Using the principle of "Yes, and…"

*Hosts: **[TF] Kathryn Burke** (Theta Fleet)*

Room Two • Session 5

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:01:56 PM

Hi! I'm Kathryn Burke from Theta Fleet.

This presentation is how to use the improv game "Yes, and..." in your roleplaying.

Feel free to ask questions or make comments as we go. 🙂

"Yes, and…" is an improv game designed to help actors think on their feet, accept ideas that are different from what was planned and teach cooperative storytelling. While it is designed for the stage, it can be used in writing. And isn't cooperative roleplaying (simming) also improvisational writing?

How it works is this: One person makes a statement. Another person says, "Yes" and builds on that idea. The point is that you take the original statement and add to it. In Improv, it gets bigger and more outrageous as you go. In writing, it simply builds on the original idea.

Too many times in simming someone makes a suggestion and someone else immediately shoots it down. "We don't want to do that." Or "No, we're going in another direction." This generally stops people from throwing out ideas and/or feeling like they're a part of the team. While you can't take every suggestion, you can try and twist the suggestion into something possible by using "Yes, and…"

When what is being proposed is flagrantly wrong, such as "We're going to dump the warp core, but we have a special transmitter based on Tesla's theories of electricity that will allow us to warp far enough to get out of the blast radius," you can politely inform them in OOC why the idea can't work. But you need to have facts to support your statement. Or let the CO moderate. In roleplaying, "Yes, and…" is for developing what you can do, not for coming up with the impossible.

This method of story development works when you're talking about possibilities. For building off ideas to see what else can be done. It's for creative brainstorming, in and out of character. It also spurs creativity as a whole. Always remember to keep it within the rules of the sim, game, or world.

[TF] Kaede Kayano 2/22/2020, 2:05:41 PM

The engineering concepts in that.... oh... no... *walks away*

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:06:06 PM

Puts blindfold on Kaede

[TF] Kaede Kayano 2/22/2020, 2:06:14 PM

walks into wall

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:06:34 PM

An important point to note is that for this to work well you need to build off another person, not just throw in a noncommittal answer and expect someone else to come in and take the story forward. Add a question, a comment, or an idea to add to what was already stated.

Takes off Kaede's blindfold

For example: "Looks like we'll have shore leave on Starbase 666. Want to go with me to check out the restaurants?"
"Sure. I hear they have a place that looks like you're in the belly of a whale."
"Pinocchio's? I read something about that place. Don't they have whale song playing in the background?"

'Yes. And a dinner show where Pinocchio gets washed into the restaurant and then sings 'I have no strings'."
So, if you're in a briefing and the captains says the following, how could you use "Yes, and..."?

"When we enter the system, I want a complete scan, including all planets and their satellites."

[TF] Kaede Kayano 2/22/2020, 2:09:57 PM

"Ok Captain, then what should I do?"

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:11:13 PM

"Boost the shields in case we encounter any solar flares."

[TF] Kaede Kayano 2/22/2020, 2:12:26 PM

"Boosting shields. No solar flare activity yet, but some strange fluxuations in the system. There could be a cloak ship out there..."

Improve people. IMPROV!

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:13:08 PM

"Look for Tachyon particles."

Or we could try this:

How about: "Security, I'd like you to organize rescue parties. Find everyone you can. Medical, set up triage stations and have sickbay ready to accept casualties."

[TF] Kaede Kayano 2/22/2020, 2:15:31 PM

"i think I'll eject the warp core instead Captain...."

Sorry not sorry 😛

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:16:53 PM

"Kayano, I don't think dumping the warp core in system will help us evacuate the planet in an appropriate manner."

[22][118][SARP] Kylindra 2/22/2020, 2:17:22 PM

Well..

If it hits the planet, there's probably no one left to evacuate? *runs*

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:17:50 PM

"Exactly."

[TF] Qazzy/22/2020, 2:18:09 PM

you have to think as Starfleet not Klingons

[TF] Kaede Kayano 2/22/2020, 2:18:12 PM

curses in Tal Shair Romulan

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:19:15 PM

So, we now know that Kayano's solution to everything is to dump the warp core.

[TF] Kaede Kayano 2/22/2020, 2:19:34 PM

yes, And?

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:19:47 PM

So, at some point, in some mission, there must be an opportunity to dump the warp core. But not in this conversation.

[USS Mayhew] Tom Rake 2/22/2020, 2:20:03 PM

"Yes. Triage stations, and a quarantine pens - the local med services have reported a breakout of viral infections over the last seven days."

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:20:24 PM

Nice.

"Medical, can you identify the strain and create an injection to protect the away team?"

