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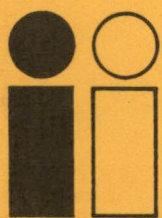
**SELF
INSTRUCTION**

GAMES

UNIT 9



PARENTAL SKILLS PROGRAM HANDICAPPED CHILDREN



SELF-INSTRUCTION WORKBOOK

UNIT IX

GAMES

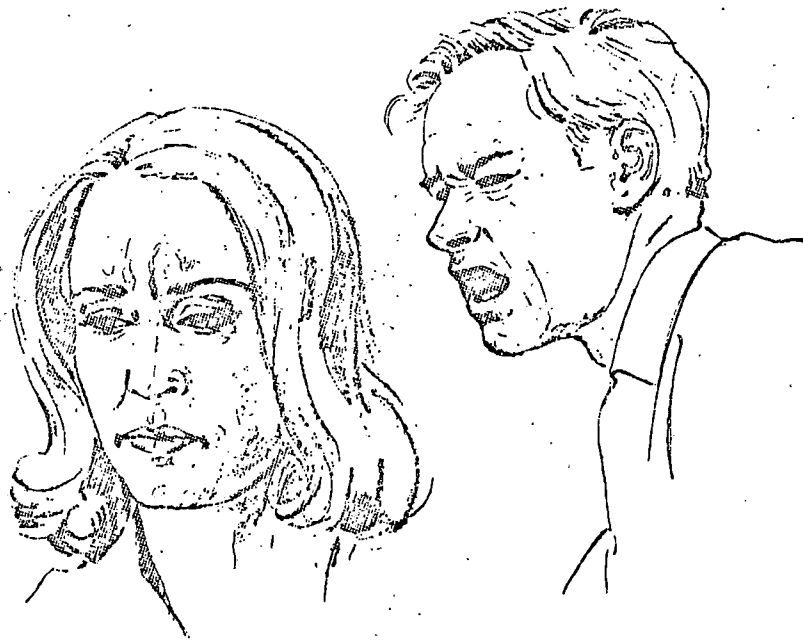
PARENTAL SKILLS FOR PARENTS OF
HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

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GAMES



INSTRUCTIONS: Turn the page and begin reading. Take a sheet of paper and slide it down the page as you read. Throughout the unit, you will come to exercises marked with a big circle. You should complete each exercise as you come to it. Then slide the paper down and check your answer with the answer provided immediately following the exercise. If you are not satisfied with your answer, go back and read the part just before the exercise and then redo the exercise. When you are satisfied with your answer, proceed with your reading.

UNIT 9

THIS IS THE NINTH UNIT IN THE PARENTAL SKILLS PROGRAM. THIS UNIT DEALS WITH GAME THEORY OR THE KINDS OF PEOPLE-GAMES THAT ARE PLAYED IN FAMILIES, INCLUDING FAMILIES WHERE THERE IS A HANDICAPPED CHILD. GAME THEORY IS SOMETIMES REFERRED TO AS TRANSACTIONAL ANALYSIS.

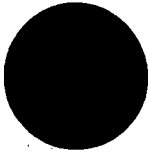
GAMES

A GAME IS A TRANSACTION THAT OCCURS BETWEEN PEOPLE IN WHICH SOMEONE RECEIVES A BENEFIT AND SOMEONE IS THE VICTIM. CHILDREN PLAY GAMES WITH THEIR PARENTS AND PARENTS PLAY GAMES ON THEIR CHILDREN. A GOOD EXAMPLE OF A GAME IS WHEN A CHILD THROWS A TANTRUM.

TANTRUM GAME

- . BENEFIT
- . VICTIM

WHEN A CHILD PLAYS THE TANTRUM GAME HE IS GENERALLY SEEKING A BENEFIT OR PAY OFF. THE BENEFIT MAY BE TO GET OUT OF DOING CHORES OR JUST ATTENTION. IF THE PARENTS PLAY THE GAME AND GIVE HIM HIS PAY OFF, THEY ARE THE VICTIMS.



Check (✓) the statements below which are true of games.

