

Playing Games With Scrum



Nigel Baker

Agile Coach, Certified Scrum Trainer





- Childhood Programmer
- IT > 28 years
- Agile > 20 years
- Agile Coach > 17 years
- Certified Scrum Trainer > 15 years
- Conference Presenter > 14 years
- Keynoting Conferences > 7 years
- Annoying, Unfunny, Comedy Orc > A LIFETIME!



Context is **King**
but
Context is a **Con.**



"Playing Games with.."

- ***"deal with someone or something in a way that **lacks due seriousness or respect.**"***
- ***"To be evasive or deceptive. To mess around with someone or someone's feelings. Not being direct or tell the truth."***

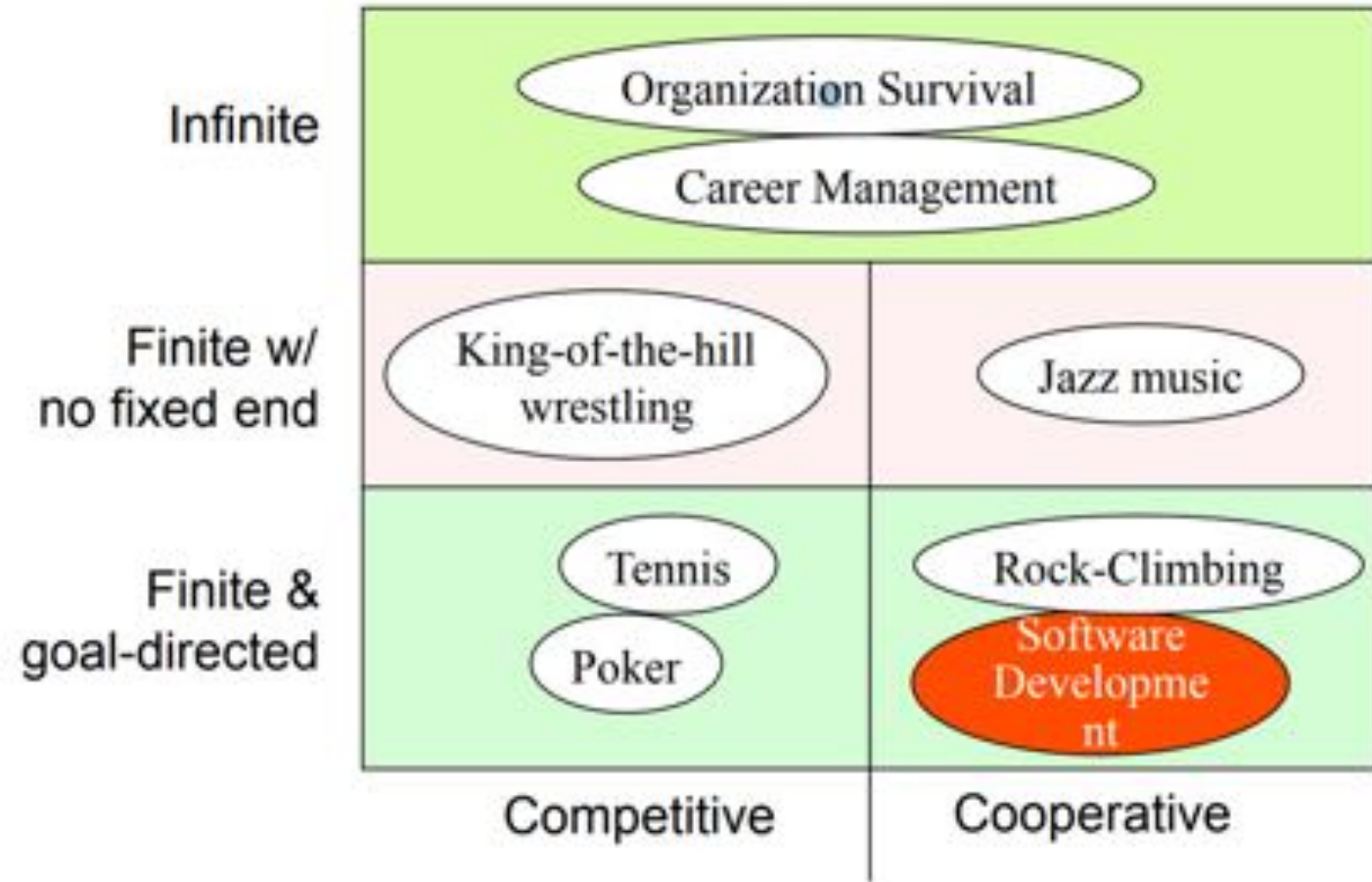


Playing + Game

- *“A game is an activity or sport usually involving skill, knowledge, or chance, in which you follow fixed rules and try to win against an opponent or to solve a puzzle.”*
- *“[Playing is] engage in activity for enjoyment and recreation. Be cooperative.”*



