

Anniversaries

A Solitary Creation Game

By Mendel Schmiedekamp

Anniversaries is a game where you will create the calendar of a person. In process you will assemble and discover something of who that person is by the events and remembrances which make up the calendar.

To start you need something to write with, and a blank calendar or date book. It doesn't matter for which year, so I recommend picking up an old calendar or date book. In this calendar the person whose anniversaries you are creating is always referred to in first person. For example, 'my birthday', or 'my daughter's first day at school', or 'got my doctorate'. Other people can be referred to by name, relationship with your unnamed person, or both.

Each anniversary involves at least one person, which for the unnamed owner of the calendar is 'me', and an event. Here are some possible events:

- Birthday
- First Date
- Graduation
- Suffered Accident
- Received Award
- Death
- First Job
- Wedding
- Adoption
- Invented ...
- Court Case
- Joined ... (military, secret society, etc.)
- Break up or Divorce
- Left on a Journey
- Published ...

Others can be used as well, especially if you want to imply a specific career, such as elections for a politician or movie releases for a director. Fantastic events can also be easily added, but I recommend playing more simply for your first time.

Anniversaries is played in five stages. The first stage sets the birthday of your unnamed person, which matches your own, simply as 'my birthday'.

Each subsequent stage involves a list of people and events which you cross off to create a new anniversary of such an event or involving that person. These lists derive from the previous stage with each anniversary splitting out a person and an event to the next stage – to make two new events. You can cross off a item from the list in any order, and on any date on which you haven't already written an anniversary.

When you write down an anniversary indicate the people and event which makes it up.

Then take a moment and consider how this anniversary feels to the calendar's owner, and what memories it brings up. Write three words referencing some of those feelings and memories.

Lastly, unless this is the last stage, we break this anniversary up into one of its people and the event itself. Each of these will be added to the list for the next stage.

Stage 1

Write down 'my birthday' on the date of your birthday. You and the unnamed owner of this calendar share a birthday. Don't describe the feelings and memories here yet.

Stage 2

This stage has two anniversaries, derived from 'my birthday'.

1. Me
2. Birthday

Stage 3

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Stage 4

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Stage 5

This is the last stage, although you may choose to continue this to a stage 6 if you like.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.
- 16.

When you have completed your calender, take a read through the anniversaries again. Think about who this person is. Then write a few words under 'my birthday' about them.