Photo Journal 2: Emotion Game

Catherine Chen

My movie was "Twilight Samurai" (2000), and the emotion I chose was **peace**.

February 1st - 2nd

Researching, Brainstorming, Confiding, and First set of Rules conceptualized.

I brainstormed ideas for the game, and looked for external sources such as "Tiny Buddha" and "Pinterest" for visual inspiration for images and activities that evoke the feeling of peace. Trying to make a game with "peace" didn't help me visualize actual gameplay with multiple players, so I focused on reinterpreting the goal of the game:

1) Goal of the game is to make another player feel better, instead of "being" better than the target player.
2) Game revolves around giving gifts

Brainstorming:

Fancy Friday

Turbulence -> Peace

Goal - to make the other player happy

What do you bring to the party?

- Each player has a problem (have to act it out)
- Each player has a gift
- Use the gift to solve the problem

What to bring to the journey

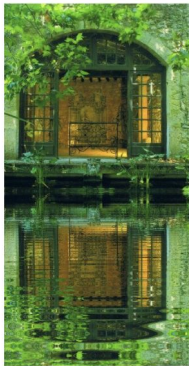Play as deer and humans-

List of items:

Coffee

Tea

Nightlight

Canoe

No building

Just play

Everyday, offer the best gift for a party.

2 v 2

Each human has a problem bugging them.

Only the deer knows the problem.

The deer can't talk but need to tell them what to bring to fix the problem .

Humans have to draw down their gift to offer the other player.

Fill your backpack with items to bring.

Then - a random location card.

ANIMAL STRENGTH CARDS

2 to 4 person game

Texture

Smells

Letting things be without explaining

Compassion

Creative concentration

Eye contact

Audio

Taking a walk

Nature

Find the beautiful in the chaos

TinyBuddha

Here are fifty peaceful things to help you be mindful and happy throughout the day:

1. Laying in bed for a few minutes in the morning before hopping into your day.

2. Eating breakfast slowly, at a table, instead of grabbing something on the go.

3. Listening to your favorite music on the way to work and remembering when you first heard it—where you were, who you were with, how you felt.

4. Hugging someone you know long enough to make it meaningful.

5. Appreciating something you take for granted, like your feet for taking you where you need to go.

6. Focusing solely on the smell of your coffee as it brews.

7. Noticing something thoughtful a stranger does for someone else.

8. Watching a coworker get proud about doing something well and feeling happy for them.

9. Getting into the zone typing, like finger-moving meditation, maybe set the rhythm of a great tune on your iPod.

10. Doing only one thing, even though you have a lot to do, to fully enjoy what you're doing.

11. Knowing you did a good job and taking a few minutes to bask in self satisfaction.

12. Expressing how you feel and then letting it be without feeling pressure to explain (pressure we usually put on ourselves).

This, I did the first two days. But I found it difficult without discussing the game with anyone - especially any of my potential playtesters! So, I asked people for interest in playtesting a game early, and finally broke the secret emotion to one person - outside of class - for his opinion on some of my brainstorming thoughts.
Some earlier game thoughts:

players-

All players have a need.
All players have two restraints/ a problem.

The players win if they fix the problem each round by giving the right card to the right person at the end of the game.

Player has to act out what is wrong with them without speaking.
The player then has to give a card when 30 seconds run out. Then they have 3 words to describe how they will use the card - on the fortune.
Then the card is revealed.
Giving the wrong card- no points

Then go to next person.

Secret location
    - Each player, without talking, describes a place they are going to.
    - Other players pack their bags for the location.

He thought my two goals were good, and the general premise: Where a player is hurt, and the goal of the game is to make the player feel better. He helped me arrive at two conclusions:
1) It will be fun to draw the gift instead of having pre-conceptualized items
2) It is good to have the "problem" already decided from the players - through drawing cards.
3) These problems should be light, "boy dropped his lollipop" and should not be serious issues such as "depression" because that is inappropriate for complex reasons.

February 3rd
First set of rules and first playtest
The next morning, I had my first set of rules written.
There was one concern about gameplayI had:
1) The player needs to have some restraints for what they could draw. So,
2) Roles would be about "misfortunate characters" better at making enemies than friends for three reasons:
    a) To make it difficult to think of a gift
    b) To show that anyone could make a friend by being nice

Another concern was production ease and production value, an imperative I had going into designing Project 1: "Poor Me".
How could I maximize simplicity to create the best production value in a low amount of time?