Games, finite/infinite or cooperative/competitive, consist of better/worse 'moves'





BAKE A CAKE



INGREDIANCE
PRICE L
2 MARGERIN
1 SUGAR
1 FLOUR

BY
SCOTT
WILSON
&
NIGEL
BAKER

get left to spar	blue players Bunglow when he or she	feel sick go straight to home
	Passes Collect £1	



INGREDIANCE
PRICE L
2 MARGERIN
1 SUGAR
1 FLOUR
1 EGGS
1 ICE CREAM
2 BUTTER
2 SWEET

SUGAR
FLOUR
EGGS
ICE CREAM
BUTTER



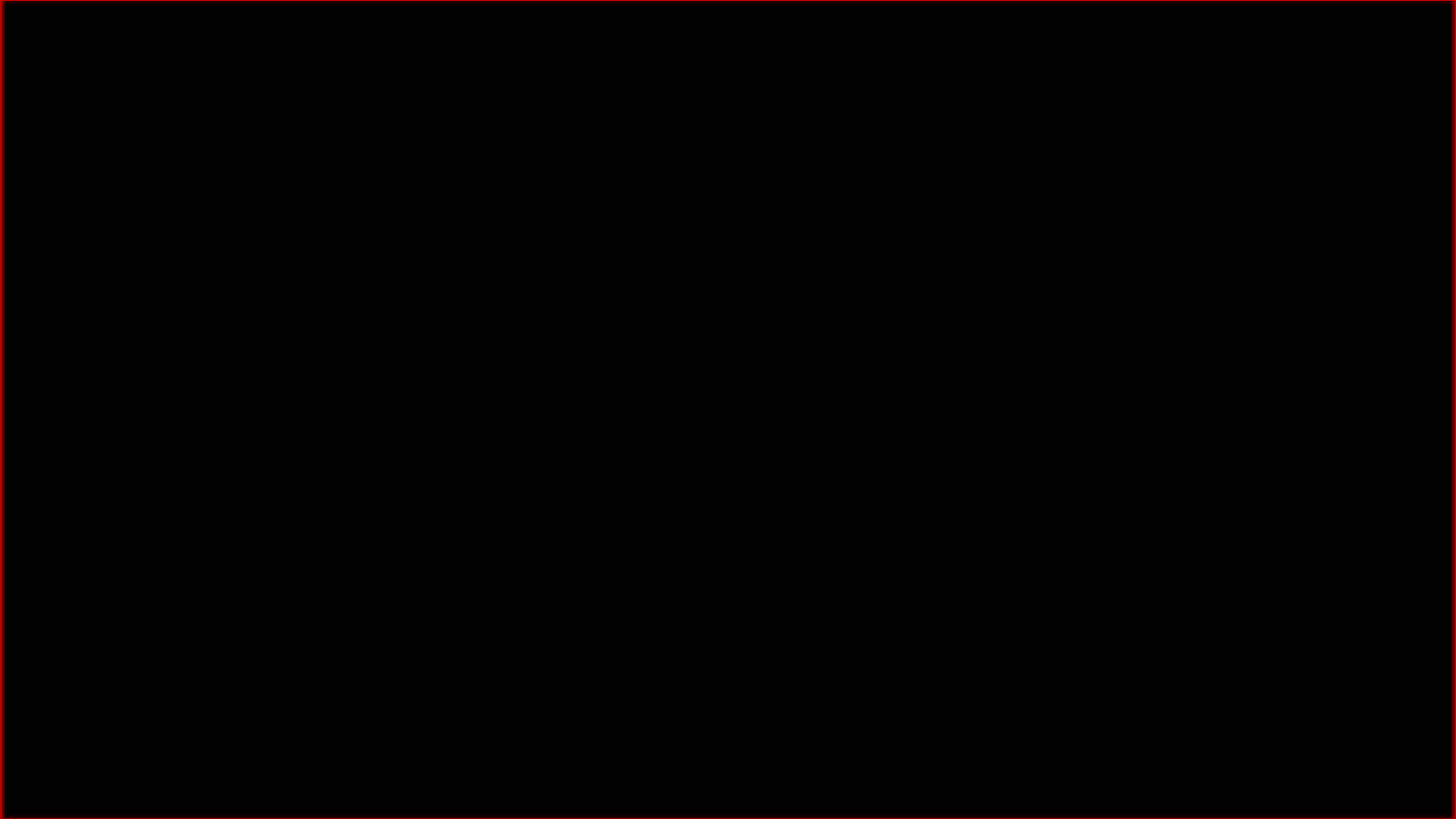
Games with strategy and tactics *inside*



