value and ultimately seek complexity. They stress a contextualization of the environment through awareness and examination of one's role within an ever-complex system with others, rather than as an individual in opposition to conflicting outside beliefs, systems, and/or individuals. Practitioners tend to agree that the approach that is most beneficial for facilitating change in self-preoccupied ideologically-extreme young people be a "dialogic, open-process, and non-directional" (Weilnböck, 2014, p. 5).

We propose that such an approach includes narrative reflection - an examination of self-identity in relation to the various environments the person encounters. As an individual learns to recognize the various roles they assume they learn to tolerate, appreciate, and ultimately value the variances within themselves. And, because the human mind thinks in a story, it forces a grander macro-narrative of self to be constructed. The value of this added understanding of self is eventually transferred over to how the individual views the environment around itself.

An individual learns to value and understand complexity through repeated examination and awareness of one's own narrative roles. This increased self-awareness and

awareness of the environment are valuable because they reveal the interdependencies of self to others. Once awakened to these connections, the idea of self is expanded and the process is amplified.

The first step toward self-recognition is patterned and intentional introspection aligning action to identity. That is to say, one must develop the practice of assessing why a particular action is done over an alternative one. This is ultimately a question of goodness posed to oneself over and over and over again. Inherently, the repetition of that question forces an account to be taken of how others might view that same action from an alternative perspective. This process extends the sense of self beyond the self and in so doing a bird's eye vantage point of self becomes increasingly evident. In other words, a more concrete, macro story of self begins to emerge.

Previous research found a positive change in explanatory self-narratives to be an important aspect of desisting from crime (Maruna, 2004). This finding was then applied to several deradicalization programs that incorporated teaching participants about self-awareness and self-confidence:

As many active offenders and extremists portray their own involvement and criminal activities the result of uncontrollable external forces, fate, or personality, critical debates, participation in explanatory workshops, group discussions, biographical analysis, and narrative reframing have been used to alter the way participants see themselves and their efficacy in regard to change (Koehler, 2017, p. 230).

This research study moves beyond just self-awareness and self-reflection to understand narrative reflections, examinations of self-identity *in relation to the various environments* the person encounters. We propose to use games (a form of exercise) as a vehicle for engaging in self-awareness, self-reflection, and examinations of self-identity. Specifically, we advocate using those games that take place as a contextual practice with others toward cooperative outcomes where narrative reflection techniques can be developed and learned through the course of game play. The use of games in the deradicalization process

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is not a novel idea. For example, one study offers immersive virtual reality (VR) technology as an innovative methodological perspective for the deradicalization of terrorists and other extremists (Pelletier & Drozda-Senkowska, 2020). Grounded in the intergroup contact theory and social identity theory, researchers argue that interpersonal contact with the “other” group members (even in a virtual environment) may reduce inter-group prejudice and persistent conflicts (Pelletier & Drozda-Senkowska, 2020).

### **Narrative Reflection within CVE Programs**

Researchers attempted to classify CVE programs into several typologies. For example, one typology, grounded in clinical psychiatry, separates CVE programs based on the “public health model” developed by Caplan (1964). According to this typology, *primary prevention* focuses on raising awareness, resilience, or community coherence; *secondary prevention* refers to averting radicalization processes in the early stages; and *tertiary prevention* aims at preventing recidivism to violent extremism (after disengagement has been achieved) (Koehler & Fiebig, 2019). We argue that narrative reflection is a tool that can be adapted and used in all types of CVE programs.

A pilot review of five CVE resources (a mix of programs, networks, and public-private-partnerships) revealed that the current programs already incorporate elements of narrative reflection (for a list of CVE resources used in this study, refer to Appendix A). They focus on principles of *group-dynamic based learning* where participants share their personal narratives and accounts of events that have occurred either in their biographies and/or their social environments. They attempt to develop central personality competencies among radicalized (and vulnerable to radicalization) youth, including emotional intelligence, empathy, the ability to build trust, the ability to form relationships, and, most importantly, tools for personal reflection. Existing CVE resources posit that narratives stimulate personal appraisals of violent acts, develop abilities to empathize and evoke moments of retrospection.