- ___ 1. A game is a transaction between people.
- ___ 2. Each player in a game receives a benefit.
- ___ 3. There is always a victim in a game.
- ___ 4. Only children play games.
- ___ 5. A child may play the tantrum game to get attention.
- ___ 6. If parents play along with the child's tantrum game, they receive the pay-off.

(Statements 1, 3, and 5 are true.)

TRANSACTIONS

IN HIS BOOK THE GAMES PEOPLE PLAY, ERIC BERNE DEFINES FOUR TYPES OF TRANSACTIONS THAT OCCUR BETWEEN PEOPLE.

TRANSACTIONS

- RITUALS
- PASTIMES
- GAMES
- GAME-FREE

BERNE LABELS THESE FOUR TYPES OF TRANSACTIONS AS RITUALS, PASTIMES, GAMES, AND GAME-FREE RELATIONSHIPS.

RITUALS

RITUALS ARE SIMPLE TRANSACTIONS THAT OCCUR BETWEEN PEOPLE. THERE ARE NO MOTIVES EXCEPT PERFORMING A NECESSARY ACTION. READING A BED-TIME STORY, CASHING A CHECK AT A BANK, OR SHOPPING ARE GOOD EXAMPLES OF RITUALS. MUCH OF ONE'S FAMILY LIFE AND WORK LIFE IS SPENT IN PERFORMING RITUALS.

PASTIMES

PASTIMES ARE TRANSACTIONS IN WHICH PEOPLE MERELY PASS TIME. THERE ARE NO OTHER MOTIVES IN THE SITUATION OTHER THAN PASSING TIME. WHEN PEOPLE BECOME INVOLVED IN DISCUSSIONS OR BULL SESSIONS, OFTEN THEY ARE PARTICIPATING IN A PASTIME.

GAMES

GAMES ARE TRANSACTIONS IN WHICH PEOPLE PERIODICALLY ENGAGE. GAMES DIFFER FROM THE OTHER TYPES OF TRANSACTIONS IN THAT...

GAMES
TRANSACTIONS
WITH AN
ULTERIOR MOTIVE

GAMES ARE TRANSACTIONS IN WHICH THERE IS AN ULTERIOR MOTIVE, OR SELFISH AIM, ON THE PART OF ONE OR MORE PLAYERS. ONCE A GAME IS CREATED IT TENDS TO BECOME REPETITIVE; THAT IS, IT IS PLAYED OVER AND OVER.



Below is a list of examples of transactions. Pick the number of the example which matches the type of transaction and write the number in on the line provided. HINT: There should be two numbers beside each transaction.

Transactions
Rituals _____,
Pastimes _____,
Games _____,

- Examples
1. Just stopping by to talk
2. Getting gas in the car
3. Ulterior motives
4. Shaking hands
5. Selfish aims
6. Bull sessions

(The answers are: Rituals - 2 and 4; Pastimes - 1 and 6; Games - 3 and 5.)

SOMEBODY:
PAY-OFF
VICTIM

IN A GAME TRANSACTION SOMEBODY RECEIVES A PAY-OFF AND SOMEBODY IS A VICTIM. IF THERE IS NO VICTIM AND NO PAY-OFF, THERE IS NO GAME.

PAY-OFFS
. AVOIDANCE
. CONTROL
. EGO SATISFACTION

THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT TYPES OF GAME PAY-OFFS. SOME OF THE MOST PROMINENT ONES ARE: AVOIDANCE PAY-OFFS WHERE ONE AVOIDS WORK OR RESPONSIBILITY; CONTROL PAY-OFFS WHERE ONE CONTROLS OTHERS; AND EGO SATISFACTION PAY-OFFS WHERE ONE BUILDS ONESELF UP AT THE EXPENSE OF OTHERS.

WHY PEOPLE
PLAY GAMES

WHY DO PEOPLE PLAY GAMES? THE ANSWER IS BECAUSE OF THE PAY-OFF. PEOPLE ARE ABLE TO GET THINGS THEY WANT WITHOUT GREAT RISK OR SACRIFICE.