 I wanted to create cards with good art, but limit the amount of pieces to simplest and most compact possible: a deck of cards - which could be used twice: to present the conflict, and to

reward the winner of a round. This way, no extra tokens, packaging issues, and fumbling - for both me and the players - will be created.

Therefore, I wanted to contrast the visuals of the cards: to have misfortunate problems on one side of the card, and have daisies and dandelions on the other side.

This was my first pass of creating the rules, much better than my concerning multiple drafts of them for "Poor Me":

Misfortune
(3-5 players)
Misfortune cards - back side - blue and scary. face side - happy and cute with a single flower
All players: Draw a scary face card. This is your role and restraint.

The youngest player starts the game. Order rotates clockwise.
One player draws an daisy card - as soon as this happens, the 30 second timer starts.
Do not show the card. The player cannot speak, but must use their body to show what happened to them.

Then 30 seconds start again, and the other players have to give something to give. Draw something within the theme of your character.

The player who draws the card gives the card to the player with the best gift - the gift that made them feel better most. (Daisy side up)

The game ends when all players have performed 3 times.
The player with the most Flower cards by the end of the game wins.

 I playtested the game with these rough instructions and a different friend from before. I got some feedback: I still need to work on clarity, and I have to update the cards, and change some basic rules such as time limits. The 2 players reported that it made them feel "happy." Did it make them feel peaceful? It's a feel-good game, they said.

Although there is still a charades element, it definitely serves a different audience from the "Poor Me" game I designed before. They like the creative - drawing aspect as well, and would like to keep it.

February 5th

Changes, Revisions, and Reasons why pt. 1

I designed the theme of the game- daisies. This I will need to put onto a card back. I will need to digitize it and make it better, but I am going with the watercolor aesthetic. I also changed the title of the game from "Misfortune" to "Daisies" to: 1) make the game name more memorable, and 2) to keep the players focused on the gift giving aspect more.

I also think that I shouldn't use the Cards Against Humanity mechanic of choosing who gave the best gift, because it redefines gift-giving as a toxic culture of "who gives better gifts than who." This also unfair to the players, because now deciding the "best card" is subjective.

Therefore, this game should be made for 2-5 players, where the gifts actually score a point or don't score a point, and the judge is the performing player.

I also changed the cards so that it doesn't limit performance, but defines what players draw:

Player Roles (scary back)	Limitations
Gorilla	gorilla posture while performing
Vampire	Perform in the darkest corner
Werewolf	howl before and after performing
Pirate	Cannot use dominant hand
Siren/Mermaid	hum when performing
Caveman	cannot touch 21st century technology
Mad Scientist	always hold onto 21st century technology
Surgeon	rub hands before performing an action

Player Roles (scary back)	Drawing Limitations
Gorilla	From the rainforest
Vampire	Gothic or 19th century
Werewolf	Found in the woods
Pirate	Must be stolen
Siren/Mermaid	From the Ocean
Caveman	Prehistoric
Mad Scientist	Made up, futuristic
Surgeon	

Then I decided that defining the limitations hinders player creativity, so I will not define them. Instead, the general limitation for all of the roles is that the player must have access to the item. I want to playtest this. Tomorrow I will playtest. Today, I will figure out the cards and make them printable.

I ended with just this list for the cards:

A	B
Player Roles (scary back)	**Misfortunes (flower back)**
Gorilla	lost spouse's ring
Vampire	favorite food eaten by mom
Werewolf	suffering from dog allergies
Pirate	fell down a beanstalk
Siren/Mermaid	has fruit intolerance
Caveman	wants some time alone
Mad Scientist	stoned by peasants
Surgeon	rejected by a crush
	cannot find baby brother
	the music is too loud
	misses little sister
	broke favorite toy
	book ending was too sad
	water broke
	seasick
	misplaced keys
	feet are on fire
	rejected from a job
	needs to sleep in
	needs coffee

February 6th

Changes, Revisions, and Reasons why pt. 2

Today was the second playtest. I tested the game with another friend using the following rules.

