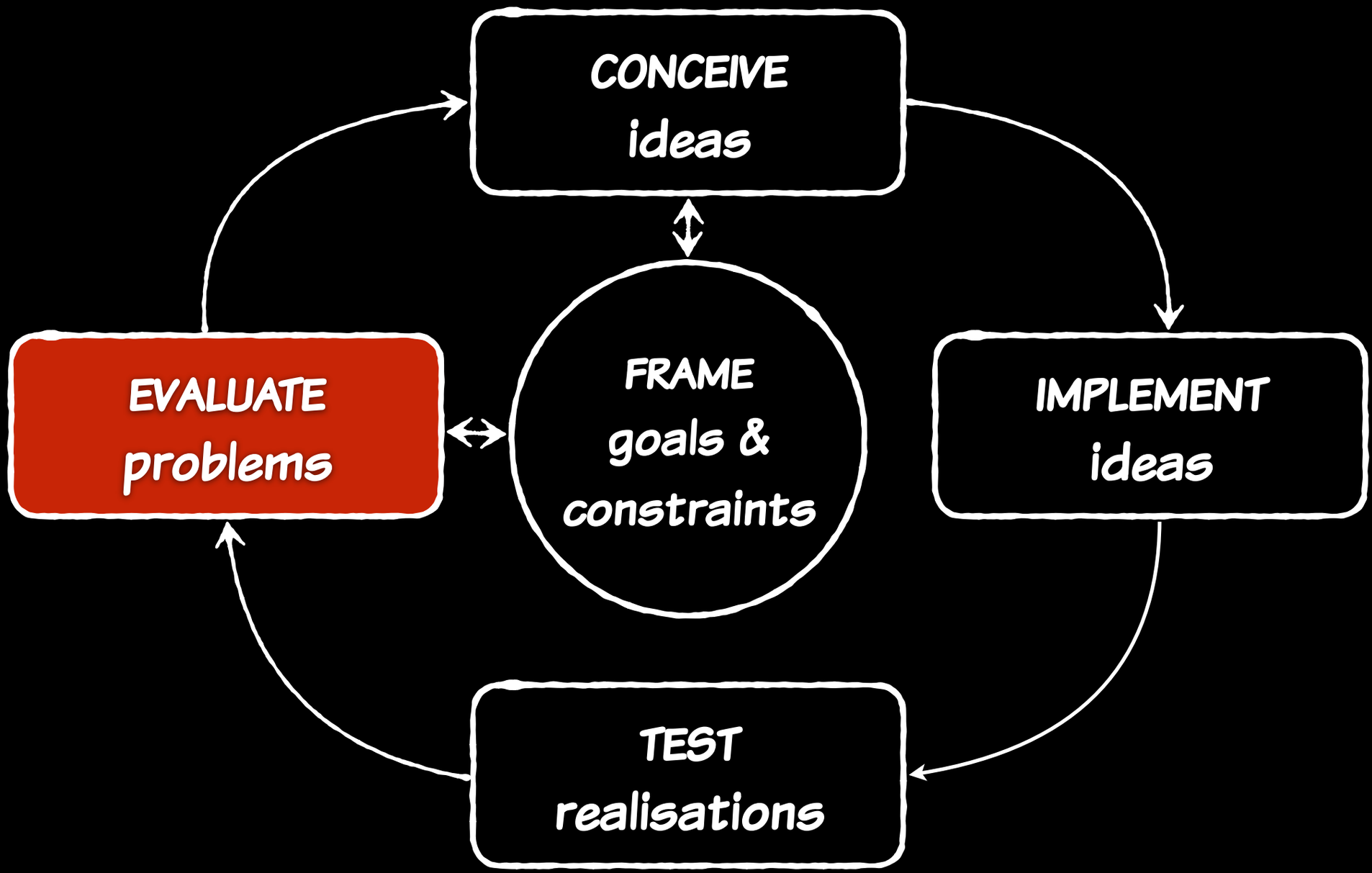