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Several key elements of narrative reflection in CVE programs emerge. First, narrative reflection can manifest itself in participants learning to take an interest in what others do, as well as understanding points of similarities and differences in other people's paths. Second, narrative reflection can be used as a tool aspiring to, "awaken participants' attention to what is experienced and narrated, and for the subtleties, contradictions and biographical influences that the worldview of each and every person displays" (Baer & Weilnböck, 2011, p. 13). Further, narrative reflection can be considered as the, "importance of open and reflective communication for guiding adolescent youth in their search for meaning and identity, commitment to society, dealing with diversity and conflicting values...there must be room for critical reflection" (Meere & Lensink, 2015, p. 15). Finally, narrative reflection is a potential mechanism for contextualizing the radicalizing environment and the local environment through the process of deradicalization.

### **Narrative Reflection Exercises**

We further propose descriptions of several narrative reflection exercises that may serve as tools of deradicalization. Games and mental exercises are fundamental tools for developing our identity. We are in many ways brought closer together when we share experiences, victories, hardship, and growth through one another. Games, throughout history, have served as integral parts of our lives from a very young age; serving important biological and developmental purposes. It is through proper counsel and the use of tools, such as games and exercises, that youth can come to a greater understanding of themselves, of the world around them, and fulfill their psychological needs. The following exercises are selected from the Youth Counseling Against Radicalisation (YCARE) toolbox, Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) toolbox and Maheshvarananda's (2017) book *Cooperative Games for a Cooperative World*. For a more detailed description of these and other exercises, their purposes and key reflection points, refer to Appendix B.



- Around in Circles. This exercise seeks to encourage participants to consider how their radical behavior and tendencies could affect their lives on a personal, interpersonal and global level, to examine the psychological and social effects of their radicalization and to re-evaluate their radical beliefs and ideas. The exercise allows participants to reflect on the impact radicalization has had on their lives and relationships.
- Auntie Agony Exercise allows participants the opportunity to practice their listening, communication and counseling skills. Most importantly, participants take time to reflect on the common problems facing their age group today and to develop solutions to these problems.
- CV Exercise, My Story. This exercise asks participants to think of their lives to date, reflect on the skills and experiences they have acquired and think about putting together a CV of these experiences. Next, they are asked to think of where they would like to be and what efforts they need to make to get to where they want. The purpose of this exercise is to encourage participants to start thinking about and planning their future, away from radicalism.
- Mapping My Community. It is essential for any young (vulnerable, non-vulnerable and radicalized) people to get knowledge about the existing supportive environments as alternatives to extremist groups. Through this exercise, young people will put down roots strengthening their identification with their close environment and thus be in contact with social action groups that offer them opportunities in response to their curiosity and concerns without the need to make use of violence. Getting young people closer to their neighborhoods enables them to know the social reality where they live, and they can reflect on the role they play as agents of change in their surroundings.
- Sculpting Stones... Finding My Place. Sometimes it can be difficult to get young people to open up and express what is going on for them. This may be

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for a variety of reasons, sometimes a fear of being judged or excluded or just a general lack of confidence in their own abilities. The sculpting stones exercise is a novel way of getting participants to talk about themselves and the issues of relevance to them in a safe and creative manner. The idea is to get to the heart of participant's beliefs about themselves as these can provide a framework that shapes their world-view, and can be powerful motivators.

- Strengthening Roots This exercise allows participants to share their past and say a little about what has formed their outlook on life. Using the power of imagery and symbols, the facilitator encourages the participants to work without words in order to convey some powerful messages about their lives so far.
- What Culture Is? Culture is neither static nor changeless and it is necessary to understand that diversity is one of the key factors in its development. Each person is a melt of his/her culture (or cultures), own characteristics and experiences and the fact of being aware of our own plurality will improve common knowledge about the group and its diversity.
- The Friend Game. A common theme outlined within this game is: as you think so you become. The objective of this game is ultimately self-reflection. Two participants form a pair and write down words that describe each other. Then, the first participant reads his/her list aloud, and the partner considers whether he or she thinks those things to be really true. When all pairs are finished, partners switch lists and replace their names with their partners' names. This is a game of truth and reflection, what we see in others is something that was always inside of us. Because we see through our own eyes we see through our own thoughts.