Daisies

A gift-giving game
(2-players)

Setting Up

The two decks- There is a character deck, and a daisy deck. Put these decks face down. Draw from the top of the deck only.
Paper - each player has at least 10 sheets of paper
Timer - use the 20 second timer for each turn.

All players draw a character card from the character deck.

Turn Order

The youngest player starts the game. Order rotates clockwise.

On Each Turn

1) The first player draws a Daisy card. On the other side, this card describe a misfortunate event that has happened to them.

Do not show the card. The player cannot speak, but must use their body to show what happened to them within 20 seconds.

2) Then, the other player has to draw something within the theme their character to give to the performing player - within 20 seconds.

3) The performing player decides if the flower helps their situation. The drawing player could describe how they hoped the gift would help.

Win Conditions

The game ends when both players have performed 3 times. The player with the most flower cards wins the game and cheers from the other player.

Again, I needed to clarify the instructions. I decided to change some of the rules - such as changing the 20 second timer to 30 seconds. Instead of 2 players, the game should have 3-5 players for a much bigger group. Cards also need to be better organized.
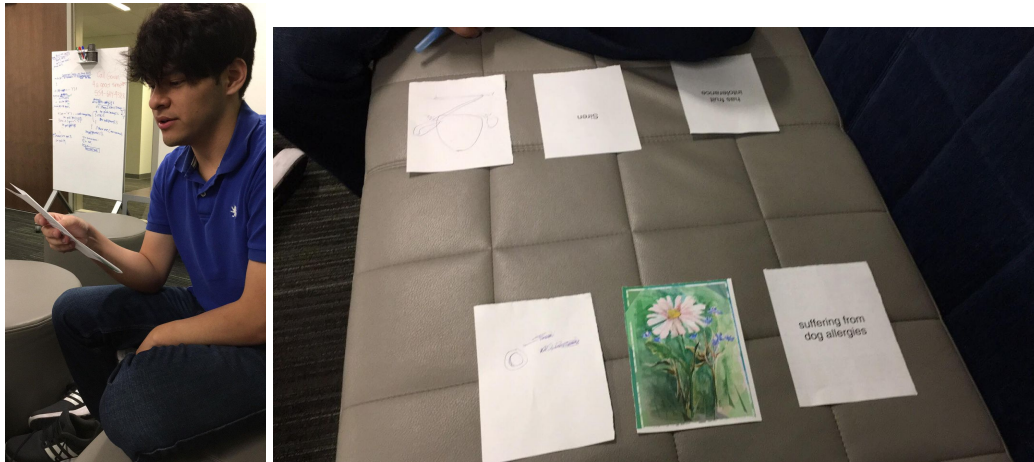
However, I was still concerned that having more players in the game could lead to unrest, making the game not peaceful. One suggestion was to change the win conditions. In the end, changing the competitive aspect of the game to be more collaborative, where either all players or no players win. There should not be a single winner.

