



Psy-Connection Award Project Proposal: /com¹mon²/ Love Lab 同理愛情研究所

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Romantic relationships is a large part of life for many. A survey in Hong Kong showed that 71% of respondents indicated they were in a relationship (Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute, 2024). However, relationship dissatisfaction is a pervasive issue that could hamper relational and individual well-being. Data from a local crisis hotline (SBHK, 2024) and university mental wellness clinics (Lo et al., 2020) show that up to 14-18% of help-seeking cases reported facing distress from romantic relationships. In addition, a study found that Hong Kong couples had significantly higher attachment avoidance and anxiety while also having significantly lower relationship satisfaction compared to US couples (Ho et al., 2012). Some studies linked authoritarian filial piety with decreased relationship intimacy and increased insecure attachment (W. Chen et al., 2024; W.-W. Chen & Wu, 2023), suggesting a cultural effect that may not be captured in extant western literature. Aside from these findings, we also identified common themes of stress, such as traditional gender role expectations, relationship with partner's family, sexual incompatibility, and interpersonal boundaries, based on forums and posts from popular local Instagram pages.

Although there are existing efforts that target at improving couples' relationships, they are not attuned to the preferences of local couples. For an example, on top of price concerns, therapy is generally stigmatised in Hong Kong (Chung et al., 2019), and few people would actively seek therapy. For another, although attachment and relationship psychology knowledge and toolkits are abundantly available online and even in Hong Kong retail stores, they are often presented through a Western lens, alienating Hong Kong audiences. Else yet, while relationship improvement tips are frequently posted in Cantonese social media, they are either too generic to provide meaningful guidance or not based on psychological evidence.

1.2 Objectives

To address the market gap, we aim to establish a social enterprise that primarily designs board games for couples. Our vision is to help couples reach common ground through play. Three principles underscore our game designs: 1) being based on psychotherapeutic principles, 2) being attuned to Hong Kong sub-cultural characteristics and references, and 3) being balanced across intensity and fun. Aside from retailing physical board games, we will also provide psychoeducation through social media and organise school/community relationship workshops to holistically provide psychological value to different demographics. Ultimately, our vision is to shape the dating culture in Hong Kong to foster healthy, respectful, and satisfying relationships.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

Our proposed solutions, and especially our first game prototype, are based on emotionally-focused couple therapy (EFCT, Greenberg & Johnson, 1988), which focuses on identifying and restructuring the negative interaction cycles that couples fall into when their attachment needs go unmet. EFCT has accumulated a strong evidence base over the past three decades, with meta-analyses showing recovery rates of around 70% and significant improvements in relationship satisfaction that are maintained at follow-up (Beasley & Ager,

2019; Spengler et al., 2024). Additionally, with culturally sensitive adaptation, there is emerging evidence that EFCT could also be beneficial to Chinese couples (Tseng et al., 2026).

Beyond EFCT, we also aim to develop our products eclectically, incorporating frameworks such as the Gottman method couple therapy (Gottman et al., 2019), integrative behavioural couple therapy (IBCT, Jacobson et al., 2000), and narrative couple therapy (Freedman, 2019).

1.4 Social Impact

Our project emphasises scientific rigour, cultural sensitivity, and financial sustainability, ensuring that our media and game products undergo rigorous research and development while also being consistently updated to fit evolving social trends. As a result, couples who enjoy our content and games will continually gain invaluable psychological insight and emotional sensitivity, in turn improving their relationship satisfaction and mental well-being. Our school/community efforts will also raise awareness on healthy dating practices and improve emotional literacy, preventing future relational or mental issues. In addition to direct interventions, the media and brand presence of our project will serve to raise awareness on adaptive romantic relationships, inspiring the general public to prioritise fostering a satisfying love relationship. To ensure sustainability, we will also register as a social enterprise to establish our brand as a company that provides social value in a self-sustaining manner.

2. Solution

Our short-term strategy is to build a social media presence on Instagram from March to May 2026. The media presence will serve to increase awareness on relational health while also advertising for our first upcoming board game, which is planned to be production-ready by August 2027. A detailed timeline is available in Appendix 1.

2.1 Social Media Campaign

As part of our outreach and public engagement efforts, this social enterprise will maintain an active presence on Instagram, with content designed to bridge the gap between empirical psychological knowledge and everyday relationship experiences within the Hong Kong context.

Our social media strategy will be guided by two core principles: scientific accuracy and cultural relatability. All content will be grounded in established psychological literature and reviewed for accuracy prior to publication, while being communicated in a manner that is accessible and resonant to a local audience. A screen capture of our page is available in Appendix 2.