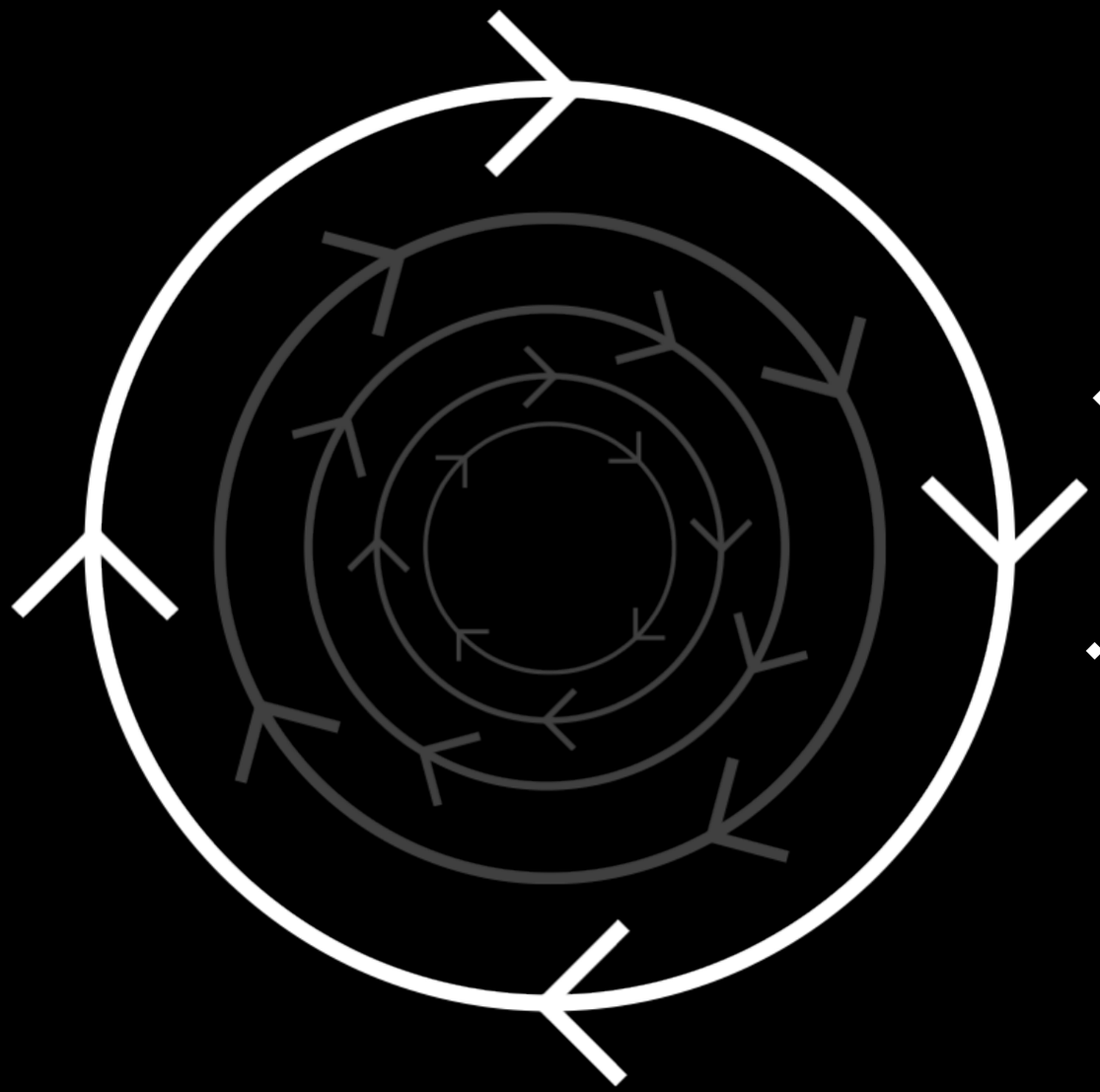
01.10
EVALUATING
Transformational Play

