

# **PENGUIN PEBBLING**

## ***A Game of Creating Belonging, Building Connection and Understanding Autistic Identity***

### **How to Play — Plain Language Guide**

*Created by Helen Edgar, Autistic Realms & Ryan Boren, Stimpunks (2026)*

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#### **What is this game?**

Penguin Pebbling is a card game about connection and belonging.

You can play with other people — online or in person.

You can also play by yourself and use the cards to reflect and journal.

There are no winners and no wrong way to play.

You can leave at any time, for any reason.

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#### **What you need**

Some pebbles — or any small objects you like. Stones, buttons, shells, coins, or anything from your collection.

Everyone starts with 3 pebbles.

Put some extra pebbles in the middle of the group. This is the pebble bank. Anyone can take from it at any time.

The cards — physical or on screen using the widget at [autisticrealms.com](https://autisticrealms.com).

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#### **Before you begin**

Everyone picks up their 3 pebbles and holds them.

Notice the weight, texture, and temperature.

They are yours to keep, pass, or just hold throughout.

Place any remaining pebbles in the centre as the shared pebble bank.

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## Taking turns

One person draws a card and reads it out, or shows it to the group. Someone else can read it for them if that works better.

Then choose how to respond:

- Speak your answer
- Write or draw it and pass it around
- Use AAC, signing, or any other communication tool
- Just be present — some cards ask nothing of you except presence

You can always skip a card. No explanation needed. Just set it aside.

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## Passing a pebble

When something someone shares resonates with you — when you feel heard, when you recognise yourself in what they said, when you want to say I'm glad you're here or I care about you or I thought of you — pass one of your pebbles to them.

If you want to pass a pebble but don't have one, take one from the pebble bank in the centre.

No words needed. The pebble holds the meaning.

There is no limit to how many pebbles you can give or receive. Pebbles circulate freely throughout the whole game. No one ever runs out of a way to show they care.

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## The five locutions

Each card belongs to one of five locutions — five ways of showing care that are natural to many neurodivergent people.

**Infodumping** — sharing what you love, in depth and at length. A sign of deep trust.

**Parallel Play** — being alone, together. Body doubling. Connection without demand. Interdependence is valid.

**Support Swapping** — mutual aid at the human scale. Capacity fluctuates. Needs are not a weakness. We carry each other, taking turns.

**Penguin Pebbling** — "I saw this and thought of you." Small gestures that build pebble bridges of relational closeness.

**Deep Pressure** — regulation is relational. What helps your nervous system settle — weight, pressure, texture, warmth. Grounding together.

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## Ending the game

No words needed to end the game.

Simply set your pebbles down.

Or your group can agree their own signal before you begin — a gesture, a word, an object placed in the centre. Whatever feels natural.

The game ends when everyone feels complete and finished for now.

If something a card brings up stays with you, you are welcome to keep reflecting by yourself, in your own time, in whatever way feels right. The cards and prompts are yours to return to whenever you need them.

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## A note for therapists, educators, and practitioners

If you are using Penguin Pebbling in a professional setting — a clinic, classroom, support group, or training — please consider purchasing a physical card set from the Autistic Realms shop or making a donation to support our work.

Autistic Realms and Stimpunks are community-led projects. Everything we create is grounded in lived experience and made freely available because we believe access matters.

 Buy the card set: [\[LINK TO SHOP\]](#)  Make a donation: [\[LINK TO DONATION PAGE\]](#)

Thank you for using this resource with care and for crediting the community it came from.

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## About this game

Penguin Pebbling: A Game of Creating Belonging, Building Connection and Understanding your Autistic Identity was developed by Helen Edgar at Autistic Realms & Ryan Boren at Stimpunks (2026).

Grounded in the Five Neurodivergent Love Locutions coined by Amythest Schaber (Neurowonderful) and documented by Stimpunks Foundation (2022). The penguin pebbling locution draws on Helen Edgar's writing at Autistic Realms (Edgar, 2023), framed through Milton's Double Empathy Problem (2012) and monotropism theory (Murray, Lesser & Lawson, 2005).

Free to use and share for non-commercial purposes. Please credit Helen Edgar, Autistic Realms & Ryan Boren, Stimpunks, and link back.

[autisticrealms.com](https://autisticrealms.com) [stimpunks.org](https://stimpunks.org)

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## References

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