The primary content format will be a structured short-form video series (reels), comprising five thematic series, each consisting of three episodes. Each series will adopt a psychoeducational myth-deconstruction framework, systematically addressing prevalent

misconceptions held by couples and individuals in dating relationships. For example, normative beliefs around conflict avoidance, communication expectations, and family dynamics. Episodes will be released on a weekly basis to sustain audience engagement and facilitate incremental learning.

In a subsequent phase, following the completion of our board game production, the platform will be utilised for targeted promotional content to raise awareness of the product. Post-launch, user-generated feedback and engagement data collected via social media will be systematically reviewed to inform iterative improvements to the board game, ensuring the product remains responsive to the needs of its intended audience.

This phased approach is intended to reflect a commitment to sustainable, evidence-informed community engagement, whilst leveraging digital platforms to normalise help-seeking behaviours and promote psychological literacy around romantic relationships in Hong Kong.

2.2 Board Game Production

2.2.1 Research and Development

Game mechanism. To ensure scientific rigour and game quality, our game development steps will adhere to the following steps:

1. To conduct a review of the literature on the relational problem we aim to address.
2. To read local media and to interview Hong Kong couples to identify culturally specific considerations for the problem.
3. Adapt evidence-based therapeutic frameworks into a gamified format that addresses the problem in a fun and engaging manner.
4. Send out prototypes to different couples to obtain feedback.
5. Consult psychological professionals for feedback.

Design and prototyping. For swift iteration and creative freedom, we will design all elements in-house and 3D print initial prototypes in our studio. We will mass produce our games once we finalise the content and design elements.

2.2.2 Manufacturing and Distribution

At our current scale, we will source components from local printing shops and mainland game piece manufacturers while we package the games in-house. Our main distribution channel is through our Instagram shop, but as expand, we will partner with local board game stores, board game cafes and also retail shops like Log-on to sell our products physically.

As the demand for our game increases, we will reach out to board game publishers to automate the whole manufacturing and distribution process.

2.2.3 First Prototype

Our first prototype game is called 畫／話 and it is a turn-taking drawing and guessing game. Players receive a prompt card and are asked to recall a moment described by the prompt. Depending on the level, the guessing player will guess the a) surface emotion, b) secondary emotion, c) primary emotion, or d) attachment needs of the moment drawn by the drawing player. Players are then invited to share their thoughts about that round based on guiding questions on the back of the prompt card. The game prototype showcase can be found in Appendix 3.

2.3 Financial Planning

Since our team consists of a full-time student and a member with a current full-time job, the project is run in our spare time and with our own capital. To accelerate our transition from a side project to a social enterprise, we are looking for seed funding for our prototyping costs and to cover our first batch of manufacturing costs.

We have the following one-year financial plan:

<u>Funding Income</u>	<u>Unit Amount</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Psy-Connection Award	\$10,000	1	\$10,000
Other potential funding ¹	\$20,000	2	\$40,000
<u>Revenue</u>			
Board game sales	\$299	200	\$59,800
School/community workshops	\$800	3	\$2,400
Total			\$112,200

¹ Potential funding sources include startup competitions from CUHK, Enactus, and other business organisations.

<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Unit Amount</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Rent	\$32,400	1	\$32,400
Board game manufacturing	\$106 ²	200	\$21,200
Transportation & delivery	\$2,000	1	\$2,000
Business registration fee	\$2,350	1	\$2,350
Advertisement	\$500	12	\$6,000
Accounting fees	\$5,000	1	\$5,000
Legal fees	\$10,000	1	\$10,000
Design software and materials	\$1,000	1	\$1,000
Founders' compensation	\$16,125	2	\$32,250
Total			\$112,200

² A detailed breakdown is available in Appendix 4.

3. Frequently Asked Questions

3.1 How is the risk of conflict during vulnerable mutual sharing managed?

A: Our games feature innovative “function cards” that allow players to take breaks or show love to each other whenever they feel the need. We also design games with varying levels of depth so that couples may choose to start with positive or easier experiences or explore deeper issues together. (Appendix 3)

3.2 How do we adapt Western psychological frameworks to remain culturally relevant and resonant within the Hong Kong context?

A: We will look for empirical validation studies or expert opinion from psychological professionals if empirical evidence was not available. We will also conduct our own qualitative investigation by interviewing couples or looking up online posts and forums.

3.3 How do you sustain long-term player engagement across repeated gameplay experiences?

A: We will design upwards of 50 game prompt cards so that it takes at least several gameplay sessions to fully exhaust. The prompts are also general enough to allow repeated playing. We also plan to sell expansion question packs that touch on different topics of attachment for couples who want fresh questions with a familiar gameplay format.

3.4 What makes your team suited to executing this project?

A: Our team comes from backgrounds of psychology and architecture while also having experience in special education and multimedia content creation. This gives us domain knowledge, practical experience, and design capabilities. Our connections with social workers, psychological professionals, arts supplies companies, and content creators place us at a unique advantage of blending psychological knowledge with high-quality product and media design. Our team being a couple also boosts customer relations through relatability and founder-product fit. For an introduction of our team, please reference Appendix 5.