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## Conclusions

This research project sought to extend the narrative theory into CVE research by offering games (exercises) with embedded narrative reflection techniques to be used as tools of deradicalization. This aim is oriented towards practical solutions to deradicalization. The selected exercises are designed to elicit narrative construction, perspective sharing, and reflection opportunities and represent a template that future practitioners and academics can look to test, modify, and expand upon. We also offer a theoretical approach to narrative reflection within a gaming context that allows narrative theory to be more accessible and comprehensively used in de-radicalization related work.

There are several implications for this research project. Government and nongovernment organizations developing CVE and deradicalization programs should put a larger emphasis on the pedagogical roots of radicalization, education risks and protective factors that can be identified relevant to the prevention and symptomatic treatment. Teaching early detection practices, prevention activities, interventions (community empowerment and engagement, family support and alternative narratives) and exit strategies as learning modules are of particular note. Another suggestion is to focus on the role of civil society in preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization. Youth are key civil society actors in preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization and should be acknowledged as such. Dialogue facilitation is also identified as a critical practical approach. Most importantly, we argue that there is an importance in contextualizing the radicalizing environment and the local environment when implementing deradicalization exercises.

This research project has certain limitations. Our pilot review of CVE materials and how they incorporate narrative reflections is certainly not comprehensive. CVE and deradicalization materials are notoriously hard to acquire, and researchers documented a lack of transparency and accessibility of such materials (Feddes & Gallucci, 2015; Koehler & Fiebig, 2019). In 2017, over 40 deradicalization programs were operating around the world (Koehler, 2017), and a more comprehensive review of these programs would be fruitful for

further research. Also, this research project did not include any insights from practitioners who conduct training modules. We know that academic literature on this subject is not well-grounded in practical realities of deradicalization interventions (Koehler & Fiebig, 2019), and further research studies may focus on bridging this gap by providing feedback from practitioners who administer these programs.

In conclusion, deradicalization is a highly complex process that cannot be understood with one method, study, or approach. Some scholars argue that “much of our understanding of the causal processes of disengagement from terrorism remains theoretical or speculative” (Gill, Bouhana, & Morrison, 2015, p. 245), and scholarship in the fields of criminology and psychology offers various perspectives on understanding individual and collective processes, inhibiting factors, and solutions to CVE. This study’s contribution is in its application of the communication theory of narratives to CVE efforts. By proposing gaming exercises as intentional tools of narrative reflection among youth, we extend the narrative theory into the context of deradicalization programs, where games can provide opportunities for an examination of self-identity in relation to the various environments encountered and co-construction of meaning with others.

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**Appendix A: CVE Resources**

Name	Description	Examples of narrative reflections
Cultures Interactive (CI)	- The nongovernment organization based in Germany that works on issues related to right-wing-extremism, fundamentalism and adolescent violence among youth.	- One of the methodological tools and underlying assumptions of the project is the principle of <i>group-dynamic based learning</i> . - The module of thematically-open conversation round is run as a self-awareness group, where participants share their personal narratives and accounts of events that have occurred either in their biographies and/or their social environments (Baer & Weilnböck, 2011).
Violence Prevention Network (VPN)	- VPN is tasked with changing the behavior of ideologically vulnerable people and violent offenders with extremist views through deradicalization efforts. - The program aims to develop central personality competencies among radicalized (and vulnerable to radicalization) youth, including emotional intelligence, empathy, the ability to build trust, the ability to form relationships, and, most importantly, tools for personal reflection (Baer & Weilnböck, 2011).	- The VPN values a group-based approach and places a special emphasis on narration (as opposed to discussion, argumentation, and description). - The program employs methods for generating narrative used in biographical therapy, such as life-historical partner interviews, drawings/illustrations of a personal lifeline, and generations of genograms (Baer & Weilnböck, 2011). - “Violence sessions” are critical components of the VPN. Within these sessions, participants share the details of the violent acts they committed with the group. These sessions are designed not only to stimulate personal appraisals of violent acts but also to develop abilities to empathize and to evoke moments of retrospection for those who take part, assist or follow the process. - The VPN clearly utilizes narrative reflection since it aspires to “awaken participants' attention to what is experienced and narrated, and for the subtleties, contradictions and biographical influences that the worldview of each and every person displays” (Baer &