Sebastian Deterding
Imperial College London


CONCEIVE
ideas
EVALUATE
problems
FRAME
goals &
constraints
IMPLEMENT
ideas
TEST
realisations

PLAYTESTS COLLECT DATA ON THE QUESTIONS OUR PROTOTYPES POSE. EVALUATION TURNS THE DATA INTO ACTIONABLE ANSWERS FOR REVISIONS.

AN *iteration* CAN MEAN ...

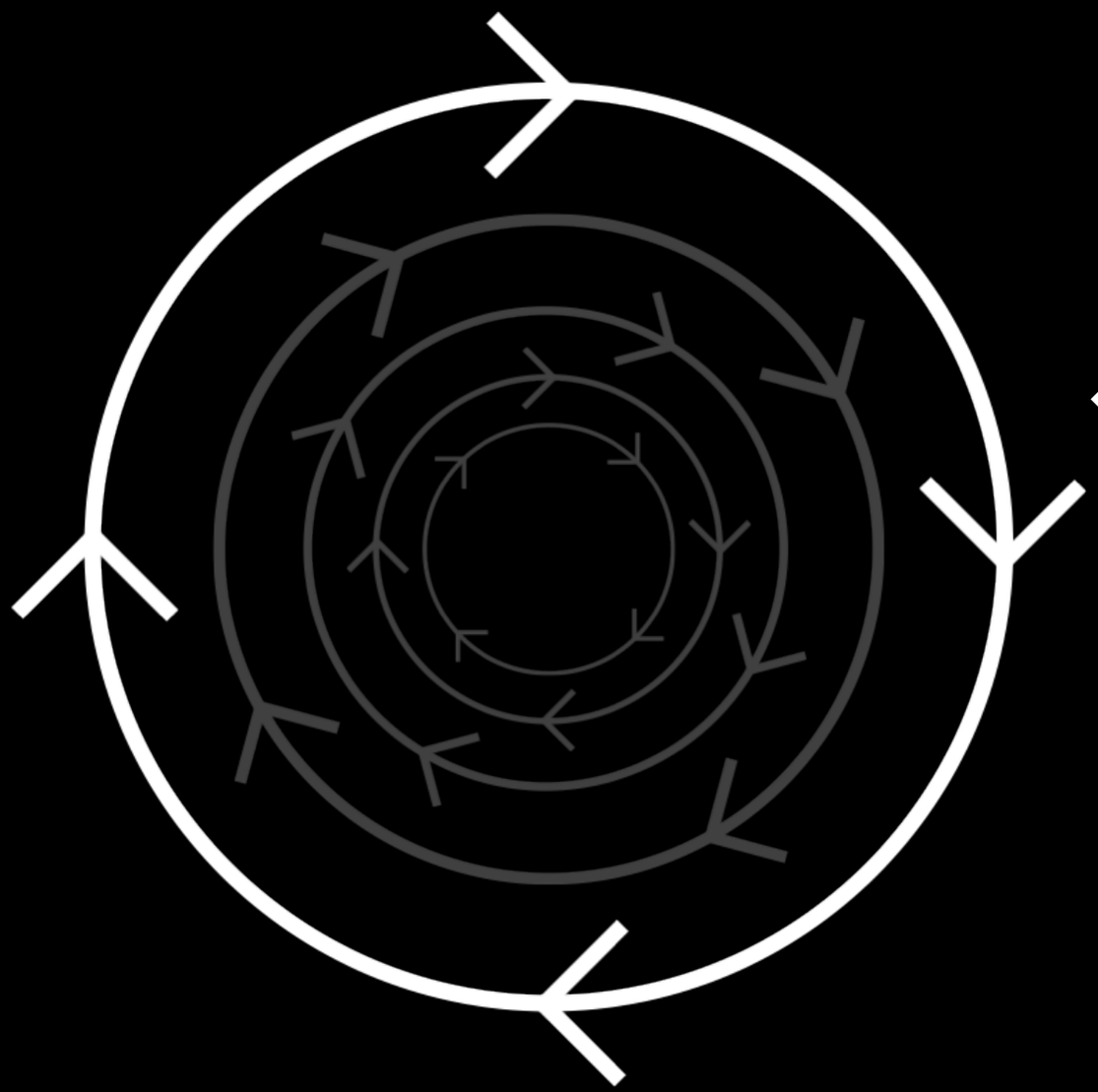


rework
EXISTING STUFF

add
NEW STUFF

reframe
GOAL ('PIVOT')