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5. Appendix

5.1 Appendix 1: Project Timeline

<u>Timeline</u>	<u>Activities</u>	<u>Status</u>
Jan to Feb 2026	<u>Ideation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literature review on relational problems in Hong Kong contexts Local media research & couple interviews for cultural considerations Initial game mechanism design for 畫/話 	Completed
Mar to May 2026	<u>Media Presence Establishment</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Psychoeducation blog posts on Instagram Psychoeducation and role-playing skits reels 	Ongoing
	<u>Research and Development</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of the board game prototype to a complete product Quotation with manufacturing companies 	Ongoing
Apr to May 2026	<u>Market Testing</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prototype distributed to couples for feedback Consultation with psychological professionals Iterative design refinements based on feedback 	Planned
May to Jul 2026	<u>Production Preparation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalise game content and design elements Source components from local printing shops and mainland manufacturers In-house packaging setup Social media shifts to board game promotional content 	Planned
Aug to Dec 2026	<u>Launch and Distribution</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch via Instagram shop Partner outreach to board game stores, cafes, Log-on Post-launch feedback collection via social media 	Speculated
2027 and Onwards	<u>Post-Launch and Expansion</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Iterative game updates based on customer feedback Adapting games to school/community workshop settings Development of second board game Outreach to board game publishers for scaled manufacturing 	Speculated

5.2 Appendix 2: Social Media Content

com1mon2 ...
/com'mon?/ love lab 同理愛情研究所
1 post 63 followers 2 following

Reaching Common Ground through Play
❤️ 愛情心理學 | 情侶桌遊 (敬請期待)
📍 香港

Followed by ... and 36 more

Following Message

「嗰人話拍拖遇到問題就要解決，但點解我地成日都解決唔到？」
「根本明明好小事，但點解最尾會搞成咁？」

com1mon2 Original audio

com1mon2 #同理研究01
「你都唔明我講緊乜！你有冇聽緊我講野架？」
「你家陣咩態度呀？我咁都叫冇聽你講？」

以上嘅對話，有冇係你地關係入面出現過？鬧完又鬧，但係永遠都好似解決唔到個問題，甚至乎愈鬧愈僵，感覺越黎越疏遠對方。

今次嘅 #同理研究 想同大家探討一個好重要嘅問題：點解我地成日鬧交，但係永遠都沒完沒了？

當一對伴侶陷入爭執嘅時候，表面可能係睇緊邊個比多叻錢、邊個成日遲到，但實際上，兩個人都唔度表達緊完全唔同層面嘅需要。

比如A同B鬧交嘅時候：
A：「你成日掛住做嘢，放假都唔陪我。」
B：「我咁辛苦做嘢都係為左我地嘅將來，你咁都唔體諒我？」

表面睇，佢哋好似緊「陪伴」同「工作」嘅問題。但係如果我哋仔細傾落去，會發現：

A真正想講嘅可能係：「我需要感受到你重視我，我需要感覺到同你有連繫。」
B真正想講嘅可能係：「我需要你欣賞我嘅付出，我需要你信任我係為咗我哋嘅將來。」

Liked by ... and 39 others
18 hours ago

Add a comment... Post

Instruction manual:

我們為什麼玩這個遊戲？

生活中，有很多時刻我們一起經歷，卻不一定知道對方心裡在想什麼。

也許是那天傍晚，我們並肩走在回家的路上，你突然安靜了。

也許是那次爭吵後，你笑著說「沒事」，但我知道，那不是事實的全貌。

這個遊戲，是為了那些「未曾被看見」或「不知道怎麼問」的瞬間。

透過畫畫，我們把心裡的感覺變成線條；

透過對話，我們把那些線條，讀成彼此的故事。

遊戲步驟

步驟一：抽牌與朗讀

玩家1從情境卡牌堆中抽取最上面的一張牌，看清楚牌面上的「情境描述」後，將問題情境讀給玩家2聽。例如：「近排我哋一個平凡但覺得特別嘅時刻。」

步驟二：作畫與計時

玩家2聽到情境後，拿起白板筆在白板上畫出這個情境。與此同時，玩家1啟動60秒計時器，玩家2須在限時內完成畫作。

步驟三：展示畫作

玩家2將畫好的白板卡，面朝上放置在遊戲板的正中央。

步驟四：猜測情境

玩家1仔細觀察玩家2的畫作，並根據圖畫猜測原始的情境是什麼。玩家1可以直接說出他的猜測。

步驟五：猜測情緒

接著，玩家1要試著揣測：在原始描述的情境中，玩家2當下感受到的主要情緒/情感需要是什麼？

玩家1拿起代表自己的兩個小棋子，分別把一個棋子放在圓環的內圈，另一個放在外圈，分別是他認為最符合玩家2情緒的那個詞語旁邊（例如：滿足、緊張、恐懼、不屑...）。

步驟六：核對答案

玩家2現在要揭曉答案：

首先，向玩家1公佈原始情境是否被猜對（可以簡單回應「對」或「不對，其實是...」）接著，看看玩家1的棋子放在哪個情緒/情感需要上。玩家2分享自己在那個情境中，真實感受到的情緒是什麼，並驗證玩家1是否猜中。