		Weilnböck, 2011, p. 13).
Youth Counselling Against Radicalisation (YCARE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The YCARE aims to effectively combat cross-border radicalization and terrorism.</li> <li>- It assists educators and social services staff in efforts that are directed towards young people who are vulnerable to radicalization or who have already been radicalized.</li> <li>- It emphasizes pedagogical roots of radicalization and education risks and protective factors that can be identified and are relevant for prevention and symptomatic treatment (Meere &amp; Lensink, 2015).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The YCARE manuals state the “importance of open and reflective communication for guiding adolescent youth in their search for meaning and identity, commitment to society, dealing with diversity and conflicting values” (Meere &amp; Lensink, 2015, p. 15).</li> <li>- It proposes that “there must be room for critical reflection” (Meere &amp; Lensink, 2015, p. 15).</li> </ul>
Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- OSCE addresses a wide range of security-related concerns, including arms control, confidence- and security-building measures, human rights, national minorities, democratization, policing strategies, counter-terrorism and economic and environmental activities.</li> <li>- It aims to develop a multidimensional approach that focuses on the prevention of violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism (“OSCE   Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe,” n.d.).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In OSCE report, dialogue facilitation is identified as a critical practical approach.</li> <li>- Dialogue facilitation “provides opportunities for reflection and constructive debate on themes such as personal and societal development, education, independence, justice, honor, identities, gender norms, belonging and post-conflict reconciliation, etc. Other themes to explore, which warrant assistance from professional counselors, include dealing with post-traumatic stress, discrimination, intolerance, and domestic violence, among others” (The Role of Civil Society in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism, 2018, p. 28).</li> </ul>
Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- RAN is a network of frontline or grassroots practitioners from around Europe who work daily with people who have already been radicalized, or who are vulnerable to radicalization</li> <li>- It is a platform for practitioners, researchers, and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The RAN manual promotes civic education that “builds on explorative, dialogue-centered, experience-oriented approaches to participation and solving conflicts in society” (Preventing Radicalisation to Terrorism and Violent Extremism: Educating Young People, 2019, p. 5).</li> </ul>

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	<p>policymakers to pool expertise and experience to tackle radicalization (“Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN),” n.d.).</p>	<p>- RAN values narrative reflections within deradicalization programs, “Integrating reflections about values and norms in the production of art, theatre, or in workshops about youth cultures, facilitates raising interest and engaging youngsters” (Preventing Radicalisation to Terrorism and Violent Extremism: Educating Young People, 2019, p. 5).</p> <p>- The RAN manual makes a clear distinction between counter-narratives to violent extremism and alternative narratives, with the emphasis on the latter as a more effective course of action. While counter-narratives are targeted to deconstruct extremist narratives by factually demonstrating false claims or highlighting misinformation, alternative narratives do not directly respond to extremist content. Instead, alternative narratives “aim to provide additional perspectives and to raise other issues with the intention of challenging extremist agenda settings” (Preventing Radicalisation to Terrorism and Violent Extremism: Educating Young People, 2019, p. 6).</p>
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Appendix B: Games