Here were some of the drawings drawn. Arguably, the 30 second playtests yielded better drawings, but it's funny how the 20 second drawings required a lot more verbal explanation.
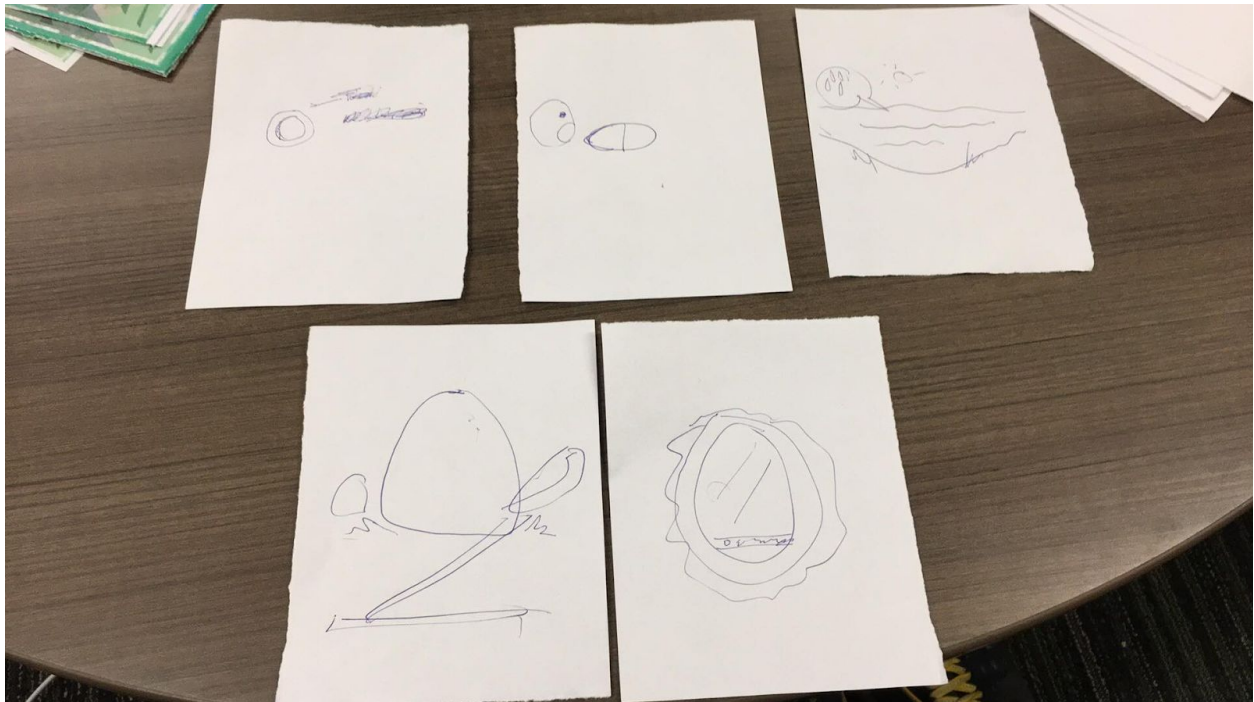
February 7th
Packaging (Reprint, timer, and box art), Instructions rewrite, and Third Playtest.

I packaged the game in a curry box, bought a timer from a friend, and reprinted the character cards. Everything fit perfectly into the box. The packaging is not completely done, but it is ready for review and looks nice temporarily.
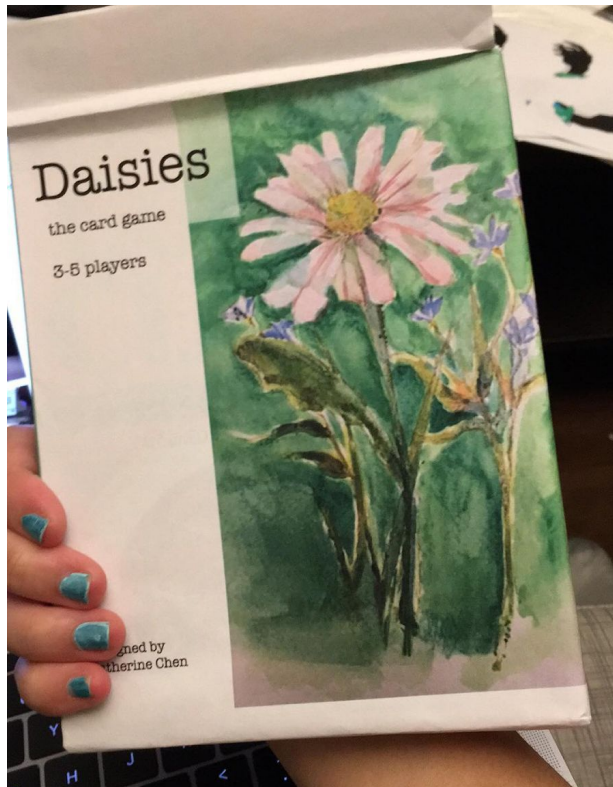
Now I embarked on my third playtest. There still needed to be a few changes to the instructions to make things more clear, but the game is pretty understandable at this point, and the new gameplay is much more clear.
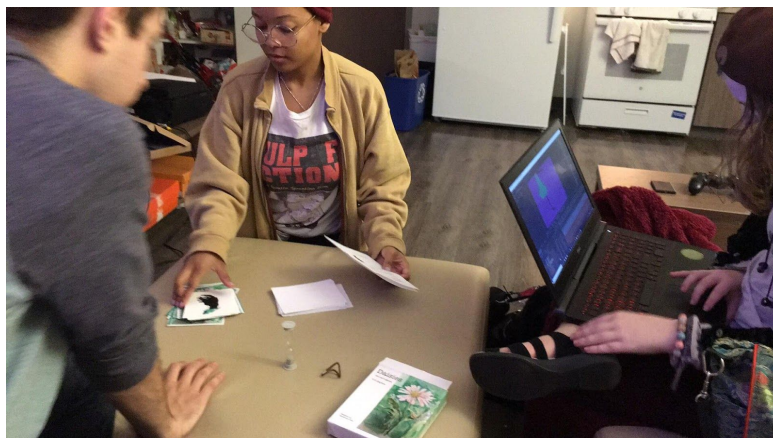
I playtested with 3 players (the fourth player went to finish preparing cookies), and they felt specifically: grateful, camaraderie, good, and happy. They scored daisies much more easily than before when the game was just with two players. But they also cheated and were telling each other the answer on the card.