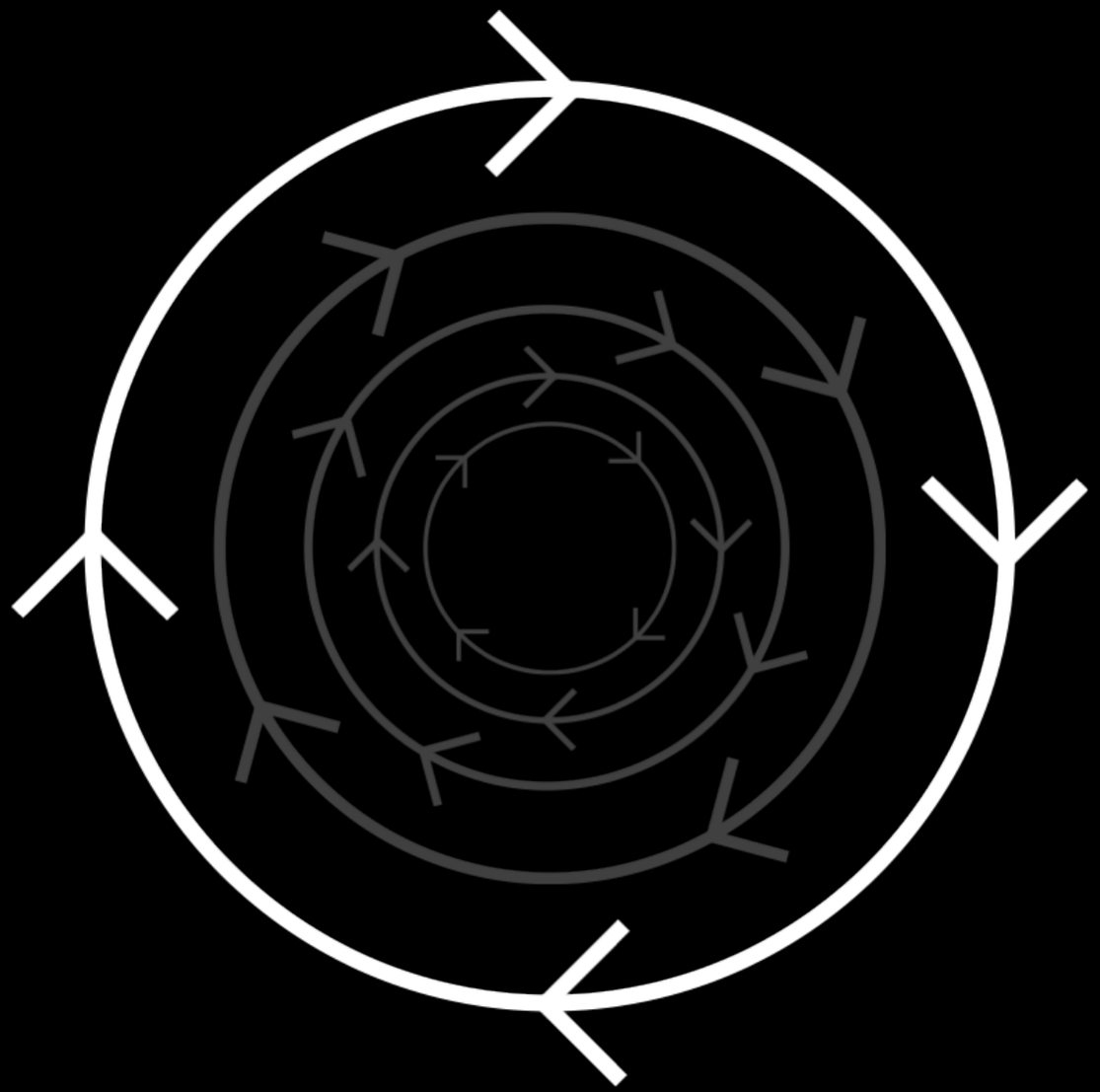
AN *iteration* CAN MEAN ...