Exercise Name and Source	Group size	Duration	Purpose(s)	Key reflection points
Attitude Towards Conflict (YCARE)	Individual, small, medium	30 min – 1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop the ability to analyze a different kind of conflicts and identify common points regarding the persons implicated, the interests which are involved and the solutions to be found.</li> <li>- Identify the behaviors we adopt to face conflicts.</li> <li>- Develop the attitude of negotiation towards a conflict.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reflection on conflict-solving strategies to achieve an agreement between two parties (negotiation) without using coercive and/or violent conduct.</li> <li>- Group brainstorming session about conflicts.</li> </ul>
Automatic Thoughts (YCARE)	Individual, small, medium	30 min, 45 min, 1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To know and detect the three components of emotions that emerge in conflict situations.</li> <li>- Identify automatic thoughts that affect self-concept, self-confidence and how we perceive the events from our environment.</li> <li>- To know and practice cognitive strategies to cope with automatic thoughts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brainstorming session on the concept of emotions</li> <li>- Organize the components of emotion and present these findings and strategies related to automatic thoughts.</li> <li>- Reflect on the difficulty of the task</li> </ul>
Becoming Journalists (YCARE)	Small, medium	1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have a reflection on one's own social concerns and also be aware of others' concerns.</li> <li>- Know the work of several entities and organizations in the social area and strengthen the construction of a counter-narrative to the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Locate community groups by drawing maps, present the map and locate organizations in that area.</li> <li>- Role-play as a journalist and formulate questions for the organizations in those</li> </ul>

			<p>extremist speech.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop the capacity to move from general concerns towards concrete questions.</li> <li>- Promote young people's identification and engagement with the Community.</li> </ul>	<p>areas.</p>
How are you with Self-Confidence (YCARE)	Individual, small, medium	30 min, 45 min, 1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Screen the level of self-confidence.</li> <li>- Think about the influence of self-appraisal on our behavior and the way we perceive our environment.</li> <li>- Identify characteristics associated with low/high self-esteem.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fill out a questionnaire with an enumerated scale of self-confidence, turn it into an instructor who will then distribute them randomly for others to correct.</li> </ul>
My Project of Life (YCARE)	Individual	30 min, 45 min, 1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduce the concept of project of life and motivate young people to reflect on their values, interests and available resources.</li> <li>- Develop the capacity to establish goals in the short, medium and long term inside the same active line.</li> <li>- Identify the main resources needed in the near future to achieve the established goals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Motivate participants to interview each other to learn more about themselves.</li> <li>- Create a chart with two columns discussing things they like/dislike about themselves</li> <li>- Imagine their future life, how they would accomplish this and short-term objectives to get there.</li> <li>- Discuss the difficulties of the exercise.</li> </ul>
Mapping My Community (YCARE)	Small, medium	30 min, 45 min, 1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To know the main organizations and groups of their close environment.</li> <li>- To know the social reality of the neighborhood and communities where they live.</li> <li>- To be aware of the active role they have inside their community and encourage them to be</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify characteristics of their neighborhood and expose this to other participants</li> <li>- Print and research their neighborhood to identify new organizations and share results</li> </ul>

			<p>part of it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To work in a group to identify the characteristics and important issues of their community.</li> </ul>	
Put on the breaks, is turning red (YCARE)	Individual, small	1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify and analyze the three components of emotions (physical, cognitive and behavioral) and develop the ability to perceive them (emotional self-awareness).</li> <li>- Analyze emotions through own experiences and share them in a group in order to facilitate the identification and cohesion.</li> <li>- Know some self-control patterns to manage adverse emotions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brainstorm about what emotions are</li> <li>- Organize components of emotions in groups and eventually roleplay them</li> <li>- Present the traffic light technique to manage emotions</li> </ul>
What Culture Is? (YCARE)	Individual	30 min, 45 min, 1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be conscious that identity is multiple, complex and changeable.</li> <li>- Improve common knowledge about the group and its diversity.</li> <li>- Reinforce the feeling of belonging to the group.</li> <li>- Know and think about concepts related to culture and cultural identity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brainstorm the concept of culture and collect examples of cultural elements that have been imported.</li> <li>- Compare answers in groups of 3-4</li> <li>- Fill out the worksheet that helps participants identify their identity and share these impressions in small groups</li> </ul>
Strengthening Roots (YCARE)	Small	1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For participants to share their life experience</li> <li>- For participants to reflect on and share (if comfortable) their motivation for getting involved in radical type behavior</li> <li>- To provide opportunities for bonding within</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teach participants about how a tree can represent personal life experiences and have them sketch the “roots,” which are their family background and situation born into.</li> </ul>