GAMES

- CONSCIOUS
- UNCONSCIOUS

GAMES ARE PLAYED AT BOTH THE CONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS LEVEL. THAT IS, PEOPLE MAY CONSCIOUSLY PLAY A GAME WITH SOMEONE, OR THEY MAY NOT BE AWARE THAT THEY ARE PLAYING A GAME. IF GAMES ARE PLAYED UNCONSCIOUSLY, PEOPLE ONLY BECOME AWARE OF THEIR GAME WHEN SOMEONE POINTS OUT THE PAY-OFF TO THEM: "YOU'RE DOING THIS BECAUSE YOU ARE GETTING SUCH AND SUCH."

VICTIMS

PEOPLE TEND TO BE VICTIMS IN A GAME TRANSACTION FOR THREE REASONS: ONE, THEY SIMPLY DO NOT KNOW WHAT IS GOING ON, TWO, THEY KNOW WHAT IS HAPPENING BUT THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT, OR THREE, THEY KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON BUT DON'T WANT TO CHANGE.



Check (✓) the items below which are true of games.

- ___ 1. A game can be played without a victim.
- ___ 2. People play games because of the pay-off.
- ___ 3. People are always aware that they are playing games.
- ___ 4. Some people are victims because they don't know what to do about games.
- ___ 5. A person who starts a game to get his own way is seeking a control pay-off.
- ___ 6. A person who builds himself up at the expense of others is seeking an avoidance pay-off.
- ___ 7. A person who starts a game to get out of work is seeking an ego-satisfaction pay-off.

(Statements 2, 4 and 5 are true.)

GAME EXAMPLE

IN ORDER TO GET A CLEARER PICTURE OF A GAME TRANSACTION, LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT AN EXAMPLE OF A GAME SEQUENCE. LET'S SAY A HUSBAND WANTS A "NIGHT OUT WITH THE BOYS" AND KNOWS IF HE MENTIONS IT TO HIS WIFE SHE WON'T WANT HIM TO GO. THE HUSBAND STARTS A SEQUENCE OF GAMES, THE PAY-OFF BEING THAT HE WILL GET OUT OF THE HOUSE FOR THE EVENING. THE WIFE WILL BE THE VICTIM.

"WEREN'T FOR YOU"

THE FIRST GAME THE HUSBAND STARTS IS A GAME CALLED "WEREN'T FOR YOU." HE SAYS TO HIS WIFE, "IF IT WEREN'T FOR YOU I WOULD BE MORE SUCCESSFUL"...."IF IT WEREN'T FOR YOU THE HOUSE WOULD BE CLEANER"...."IF IT WEREN'T FOR YOU THIS".... "IF IT WEREN'T FOR YOU THAT"....IF SHE COUNTERS WITH SOME "WEREN'T FOR YOU'S" OF HER OWN, AN ARGUMENT IS STARTED.

"UPROAR"

AFTER THE ARGUMENT IS STARTED, THE HUSBAND GAME-PLAYER MOVES INTO ANOTHER GAME CALLED "UPROAR". AT THIS POINT, HE BECOMES ANGRY, BOTH BEGIN TO SHOUT, AND HE WALKS OUT AND SLAMS THE DOOR. NOW HE HAS FINALLY RECEIVED HIS PAY-OFF IN THE GAME....HE'S OUT FOR THE EVENING.

"COURTROOM"

IF A MARRIED COUPLE PLAYS SUCH GAMES OFTEN ENOUGH, THEY MAY END UP PLAYING A GAME CALLED "COURTROOM", WHERE EACH PLAYER HAS A LAWYER AND THEY ARE IN THE ACT OF GETTING A DIVORCE.

FAMILY GAMES

NOW LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT SOME EXAMPLES OF GAMES THAT ARE PLAYED IN THE FAMILY WHERE THERE IS A HANDICAPPED CHILD. OUR EXAMPLES ARE A GAME PLAYED BY THE HANDICAPPED CHILD WITH THE FAMILY, A GAME PLAYED BY ONE PARENT WITH THE FAMILY, AND A GAME PLAYED BY OTHER CHILDREN WITH THE FAMILY.

