

Inspired by: <https://majcher.itch.io/24-game-poems>

Play to Lift

A game poem by Sylan Troh

For 3-6 people. If you have more people, you can split up into smaller groups.

You are playing as a group of friends who haven't met in a while and are catching up at the gym. Each player should think of a near future life goal that their character is working towards before play begins. These characters should know each other, so introduce your character's name to each other, and set your status in VR to your character's name (or wear a nametag in real life).

The game begins with the characters all meeting up at the gym. There's some catching up to do because none of the characters have seen each other in a while. If a character is asked "how are you doing" or something similar, the spotlight is now on that character. They should tell the others how they're doing, and also talk about their goal.

Now it's time to lift some weights. Either use a prop, or mime lifting some weights (please don't use actual weights!). The player doing the lifting picks a secret number between zero and the number of players (minus themselves), and starts lifting. Their character can't quite lift it all the way, but the other characters can start encouraging them. If they get exactly as many cheers as the secret number that they picked, then their character succeeds, and manages to lift the weights! If they get too few, then they can't muster the motivation to push through, and fail to lift the weights. Also, if they get too many cheers, then the pressure to succeed becomes too much, and they get overwhelmed, and fail.

Take a short time to reflect on how the character feels, and how their success/failure makes them feel about their life. But then it's time to get back to catching up, so ask another character who hasn't gone yet "how are you doing" and repeat until everyone has had a turn to go. Once everyone has gone, characters who failed the first time have the opportunity to try lifting the weights again. But if they fail again, that's it.

When everyone is finished, the characters say their goodbyes and leave the gym. Take a short time to come up with some epilogues for the characters, and whether or not they were able to succeed with their goal. And with that, the game is finished!