Rules don't have to be complex for the game to be complex









**Spirit
Of The
Game**



Rule Breaking



Playtesting.

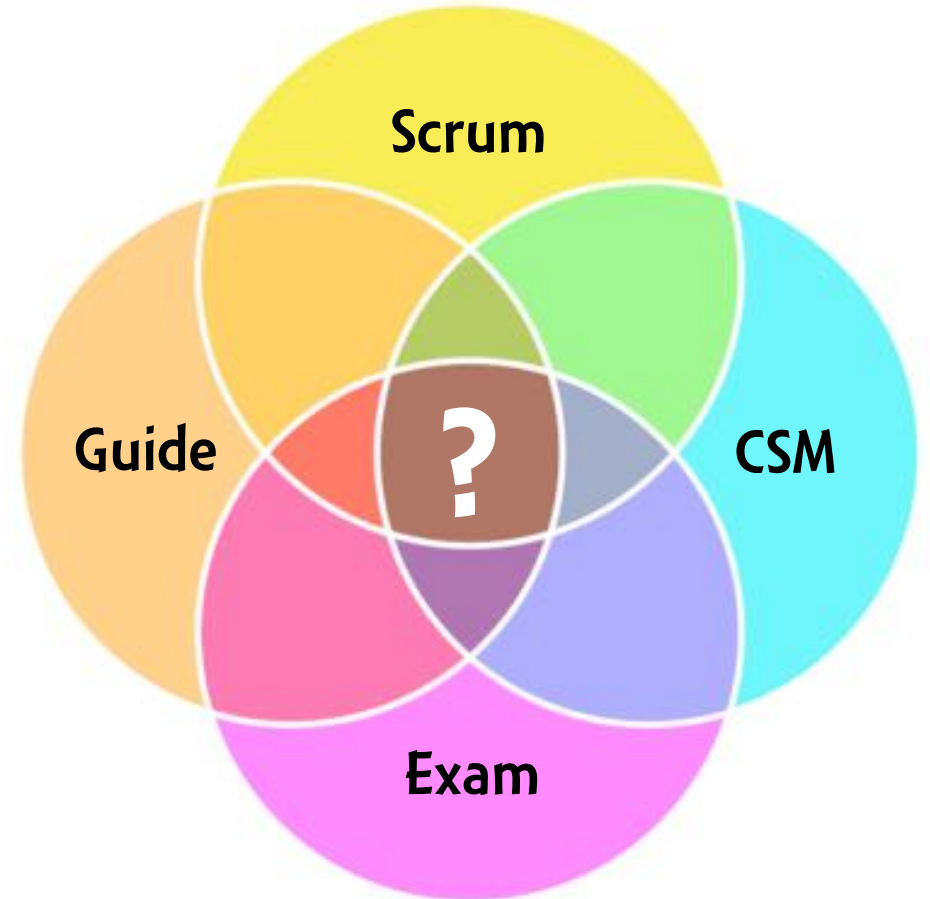


So... What can we do to handle this?

What people often get **wrong is
the **difference** between **different**
and **wrong**.**

A long time ago in a galaxy far far away....

- August 2009.
- Certified Scrum Trainer Community discussing *"Agile Project Managers"*.
 - Slipped into *"Release Planning"*
 - Slipped into *"Project Manager/ScrumMasters"*
- Scrum Guide created just one month before
 - *"ScrumHub"* - Turned into a few pages of document.
- CSM Exam *"developed"* over at least Q3 2008 till launched circa Oct 2009:
 - So lots of conversations around CSM vs Exam vs Scrum vs Scrum Guide





The Nigel Scale!™

Patent Pending – All Rights Reserved.

NS1: SCRUM

- *"Scrum Guidetastic!"*
 - The fundamental irreducible **CORE**
 - (If you bend this, things break horribly)

<http://nigelbaker.wordpress.com/2011/08/01/the-nigel-scale/>

NS2: STUFF THAT SCRUM DOESN'T OFFICIALLY CARE ABOUT.