Therefore, I think the game is balanced - at least for another playtest.

Reading the instructions and getting into the groove of the game took around 2 minutes, because players were distracted, but the rest of the game didn't take long at all, taking about 8 minutes, since this game is already timed to begin with.
I think testing with 4 players will be good for a 12 minute game. But, I am keeping the range from 3-5 players.

February 8th
The Five Person playtest.

Today I performed a 5 person playtest in class. I saw that it took:
40 seconds to unpack
20 seconds to count the paper
1:20 minutes to ge to the "On Each Turn" point in the instructions, and then it took 2 minutes to read through that section as well, taking 4 minutes to start the game. After this, the game continued at a steady pace.

The gameplay went significantly better with this group, and five players was ideal for this game. Players overall felt calm, and happy, felt solidarity but also "loosely together", and felt "creative" but also "creatively bankrupt."

Some instructions details need further clarification after edits from last time, and the drawings were significantly better with the 30 second drawing limit:

This shows a varied style of gifting. Some drew serious objects, and others were funnier, such as slamming a rock on another player's head, or drawing a werewolf (some say, furry worm) begging to be touched.

From this, I realized that not only the dynamics, but also the formal elements of this game actually change depending on who the players are because of the properties of the player: kinds of humor, relationship with other players, and **their mental state** coming into the game.

I realized that I could use this piece of information to improve my game for the next playtest.

February 12th
Emotional changes.

This was what I observed from the other players. As I was writing my playtest report, I decided that there were a lot of rules that I want to keep, because removing or changing them would not help lead my game towards peace.

Thinking of my original inspiration, "Twilight Samurai," I realized that there was a "turbulence" before the "calm" and sense of love/community/family - what I like to call "sweetness." I mapped out the emotions I wanted my player to experience/go through. Interpreting their terms "loose togetherness"

Emotion Arc
Progression Towards "Peace"

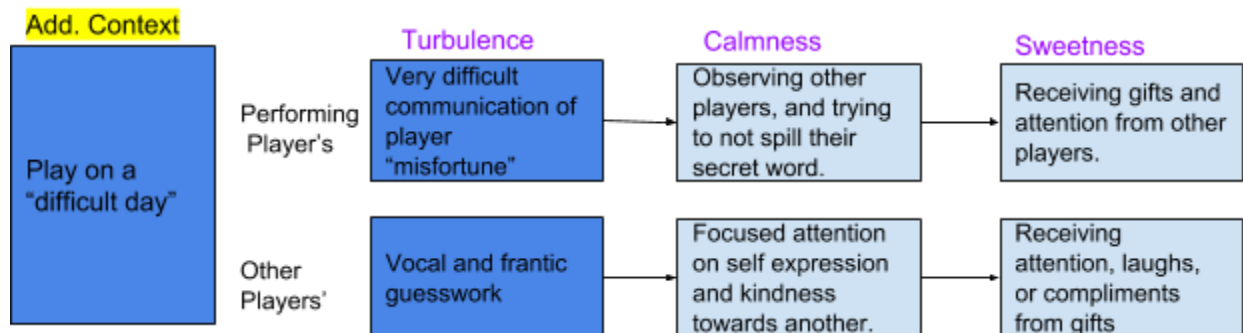|	Turbulence	Calmness	Sweetness
Performing Player's	Very difficult communication of player "misfortune"	Observing other players, and trying to not spill their secret word.	Receiving gifts and attention from other players.
Other Players'	Vocal and frantic guesswork	Focused attention on self expression and kindness towards another.	Receiving attention, laughs, or compliments from gifts

To create a greater sense of turbulence before the calmness, I could change the setting of the game by saying that the game needs to be played on a "difficult day" for some of the players.