"HELPLESS ME"

"HELPLESS ME" IS A GAME SOMETIMES PLAYED BY THE HANDICAPPED CHILD. IN "HELPLESS ME" THE CHILD ACTS MORE HELPLESS THAN HE ACTUALLY IS AND OTHERS HAVE TO DO THINGS FOR HIM. THE PAY-OFF IN "HELPLESS ME" IS ATTENTION AND NOT HAVING TO DO THINGS FOR ONESELF.

"EXPERT"

"EXPERT" IS A GAME SOMETIMES PLAYED BY ONE PARENT WITH OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS. IN PLAYING "EXPERT" ONE PARENT TENDS TO BECOME THE FAMILY "EXPERT" ON THE HANDICAPPED CHILD AND HIS PROBLEM. AS SUCH THE PARENT SQUEEZES OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS OUT. THEIR IDEAS AND CONTRIBUTIONS SEEM UNIMPORTANT. THE PAY-OFF IN EXPERT IS THAT THE PARENT GETS TO CONTROL EVERY SITUATION AND GETS ALL OF THE RECOGNITION.

"CUT OUT"

"CUT OUT" IS A GAME SOMETIMES PLAYED BY OTHER CHILDREN IN THE FAMILY. IN PLAYING "CUT OUT" THE OTHER CHILD OR CHILDREN LEAVE EARLY TO AVOID HELPING THE HANDICAPPED CHILD OR PERFORMING CHORES. THE PAY-OFF IN "CUT OUT" IS THAT THE PLAYER GETS OUT OF DOING HIS SHARE OF THE WORK.

Describe a game in which you have participated. Who started the game? Who was the victim? What was the pay-off?

Game: _____

Who Started The Game: _____

Victims: _____

The Pay-Off: _____

ALTERNATIVE
MOVES

IF A CHILD, PARENT, OR SPOUSE PLAYS A GAME WITH SOMEONE ELSE IN THE FAMILY, WHAT ARE THE VICTIM'S POTENTIAL ALTERNATIVES? THAT IS, WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVE MOVES FOR THE VICTIM IN A GAME-PLAYING SITUATION?

MOVES:

- .PLAY THE GAME
- .REFUSE TO PLAY
- .COUNTER WITH POWER
- .COUNTER GAME
- .EXPOSE THE GAME

WHEN SOMEONE IS PLAYING A GAME WITH YOU, YOU CAN EITHER PLAY THE GAME, REFUSE TO PLAY, COUNTER WITH POWER, COUNTER GAME, OR EXPOSE THE GAME.



TANTRUM GAME

TO SHOW HOW EACH ALTERNATIVE WORKS LET'S TAKE THE EXAMPLE OF THE TANTRUM GAME THAT MANY KIDS PLAY. IN THIS GAME, KIDS "THROW A FIT" OR SCREAM AND POUND ON THE FLOOR IN ORDER TO GET THEIR WAY, OR THE PAY-OFF.

PLAY THE GAME
BECOME A VICTIM

ONE ALTERNATIVE IS TO PLAY THE GAME AND BECOME A VICTIM. IN THIS CASE THE CHILD WILL PLAY THE TANTRUM GAME WITH THE PARENT OVER AND OVER BECAUSE HE CONTINUES TO GET A PAY-OFF.

REFUSE TO PLAY
AVOID THE GAME

A SECOND ALTERNATIVE IS TO "REFUSE TO PLAY". IN "REFUSING TO PLAY" YOU IGNORE THE TANTRUM, GO IN THE OTHER ROOM, OR ACT AS IF NOTHING IS HAPPENING. THE CHILD DOES NOT GET HIS PAY-OFF.

COUNTER WITH POWER
START A WAR

A THIRD ALTERNATIVE IS TO COUNTER THE "TANTRUM" GAME WITH POWER AND PUNISH THE CHILD. PUNISHING THE CHILD MAY STOP THE GAME TEMPORARILY, BUT THE GAME WILL BE PLAYED AGAIN. THE PARENT MUST CONTINUALLY RAISE THE LEVEL OF PUNISHMENT TO DEAL WITH THE GAME EACH TIME IT'S PLAYED.