- The grey area of "**GOOD** Practice".
- We use our previous experience
 - to help coach organizations
 - to self organize their own answers
 - to their own complex problems.

<http://nigelbaker.wordpress.com/2011/08/01/the-nigel-scale/>

NS3: NOT AGILE – THIS WE AVOID.

- These are Anti-patterns or negative behaviours we stay away from.
 - **BAD** stuff

"Pop Quiz, Hotshot!"



User Stories
Velocity

Release Planning
Daily "Stand-Up"

A lot of Scrum **IS NOT** Scrum

Story Points
Burndown Charts

Sprint Zero
Task Board
Minimizing WIP

PROBLEM: Homeopathic Agility

Treating
fundamentals
(NS1) as *nice to
have (NS2)*



PROBLEM:

Cultism

Treating optional things (NS2) as laws (NS1) –
Cultism,
Ritualisation.
Copy-And-Paste
agility.



PROBLEM: Cultism

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PROBLEM:

Zealotry

**Treating the core
(NS1) as sufficient
and anything else
(NS2) is unneeded
or wrong (NS3)**



PROBLEM:

agile over Agile

Regarding core
(NS1) ideas as bad
(NS3)

Treating bad ideas
(NS3) as *options*
(NS2) or core
philosophy (NS1)



**“IF YOU BELIEVE IN NOTHING,
YOU’LL BELIEVE IN ANYTHING.”**

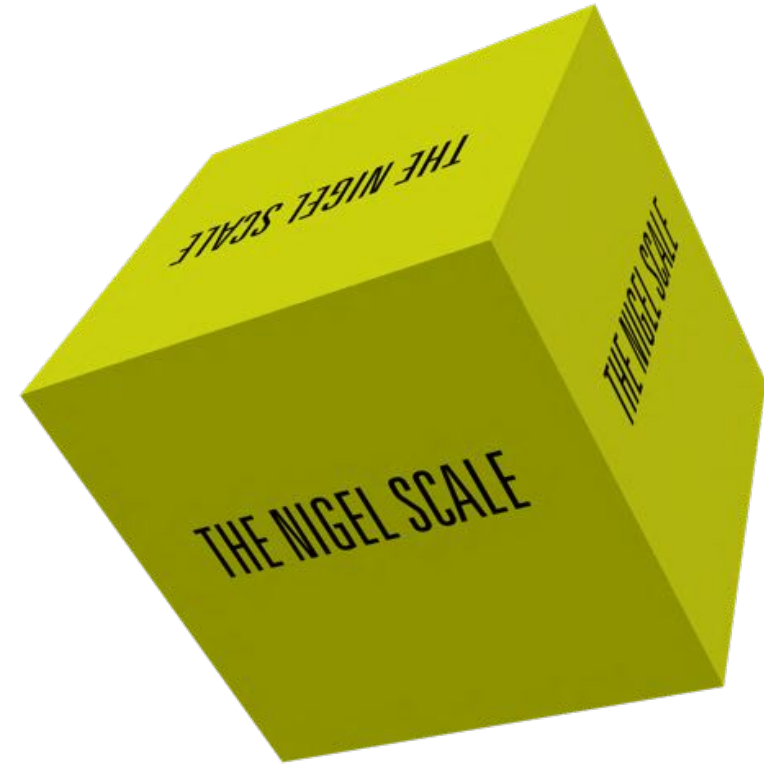
Louie Cypher – Agile Coach

CONCLUSION: Playing Games AND Scrum.

1. **Read** the rules of the game.
2. **Understand** the rules of the game.
3. Play the game *"properly"*
 1. With *spirit and intent* not just the rules.
4. Who is Dungeon Master?
5. Understanding the difference between *rules* (NS1) and *tactics* (NS2).
6. Making your own Game is **HARD**.
7. Extensive playtesting is recommended in rules and *especially* tactics.
8. Never confuse **Complex** with **Better**.
 1. Y.A.G.N.I
 2. Simplest thing that can possible work?
 3. Maximise the Amount of work not done.

If you would like to learn more about the Nigel Scale...

- <https://nigelbaker.wordpress.com/2021/01/28/the-nigel-scale-2021-context-is-king/>
- (Warning... it's ELEVEN THOUSAND WORDS)
- OR this video on the Nigel Scale applied to Scaling Frameworks:
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u7X0z-Gfmh8>





QUESTIONS?

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