This will also give the game a purpose, and possibly make the game a "ritual" by giving it a certain time to play the game.

Emotion Arc
Progression Towards "Peace"

Add. Context		Turbulence	Calmness	Sweetness
Play on a "difficult day"	Performing Player's	Very difficult communication of player "misfortune"	Observing other players, and trying to not spill their secret word.	Receiving gifts and attention from other players.
	Other Players'	Vocal and frantic guesswork	Focused attention on self expression and kindness towards another.	Receiving attention, laughs, or compliments from gifts

February 13th
Instruction revision.

So, today I edited and formatted the instructions. Made the instructions "book" look pretty, drew an additional image for the cover, and also changed the font for the other cards of the game. I will re print onto cardboard and cut, and I think my game will soon be finished!

Daisies

A gift-giving game to play
on a difficult day.
(3-5 players)

Setting Up

The two decks- There is a character deck, and a daisy deck.
Put these decks face down. Draw from the top of the deck only.

Pencil and Paper - each player has to have at least 10 sheets
of paper and a pencil to draw with.

Timer - use the 30 second timer for each turn. The player who
draws the Daisy Card needs to keep track of the timer.

All players take Character Card from
the character deck. Everything the
player sketches will have to be within
the theme of this character. Players
show each other their roles.

Turn Order

The youngest player starts the game.
Order rotates clockwise.

On Each Turn

The player draws a Daisy Card. On the
other side, this card describes a
misfortunate event that has happened
to them.

- Do not show the card.
- The player must act out what happened to them
within 30 seconds - without speaking.
- They do not have to act as their character.
- Other players may speak.
- Do not reveal the card until step 3.

2) Then, the other players have to sketch a gift
 - within the theme of their character-
to give to the player.

3) If any of the gifts help the player feel better, the
player puts the card down, **Daisy side up.**
If not, the player puts the card down **Misfortune
(text) side up.**

Players can do what they want
with the gifts they receive.

Win Conditions

The game ends when all players have performed twice.
If Daisies outnumber the Misfortunes, everyone wins.
If not, everyone loses.

Game is reprinted. 5th playtest.

Today, I performed the 5th playtest with 5 players. This group played the game much differently from the first group. They were much more concerned about making other players laugh - even making fun of the performing player - and liked to make savage remarks to one another.

The players of this group didn't try to read the instructions, and passed it around, each person reading a sentence or two. But eventually, they figured out the game through discussion - and when they read the instructions later on.

They created nice drawings, but the roles were too restrictive for one player (Gorilla) that he decided to break out of their character, and give the players anything they wanted to.
The players are good friends, so some of them decided to be mean to each other and threw the drawings in the trash before looking at it.

It took a long time to play because they liked to talk and got constantly distracted - I will need to try to minimize frustrations of the players by changing the contents of the Daisy and Character Cards and clarify the instructions again. I will also need to draw a cartoon explaining the game.

The emotion arc progression worked, but players did not feel peaceful, because the game was unbalanced. Players felt "calm" in the other playtests, because players drew cards that had similar difficulty. This draw ended up with cards with different difficulties, so players started breaking the rules. So, the biggest problem was that the game was unbalanced, so I will need to rebalance the game. This was causing players to feel frustrated.

February 15th
Rebalancing the game.

I asked four playtesters (one from playtest 1 and 5, two from playtest 3, and one from playtest 2) to rank all of the cards' difficulty, from 1 to 5, to rebalance the game. The cards were ranked:

Role	Playtester 1	Playtester 2	Playtester 3	Playtest 4	Average
~~Gorilla~~ Giant	5	2	3	3	3.25
Mad Scientist	1	2	?	2	1.67
Vampire	3	3	4	2	3
Surgeon	1	2	1	2-3 (2.5)	1.63
Magical Girl	2	1	1	1	1.25
Pirate	3	3	3	2	2.75
Elf	2 (Change this to Santa's Elf)	4	3	2	2.75
Alien	2 (Change this to Space Traveler)	2	?	1	1.67
Zombie	2	5	?	4	3.67
Siren (Mermaid)	4	5	5	3	4.25
Caveman	1	5	5	4	3.75
Werewolf	3	5	4	3-4 (3.5)	3.875

I decided to keep cards with a difficulty rating from **1.25 - 3.5,**
And I decided to remove cards with a difficulty rating greater than **3.5.**

So there are 8 final cards:
Giant, Mad Scientist, Vampire, Surgeon, Magical Girl, Pirate, Elk, and Alien.
I also changed some of the Daisies cards.