rework EXISTING STUFF

when playtesting found major issues with tested design

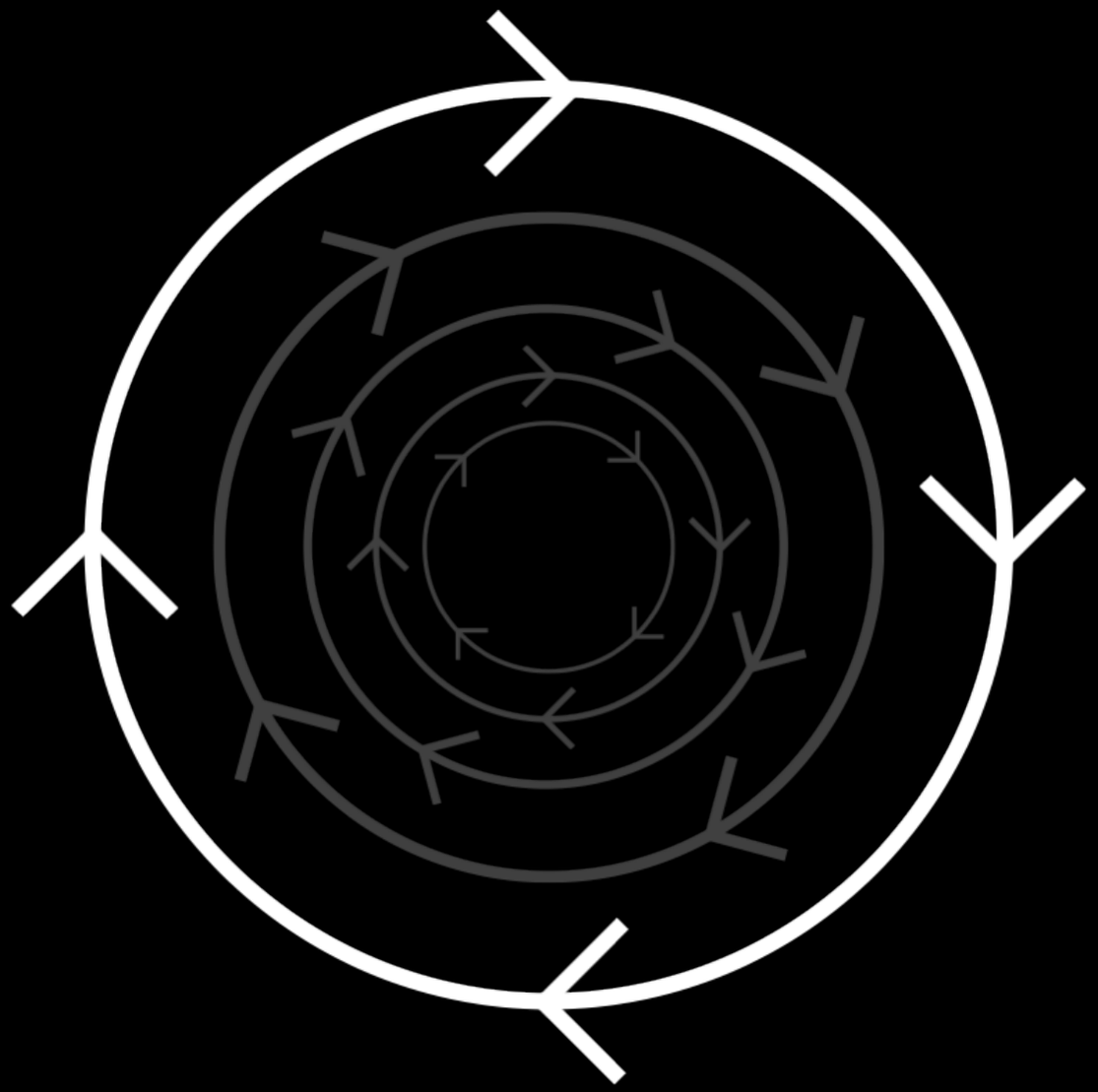
AN *iteration* CAN MEAN ...



