

GAMES FOR HEALTH EUROPE

2026



GAMES FOR HEALTH
EUROPE

DISCLOSURE SLIDE
for presentations at the

GAMES FOR HEALTH EUROPE 2026 CONFERENCE

I herewith confirm that there is not any conflict of interest with the conference organization or any of its sponsors.

GAMES FOR GOOD: THE INTRINSIC AND SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTHY GAMING



30.03.2026

GAMING FOR HEALTH EUROPE 2026

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A BIT ABOUT THIS STUDY...

- One-year study at Abertay University
- 9 participants from two universities
- What kind of things affect how games are used, how they are viewed as a tool and what affects the outcome?
- Reflexive Thematic Analysis and Depressive Symptoms Questionnaire (CES-D)

FRAMING THE PROBLEM



Assessing the most at-risk (DSM-5) and how they use video games as a mental health management tool



Challenging pre-conceived notions on the benefits and detriments



Gaining a deeper understanding of why games are used the way they are (both design and healthcare perspectives)

FINDINGS...DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS

- The scores ranged from 16/57 at lowest to 46/57 highest
- So far, data does **NOT** suggest depressive symptoms worsen with game time
- Symptoms most endorsed are: 'Loneliness', 'Restless Sleep', 'Felt like people don't like me' and 'Lack of energy'

Participants	Score	Most Prevalent Symptoms
<i>Participant 1</i>	46 / 57	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of motivation & energy• Restless sleep• Loneliness• Felt like people don't like me
<i>Participant 2</i>	17 / 57	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No severe symptoms
<i>Participant 3</i>	41 / 57	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of focus• Restless Sleep• Felt like people don't like me
<i>Participant 4</i>	23 / 57	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Loneliness• Felt like people don't like me
<i>Participant 5</i>	23 / 57	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of focus• Restless sleep
<i>Participant 6</i>	16 / 57	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moderate lack of focus• Moderate loneliness
<i>Participant 7</i>	40 / 60	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Didn't feel like talking• Restless sleep• Loneliness
<i>Participant 8</i>	28 / 60	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Restless sleep• Felt like people don't like me
<i>Participant 9</i>	29 / 60	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unshakable sadness• Loneliness• Lack of energy



THE BIG THEMES...

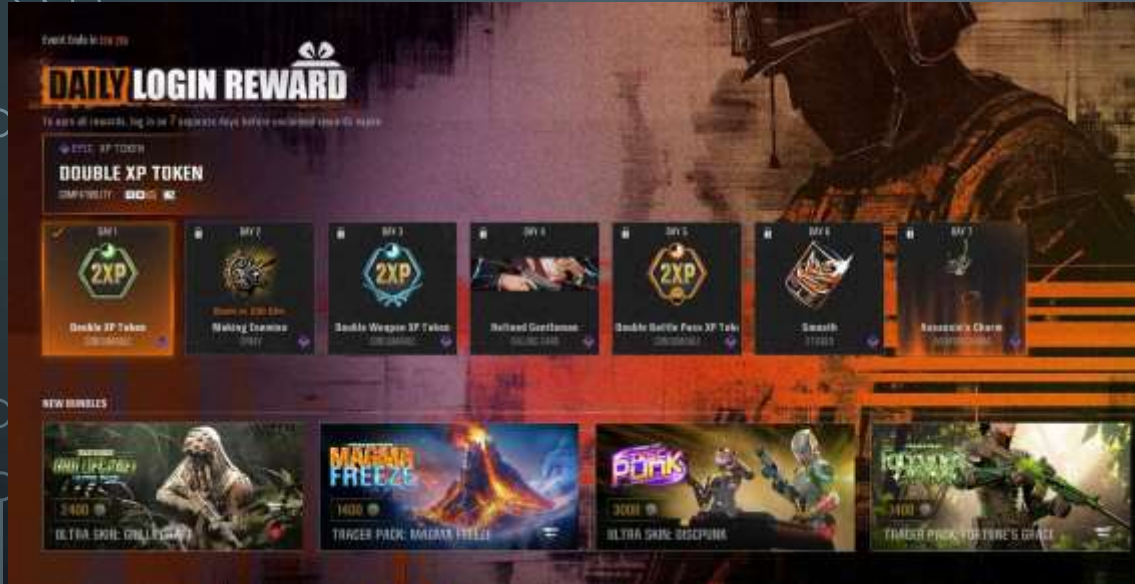
Gaming as Emotional Regulation...

“... it makes me feel like I am a person, I am human, and it makes me feel more human that I’m experiencing those emotions because in the real world, I’m not necessarily experiencing a lot of the emotions that I feel when I’m gaming.”

Gaming as a Social Construct...

“It definitely helps with like, friendships and stuff... like I would consider them friends there this year but... I wouldn't have met them otherwise. Had there been no games or like games course...”





The Poison and The Cure...

“I don’t think it tends to take priority over anything major... never anything like super major... like you said before, for some people, it does take quite a lot of priority over things they maybe should be doing.”

“Some people might think...”

The Motivational and Experiential Elements of Gaming

*“...just feel it's better to play... it just
feels a lot more controlled.”*





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SCAN ME