February 18th
Daisy Cards and Instruction details.

Player Roles (scary back)	Daisy Cards
Giant	lost spouse's ring
Mad Scientist	favorite food eaten by mom
Vampire	suffering from dog allergies
Surgeon	fell down a beanstalk
Magical Girl	has fruit intolerance
Pirate	wants some time alone
Santa's Elf	stoned by peasants
Space Traveler	rejected by a crush
	baby brother was hurt
	the music is too loud
	misses little sister
	broke favorite action figure
	book ending was too sad
	water broke
	seasick
	forgot to feed cat
	feet are on fire
	rejected from a job
	diary was read out loud
	needs coffee

I fixed the instructions by adding some details that players were not clear about last playthrough.

February 20th

Reprint and Packaging

I edited the Daisy Cards, cut them into curved shapes after reprinting them, and edited the instructions one last time. I also fixed the packaging, made the box close, and made the box nicer.
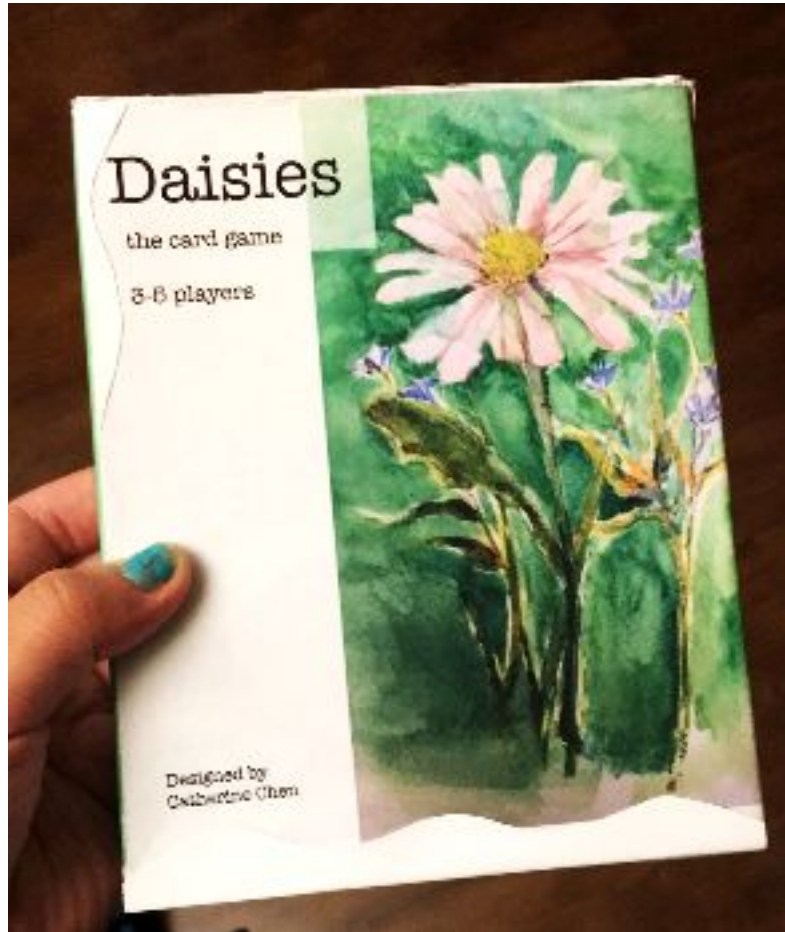
February 21st
Visual instructions - cartoon attempt

I attempted to draw a cartoon to explain the instructions, but after several rough sketches, I was having some trouble and thought that it was not the best choice. I was running out of time, so I decided not to complete it.