			<p>the group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To focus on what groups members, have in common with the peers in their group and discover the areas of common experience that have led them to where they are today</li> <li>- Identify positive and negative qualities participants feel they have developed in response to their own life situations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have them share their trees and ask what they learned about themselves</li> <li>- Have them visualize their trees budding, and explain that is their future</li> </ul>
Around in Circles (YCARE)	Small, medium	1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To encourage participants to critically examine the consequences of their involvement in radical activities</li> <li>- To help participants understand the effects of their radicalization from a psychological and social perspective</li> <li>- To challenge participants to question the validity of their old ideals</li> <li>- To nurture the development of healthy alternative attitudes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use a worksheet exercise that discusses personal development and their past radical activity.</li> <li>- Discussing how they feel looking at their past and toward the future</li> </ul>
CV Exercise; My Story (YCARE)	Small, medium	1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To get participants to reflect on the lives they are living at present, is it a fulfilling happy life or a less than desirable existence?</li> <li>- To encourage participants to make value judgments about if where they are currently at is where they want or need to be</li> <li>- To help participants start to look to the future and explore the various avenues that may have</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduce the Latin phrase meaning “the story of life.” Allowing them to take stock of their lives and focusing on their futures.</li> <li>- Takedown key points in their life that paint a picture of them.</li> <li>- Create a fantasy CV that captures themselves</li> </ul>



			the potential to take them where they need to get to	
Sculpting Stones...Finding my Place (YCARE)	Small, medium	1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To give participants the opportunity to offer support and encouragement to each other as they move forward in their journeys.</li> <li>- To challenge participants to really look at their own perceptions of themselves and their relationships</li> <li>- Sometimes the depth of sharing brought about through this type of exercise can lead to real bonding within the group which can only enhance the potential of any future sessions they participate in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Invite participants to choose a stone that represents them and share why. Repeat exercise with stones that represent family and the future.</li> <li>- Stones will be placed near each other relative to real-life closeness with the family, group or person.</li> </ul>
Agony Aunt Exercise (YCARE)	Small, medium	1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To demonstrate the potential for group problem solving</li> <li>- To highlight the level of knowledge and skills that already exists within the group</li> <li>- To show participants that their opinions are heard and their contributions are valued</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participants role-play as ‘Auntie Agony’ and help others work through their emotions after reading the letters they wrote to her. They are then asked for their feedback on the exercise.</li> </ul>

BOUNCE resilience tools (RAN)	n/a	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To build resilience in youngsters and their networks, allowing them to interact with an aware environment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-By engaging in a mix of action and reflection, participants consolidate and hone a wide range of skills and competences, linking them to their personal experiences. Youngsters learn to bounce back and bounce up when dealing with challenges.</li> </ul>
GOT (Getting On Together) (RAN)	n/a	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To counter intolerance and extremism through independent and critical thinking</li> <li>- To facilitate knowledge and understanding of the non-violent message of the Islamic faith</li> <li>- To reduce prejudice and discrimination across all cultures, faiths and creeds</li> <li>- To promote integrated and cohesive communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Creating safe spaces that facilitate challenge and debate on extremism through critical thinking</li> <li>-</li> </ul>
POLRAD – the Power Of Local Role Models (RAN)	n/a	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To achieve mutual understanding across different groups, communication between these groups is necessary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A great deal of time is devoted to exercises exploring how to tell one's (own) story.</li> </ul>