[USS Mayhew] Tom Rake 2/22/2020, 2:22:44 PM

"Certainly, as a priority. And we'll need a way to screen it out of the transporter buffers for those already infected. Is engineering free to support?"

[22][118][SARP] Kylindra 2/22/2020, 2:22:47 PM

So I have a question here. When do you stop allowing yes, and?

[22/OF] Kasterborous 2/22/2020, 2:24:06 PM

i guess that's a pretty broad question of how far your own players and lore would permit perhaps? if it gets way too ludicrous?

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:24:45 PM

Yes. You stop it when it gets too silly, or people aren't taking it seriously. Or if you feel you have enough input.

[USS Mayhew] Tom Rake 2/22/2020, 2:24:49 PM

Hmmm - guess it gets to a point where players have to go off and action their list of 'yes'?

[22][118][SARP] Kylindra 2/22/2020, 2:25:05 PM

mm. So you use it as a pacing tool?

[USS Mayhew] Tom Rake 2/22/2020, 2:25:32 PM

Good way for the characters to set up a bit of self direction rather than just saying yes or no to an order 🙂 It's cool! Like it.

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:25:38 PM

Take it case by case. When you have plenty to engage the crew, stop. Or if you think it'll take too long, stop..

Tom, yes, that exactly the idea. 🙂

It helps people feel like they have a say rather than just giving orders.

Tom, nice comebacks.

[USS Mayhew] Tom Rake 2/22/2020, 2:27:39 PM

Yes, I play Helm on a sim and I usually just take orders and have to flesh out my sim elsewhere - this is really going to help me get that character involved and contribute to the group better 🙂

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:28:05 PM

Good!

[22][118][SARP] Kylindra 2/22/2020, 2:28:50 PM

yeah, I have a similar problem. I'm fairly passive in sim

I'm going to have to practice this.

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:29:30 PM

I like playing science. A lot of the time, I find myself coming up with things to do. Or I'll bounce ideas off friends. I much prefer talking to other charactes IC when I can.

[USS Mayhew] Tom Rake 2/22/2020, 2:29:52 PM

It's great to see how to do that now

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:30:13 PM

This game especially helps passive players, or those who don't feel like they have something to contribute. This encourages everyone to say something.

Does someone else want to throw out a stataement?

So we can practice?

[USS Mayhew] Tom Rake 2/22/2020, 2:32:30 PM

"Lieutenant once coordinates are laid in, enter flight mode, warp 7"

I usually get stuck with something like that :p

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:35:12 PM

"Coordinates locked in. Jumping to warp 7. Looks like we'll be passing near a stellar nursery. Should we launch a probe to take readings?"

Now, depending on the mission, that may not be appreciated.

[USS Mayhew] Tom Rake 2/22/2020, 2:36:30 PM

Cool :)

[22][118][SARP] Kylindra 2/22/2020, 2:36:55 PM

I find, having played helm a lot

that sometimes you can go "Coordinated locked. Increasing speed to warp 8.6. ETA 12 minutes. Should we emerge close or far?" helps for combat rescue missions

because it creates a discussion about tactics.

[USS Mayhew] Tom Rake 2/22/2020, 2:37:46 PM

Rifting off @NinjaDuck "Coordinates locked in. Jumping to warp 7. Looks like we'll be passing a radiation cluster. Should we raise shields?"

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:38:11 PM

Nice.

[USS Mayhew] Tom Rake 2/22/2020, 2:38:17 PM

@ʘ_ʘ nice!

[SB118] Melody Delri'ise 2/22/2020, 2:38:38 PM

That's a good point @ʘ_ʘ it's alot more in depth then "let's go here and hope for the best"

[USS Mayhew] Tom Rake 2/22/2020, 2:38:54 PM

Yh nice little way to get helm involved with the tactical side

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:39:26 PM

You can also ask the CO if there's something you can do. Maybe you can find something thta is part of the mission while navigating the ship.

Fruit Loop 2/22/2020, 2:40:34 PM

Chief of Security: "You're here to improve your hand to hand skills. I'm here to make sure you're ready to defend yourself when you need to."

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:41:10 PM

"I'll be happy to work on my hand-to-hand, but I really don't like phases.

Phasers.

Fruit Loop 2/22/2020, 2:42:04 PM

"Unfortunately, you need to be proficient in them to be in this job."

[USS Mayhew] Tom Rake 2/22/2020, 2:43:14 PM

"Yes, you are right and I'm going to try defending myself by disarming as you approach … what's your weapon?"

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:43:34 PM

Nice. 🙂

Or, to go in a totally different direction:

"I generally perform autopsies. Do you think I should have a phaser in sickbay?"