add
NEW STUFF

when playtesting found
tested design works

AN *iteration* CAN MEAN ...



reframe GOAL ('PIVOT')

when playtesting found current values can't be achieved in constraints – or design supports unexpected, desired alternative values

WHAT MAKES A GOOD EVALUATION?

- Concrete, evidenced, actionable issues, not vague impressions:
  - Good: ‘Choosing weapons is not interesting: all players went for the sword’
  - Bad: ‘The combat is not fun’
- Answering to your playtest question(s)
- Prioritised issues
- Positive and negative issues

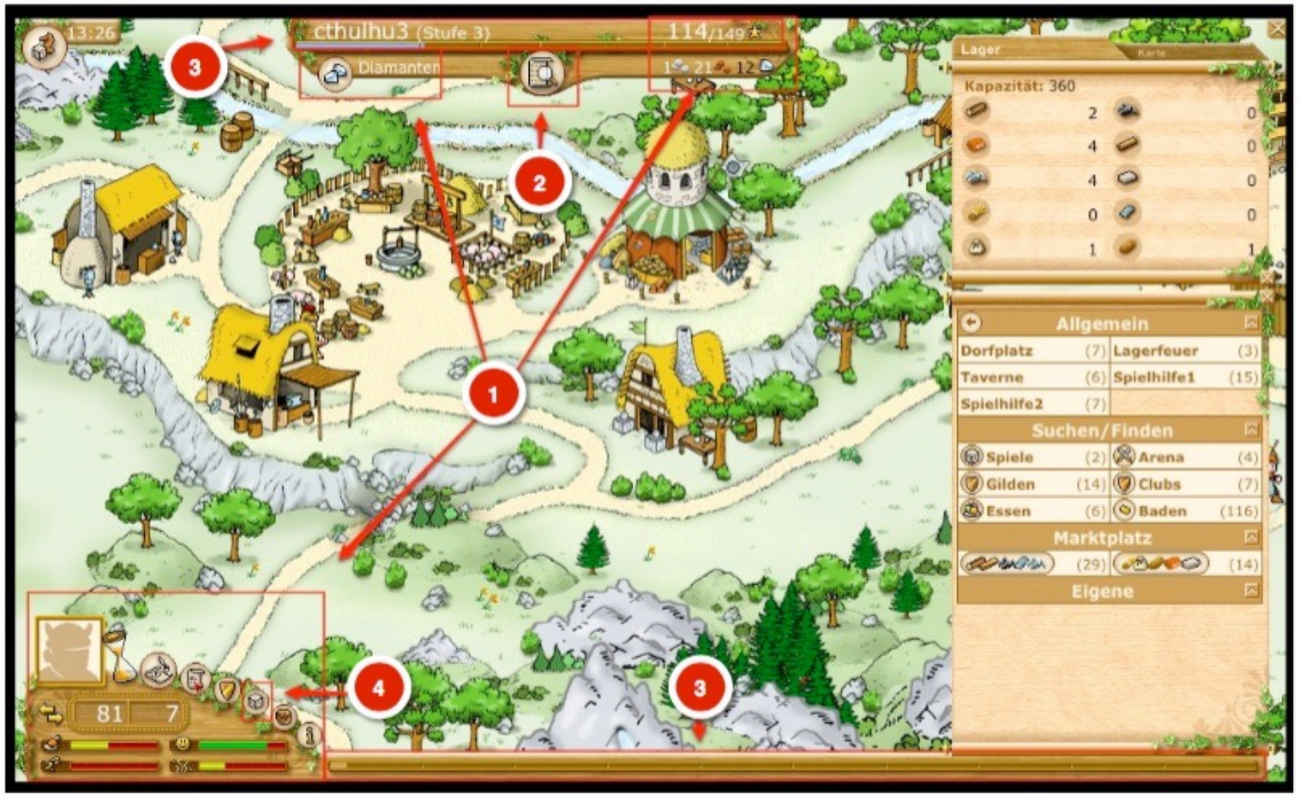
OFTEN A "PLAYTEST REPORT"