步驟七：深度對話

玩家1將剛才抽到的情境卡牌翻到背面，上面有三個引導性的問題。玩家1和玩家2針對這個情境和彼此的感受，一起討論、分享。這一步是遊戲的核心，目的是為了更深入了解對方。

步驟八：新的回合

玩家1與玩家2交換角色（下一輪由玩家2抽牌，玩家1畫畫），進行新的回合。

三個等級，三種深度

遊戲有三個等級的情境卡牌，你可以根據你們的關係和當下的心情，選擇從哪裡開始。

第一級：看見情緒

適合剛開始玩、或者想輕輕鬆鬆聊天的時候。

這一級關注的是：那一刻，你的心是什麼感覺？

第二級：聽見心底

當你們準備好，往深一點的地方走。

這一級關注的是：你表現出來的情緒，和你真正感受到的情緒，是一樣的嗎？

第三級：讀懂渴望

當你們願意觸碰心裡最柔軟的地方。

這一級關注的是：情緒背後，藏著一個怎樣的渴望？

你可以從第一級開始，慢慢往上走；

也可以直接選今天最適合你們的那一級。

沒有標準答案，只有你們準備好的深度。

遊戲配件

1. 情境卡牌（三個等級）—— 那些我們可能一起經歷過的瞬間
2. 白板卡 —— 讓感覺有形狀
3. 白板筆與擦布 —— 畫錯也沒關係，就像人生可以重來
4. 60秒計時沙漏 —— 讓直覺領先思考
5. 遊戲板 —— 我們的對話基地
6. 共感圓環 —— 情緒和需要的地圖
7. 玩家棋子 —— 代表「我覺得你是這個感覺」

開始之前

把遊戲板放在兩人中間。

洗勻情境卡牌，放在一旁。

準備好白板卡、筆、沙漏和棋子。

畫/話

兩個人，一支筆，一段時間。

這不是一場比賽，而是一次邀請——邀請你和我，用畫說話，用話走近彼此。

最後想跟你說.....

重點不在畫技。

畫得好不好看，不重要。

重要的是，你試著把心裡的感觉，變成我能看見的形狀。

猜錯，也是禮物。

有時候，我們正是因為看錯，才有機會看得更清楚。

你會知道，原來你想像中的我，和真實的我，中間有一段距離。

而這段距離，現在可以靠近一點點。

用心傾聽。

當對方說話的時候，不急著回應，不急著解釋。

只是騰出心靈的空間細心傾聽，試著感受他為什麼這麼說。

誠實分享。

你越願意說出真實的感受，這個遊戲就會越好玩。

因為真正的連結，從來不是完美，而是真實。

隨時可以暫停

遊戲進行的任何時刻，任何一個人都可以打出一張功能卡牌，例如是：

抖抖牌：

暫停3分鐘。去喝口水、看看窗外，再回來。

攪攪牌：

暫停遊戲，先給彼此一個擁抱。有時候，肢體語言比說話更快到達對方的心。

呼吸牌：

一起做三次深呼吸。吸氣——呼氣——讓心靜下來，再繼續。

5.4 Appendix 4: Board Game Production Cost Breakdown

<u>Component</u>	<u>Unit Amount</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Box	\$20	1	\$20
Card	\$1	60	\$60
Cardboard component	\$5	1	\$5
Whiteboard card	\$2	1	\$2
Wooden figure	\$1	4	\$4
Instruction booklet	\$2	1	\$2
Marker pen	\$2	2	\$4
Hourglass	\$7	1	\$7
Filling mould	\$1	1	\$1
Packing bags	\$0.2	5	\$1
Total			\$106

5.5 Appendix 5: Team Members

Founder – Elias Tse

- Current student in CUHK M.A. in Psychology full time programme.
- The American Institute of Architects Hong Kong Scholastic Award 2025
- Graduated from CUHK B.S.Sc in Architecture with First Class Honours.
- CUHK Architecture Best Studio Project Award 24/25; 22/23.
- Designed and held board game sessions for SEN children.

Co-Founder & Secretary – Gabriel Cheung

- Special education needs teaching assistant at a local secondary school.
- Graduated from CUHK B.S.Sc in Psychology with First Class Honours.
- Founding member of “SoulFeed”, an emotional eating psychological intervention programme.