[USS Mayhew] Tom Rake 2/22/2020, 2:44:35 PM

haha epic

ReminderBot 2/22/2020, 2:45:04 PM

15-Minute Warning

Fruit Loop 2/22/2020, 2:45:07 PM

Picks up a Jem'Hadar spear and hands it to a large Orion security crewman. The Orion comes at Tom

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:45:19 PM

I'm actually on a sim where another player's character doesn't like phasers. They're "vulgar." She's a counselor.

She does like hand-to-hand, though.

Also nice. I've done weapons training on the holodeck where we're on a planet and they have to improvise a weapon.

Fruit Loop 2/22/2020, 2:46:48 PM

@NinjaDuck "Well, if you'd like to be killed when we're boarded, no. Otherwise..."

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:47:38 PM

"I have a scalpel. Will that do?"

Fruit Loop 2/22/2020, 2:47:47 PM

"....."

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:48:13 PM

"And the EMH has a bazooka."

(Sorry, that's probably a bit over-the-top.)

[USS Mayhew] Tom Rake 2/22/2020, 2:49:37 PM

some bedside manner that EMH has got ha

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:50:38 PM

Patients only complain once.   "VC*(

Sorry. That was my cat.

[22][118][SARP] Kylindra 2/22/2020, 2:51:14 PM

I mean, I made the comment once that you can always solve problems with combat. You can!

[TF] Kaede Kayano 2/22/2020, 2:51:21 PM

🐱

[22][118][SARP] Kylindra 2/22/2020, 2:51:24 PM

... The and part is "everyone else noticed what you did."

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:51:46 PM(edited 2/22/2020, 2:52:09 PM)

And then come the Captain's Mast...

If you're going to do something liek that, there will be consequences.

[22][118][SARP] Kylindra 2/22/2020, 2:52:43 PM

Yep. But I mean, I guess is, to tie it into your topic. Sometimes, a bad ending can be worked into a "Yes, and now the next mission is dealing with consequences"

I've actually seen a great sim mission based on that

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:53:09 PM

Absolutely.

That can create some interesting character development.

"Yes, and..." can also be used in conversation between two characters, or a small group.

ReminderBot 2/22/2020, 2:55:04 PM

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:55:11 PM

Or in you talking aloud to yourself for your own character.

I'm a writer, and I've been told talking aloud to your muse can often get you better results.

[22][118][SARP] Kylindra 2/22/2020, 2:56:43 PM

mm. Yeah. I have a fox plushie I use.

[USS Mayhew] Tom Rake 2/22/2020, 2:56:51 PM

Yes - thinking "yes and" made me imagine stuff I had not even seen when you first posted the statements!

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:57:26 PM

Good! That's the point of this presentation. 🙂

So, to wrap up...Now one of you come up with another statement, then the rest of us will build on it.

Skoll 2/22/2020, 2:57:53 PM

Last character I wrote, I was in the bath when the idea struck me. By the time I was out of the bath the history was done

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:58:05 PM

Using "Yes, and…" gives shy people a voice. It helps everyone feel included, and if done right, will give you better possibilities for away teams, mission ideas, and department assignments. It helps develop group or ensemble thinking, and the diversity of ideas build strength and unity.

[22][118][SARP] Kylindra 2/22/2020, 2:58:20 PM

Captain, the kittens have taken over engineering! We're out of cat treats! >_>

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:58:26 PM

Discord channels give the various games a great platform to use "Yes, and…" for story development. Bouncing ideas off each other, in and out of character, will help the overall plot be better, and it can give you some road blocks you never thought of.

[22][118][SARP] Kylindra 2/22/2020, 2:59:36 PM

Thanks for the panel!

[USS Mayhew] Tom Rake 2/22/2020, 2:59:58 PM

Been excellent - mega help and pumped to use it in my sims

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/22/2020, 2:58 PM

If you're doing world building, you can use this game to create the culture of your world, its history and its stories.

In the end, if you use this for a briefing or planning session, the Commanding Officer or Department Head will decide where to go, and when to cut off discussion. If you

use it for a conversation between two or three characters, you can go until you get to a good stopping place. However you choose to use it, have fun with this game in your sim and in your writing.

Plushies help, too. So you're talking to something.

Just remember to be polite and to consider others. And have fun!

Thank you all for your participation.

Cat stepped on my keyboard, and moved me to another room. So, putting the last bit here for Yes, and...

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Just remember to be plite, listen to what others say, and have fun!

That's to get this into the record.

Sorry, cat walked across the keyboard and changed rooms. Gotta love cats. 🙂