1. Players understood the game and its target genre as a VR story puzzler.
"A puzzle game: interact with stories to progress the story." (1)
"And Indiana Jones-style room with a Portal-style book. A VR point and click adventure" (2)
"An interactive storytelling game" (3)
"A casual puzzle solving and storytelling experience" (4)

2. The game is on target for a casual family audience of all ages because it is very accessible – a good first 'entry' game for people who typically don't play VR games. It would not appeal to an action-oriented core gamer audience. With more complex puzzles, it might also appeal to 'smart' Indie puzzler fans (Portal, The Witness).

The imagined target audience is "older kids to younger teenagers (10-13) - with more complex puzzles, older puzzle fans like The Witness, The Talos Principle". (1)
"A non-core gamer audience who plays Wii Sports, good for children, senior citizens, family play" (2)
"Anyone, younger children, people who never played a game before" (3)
"Great gift for people who like smart puzzlers like Portal" (3)
"Good for my parents as an exemplar of what VR can be, because it is so accessible" (4)
"Casual gamers: I can see my mum playing it", or the smart "non-gamer brother" (5)

A01 Interface-Aufbau







#	Finding	Schwere*
1	Die verschiedenen Punkte und Währungen, die der Spieler sammelt, sind nicht schlüssig an verschiedenen Stellen des Screens verteilt: Aktions- und Berufspunkte unten links, Sozialpunkte oben rechts, Diamanten oben an zwei Stellen, Geld oben rechts. **Empfehlung**: Berufs- & Aktionspunkte mit Icons versehen und mit Sozialpunkten unten links zusammenlegen; „Sanduhr" für die Auffüllung von Berufspunkten visuell neben diese platzieren. Den Diamantenzähler neben Diamanten-Button platzieren.	★★
2	An dieser Stelle habe ich mein Questlog vermutet. Es ist aber eine Highscoreliste. **Empfehlung**: S.u., 5.: Die Highscoreliste gehört zu Community-bezogenen Features und sollte mit diesen zusammengelagert werden.	★
3	Der „Alter"-Zähler war mir mehrere reale Tage Spielzeit völlig entgangen. Die visuelle Zusammenordnung von Stufe, Erfahrungspunktebalken und Sozialpunkten erweckt den Eindruck, die Sozialpunkte würden die Erfahrung zählen. **Empfehlung**: Erfahrungspunktebalken und Alter-Balken an einer Stelle zusammenführen und Balken benennen: „Erfahrung" bzw. „Alter"	★
4	Ich verstehe nicht: Wenn ich hier auf das Minispiel-Icon klicke, bekomme ich dann Spaß oder nicht? **Empfehlung:** Wenn nein, Icon tilgen.	★
5	In dieser Anzeige vermischen sich Aktionen verschiedener Kategorien: (blau): Auf den Spieler bezogene Elemente: Profil, Nachrichten, Inventar. (orange): Forum, Gilden, Minispiele. (grün): Allgemeine Spiel-Info. Diese sollten zusammengeordnet werden: (1) Spieler-Elemente: Profil, Questbuch, Nachrichten, Inventar. (2) Community-Elemente: Forum, Highscoreliste, Gilden. (3) Hilfe.	★★
6	Diese Füllbalken sind für das Spiel zentral, der Spieler erfährt aber an dieser Stelle nicht, welche Rolle sie konkret spielen und wie er sie wieder auffüllen kann. Das Spiel versorgt ihn stattdessen bei Wieder-Einloggen mit Tipp-Overlays, die er rasch wieder vergißt. **Empfehlung:** Längeres Mouse-Hover über dem Balken löst ausführlicheren Mouseovertext aus. Klickbarkeit des Balkens signalisieren (Button-Look). Klick auf Balken produziert ein Menü, in dem der Spieler eine Erläuterung erhält, wie er die Balken wieder auffüllen kann, sowie Buttons, über die er direkt Auffüllungen (Duftwasser, Bier, Kaffee, …) kaufen kann.	★★★