Expedition Friend & Foe (RAN)	n/a	3 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To give (young) people, students, and their teachers tools to handle conflict in a constructive manner, in their personal life and in society at large</li> <li>- To actively prevent the spreading of xenophobia and radicalization, social exclusion, discrimination and bullying within Dutch society.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Together with trainers, students search for (new) ways to no longer think in contradictions – friends or foes – and to find ways to deal constructively with diversity.</li> </ul>
Narrative group work in schools (RAN)	10-13	45-90 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To build a narrative, social and emotional skills, in particular, the ability to share personal experiences in a group, listening to others regardless what they share, and maintaining a respectful and confidential space for interpersonal dialogue</li> <li>- To improve self-awareness and self-confidence by making personal stories heard and being valued</li> <li>- To strengthen democratic values and preventing group hatred, (right-wing) extremism as well as discriminative, intolerant and violent behavior by reflecting on and discussing current socio-political issues and related grievances from the point of view of the young peoples' own everyday experiences and biographical events that are at the heart of their world view</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Narrative groups provide an open space in which young people are free to talk about whatever is important to them from a personal point of view.</li> <li>- The facilitators do not set any topics but solely aim at maintaining a safe and confidential space and, most importantly, encourage attendants to trustfully share personal experiences and observations.</li> </ul>

Extreme Dialogue (RAN)	n/a	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To build resilience to radicalization among young people through a series of open-access educational resources and highly engaging short films.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This exercise encourages dialogue on non-violent approaches to tackle extremism and build community cohesion.</li> </ul>
Namaskar Game (Cooperative Games for a Cooperative World)	Small, Large	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To release feelings of resentment towards others and to forgive.</li> <li>- To demonstrate that everyone possesses a physical, mental and spiritual potential.</li> <li>- To teach nonjudgement, compassion, forgiveness and unconditional love.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This exercise provides a projection of self onto others. Parallel to the way one has their own imperfections and evils everyone has hopes, dreams and the capacity to do good within them.</li> <li>- By looking at another without judgment they realize everyone is not all that different.</li> </ul>
The Friend Game- (Cooperative Games for a Cooperative World)	Small, Medium	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To demonstrate how one is connected to everyone and everything</li> <li>- To teach non-judgmental observation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This exercise teaches that the things one sees in others are a reflection of themselves.</li> </ul>

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<p>Good Grief- (Cooperative Games for a Cooperative World)</p>	<p>Small, Medium</p>	<p>n/a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To teach thinking, non-attachment and overcoming fear by facing it.</li> <li>- To teach how to detach from things that are out of our control</li> <li>- To realize what is most meaningful in life.</li> <li>- To teach that non-attachment means to love fully and unconditionally, yet to also be willing to let that object go.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This exercise encourages one to consider the things that bring value to their life. By identifying identities, items of sentimental or physical value and the people they love and respect, it helps to mentally prepare for what would happen were one of those things to disappear.</li> </ul>
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The JD Journal for Deradicalization is the world's only peer reviewed periodical for the theory and practice of deradicalization with a wide international audience. Named an [“essential journal of our times”](#) (Cheryl LaGuardia, Harvard University) the JD's editorial board of expert advisors includes some of the most renowned scholars in the field of deradicalization studies, such as Prof. Dr. John G. Horgan (Georgia State University); Prof. Dr. Tore Bjørge (Norwegian Police University College); Prof. Dr. Mark Dechesne (Leiden University); Prof. Dr. Cynthia Miller-Idriss (American University Washington); Prof. Dr. Julie Chernov Hwang (Goucher College); Prof. Dr. Marco Lombardi, (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore Milano); Dr. Paul Jackson (University of Northampton); Professor Michael Freeden, (University of Nottingham); Professor Hamed El-Sa'id (Manchester Metropolitan University); Prof. Sadeq Rahimi (University of Saskatchewan, Harvard Medical School), Dr. Omar Ashour (University of Exeter), Prof. Neil Ferguson (Liverpool Hope University), Prof. Sarah Marsden (Lancaster University), Dr. Kurt Braddock (Pennsylvania State University), Dr. Michael J. Williams (Georgia State University), and Dr. Aaron Y. Zelin (Washington Institute for Near East Policy), Prof. Dr. Adrian Cherney (University of Queensland).

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