* Schwere bewertet in 1 (unwichtig) bis 4 (kritisch) Sternen

High

Unclear Feedback During Boat Puzzle: The puzzle element wherein the player must place repair the boat, and then place it into the book is very difficult to solve because players often have a hard time determining that the boat is broken at all. While the mast moves around, this movement is likely difficult to detect when the player is waving it around in their arms, and the feedback when the boat hits the water just appears as though it's fell through the floor. Players don't appear to understand that the ship is broken or sinking when it hits the floor, and therefore don't seek an appropriate solution. Additionally, some players misinterpreted the hint provided in the dialogue, with one trying to look for the pirate ship on the horizon.

Suggestion: Consider adding clear visual feedback that the ship is sinking and in need of repair (e.g. show water gushing out of it as it slowly sinks down). Consider tweaking the dialog so that it's clearer what is happening when players place the broken ship into the book (e.g. "I think I see them on the horizon, but

Below, as soon as players drop the boat it disappears, falling through the ocean. As this happens very quickly, players don't necessarily understand that the boat has sunk.



Good	Observations marked as good highlight some areas of the game where players are progressing as intended, without issue.
High	Issues marked as having high impact either present barrier to the players progress that is very difficult to recover from or, cause a persistent and significant inconvenience to the player and the way they are able to interact with the game.
Medium	Issues marked as medium priority typically present barriers to the players progression which are recoverable with perseverance or moderate inconveniences to how the player is able to interact with the game.
Low	Issues marked as low priority typically present mild inconveniences to the way that the player interacts with the game. Although players are able to consistently overcome these issues, many low priority issues may see the player interacting with the game in a way that harms the player experience.
Comment	Comments are made when the issue regards the game design, and not a usability issue. These often call into the question the game design and ask the developer if the player behaviour aligns with how they want players to experience the game. In other cases, the comment will highlight the user experience impact of certain design

HOW AN END RESULT MAY LOOK LIKE

Issue: Dice drafting rule unclear
What: Player A repeatedly chose wrong dice to roll
Why: Rule book doesn't state rule!

Issue: Dice drafting rule unclear
What: Player B asked clarification after reading rule book
Why: Rule book doesn't state rule!

Dice drafting unclear

Issue: Betting is tense
What: Player B wrestled with bet, stated 'how much should I bet, that's such a tough question!'
Why: Multiple options that appear equally good

PROPOSED PROCESS: EVALUATE PLAYTESTS

Goal: Learn how to derive actionable direction from playtesting data

1. In your team, recall your playtesting question and design values.

2. Now jointly work through your notes, calling out one relevant event you observed or heard at a time. Rework your notes into the following format if needed, one post-it per event:

    a. What happened? Note the concrete event, with player quotes if you have them, e.g. ‘Player A repeatedly chose wrong dice to roll’ or ‘Player B on betting: ‘This is fun!’’

    b. What is the issue? Note why this event matters for your design, esp. Your playtesting question on design values. E.g. ‘Dice selection rule unclear’, ‘Betting mechanic is good’

    c. Why did this happen? Optional: If not obvious and it helps in iteration, note your explanation for what caused this issue. Skip if obvious or you don’t have a good answer backed by your data. E.g. ‘Rulebook doesn’t state which dice to pick’

3. Cluster post-its with the same issue.

4. Now rank (clusters of) issues in their importance for improving the game – overall and with regard to your playtesting question, e.g. using dot voting.

5. If you have time, use the top three issues as prompts for idea generation for your next iteration.