COUNTER GAME
PLAY A NEW GAME

A FOURTH ALTERNATIVE IS TO COUNTER GAME OR PLAY ANOTHER GAME WITH THE CHILD. FOR EXAMPLE, YOU MIGHT GET ON THE FLOOR AND THROW A TANTRUM YOURSELF TO TEASE THE CHILD. THIS USUALLY ESTABLISHES A CYCLE OF GAME AND COUNTER GAME WHICH OCCURS OVER AND OVER.

EXPOSE THE GAME
BECOME GAME FREE

THE FIFTH ALTERNATIVE IS TO EXPOSE THE GAME AND BECOME GAME-FREE. YOU SAY: "I KNOW YOU'RE PLAYING A GAME BECAUSE YOU WANT YOUR WAY. BUT YOU ARE NOT GOING TO GET YOUR WAY NO MATTER HOW LONG YOU CRY AND POUND". LETTING THE CHILD "CRY IT OUT" WILL END THE GAME. THE CHILD WILL NOT BE LIKELY TO TRY THE GAME AGAIN BECAUSE HE RECEIVED NO PAY-OFF.



Match the Game strategy on the left with the kind of game behavior on the right. Write the number of the behavior next to the strategy it represents.

Strategy

Game Behavior

Refuse to play _____
Counter game _____
Play the game _____
Expose the game _____
Counter with power _____

1. Start a war
2. Avoid the game
3. Play a new game
4. Become a victim
5. Become game free

(Refuse to play - 2; Counter game - 3; Play the game - 4; Expose the game - 5; Counter with power - 1.)

HUSBAND AND WIFE
EXAMPLE

EVEN IN HUSBAND AND WIFE RELATIONSHIPS THE ALTERNATIVES APPLY. LET'S TAKE THE EXAMPLE OF THE HUSBAND WHO WANTS TO GO OUT WITH THE BOYS AND STARTS THE "WEREN'T FOR YOU" GAME.

PLAYS

ONE WAY TO DEAL WITH THE GAME IS TO PLAY THE GAME. IF THE HUSBAND STARTS "WEREN'T FOR YOU" THE WIFE MAY RESPOND WITH HER OWN "WEREN'T FOR YOU'S". THE HUSBAND CAN THEN MOVE INTO UPROAR AND EVENTUALLY HE GETS OUT OF THE HOUSE.

REFUSES

ONE WAY TO DEAL WITH THE "WEREN'T FOR YOU" GAME IS TO REFUSE TO PLAY. THE WIFE REFUSES TO PLAY BY NOT COUNTERING WITH WEREN'T FOR YOU'S OF HER OWN. THERE IS NO ARGUMENT, AND THE HUSBAND CANNOT MOVE INTO UPROAR. WHEN YOU REFUSE TO PLAY, YOU DEPRIVE THE GAME PLAYER OF HIS PAY-OFF.

POWER

ANOTHER WAY TO DEAL WITH THE GAME IS TO COUNTER WITH POWER. WHEN THE HUSBAND STARTS HIS "WEREN'T FOR YOU'S" THE WIFE MAY THREATEN TO WALK OUT ON HIM. THIS ENABLES HIM TO MOVE INTO "UPROAR" FASTER.

COUNTERS

ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE IS TO COUNTER GAME. HERE THE WIFE ALLOWS THE HUSBAND TO PLAY GAMES AND GO OUT. AFTERWARDS SHE GETS A BABY SITTER AND GOES OUT HERSELF.

EXPOSES

THE FINAL ALTERNATIVE IS TO EXPOSE THE GAME. WHEN THE HUSBAND STARTS HIS GAME THE WIFE MERELY SAYS, "I DON'T FEEL LIKE PLAYING "WEREN'T FOR YOU" AND "UPROAR" TONIGHT". AFTER EXPOSING THE GAMES, THE PLAYERS ARE TEMPORARILY GAME-FREE.



EXPOSURE

OF ALL THE REACTIONS TO A GAME TRANSACTION, EXPOSURE IS PROBABLY THE MOST DESIRABLE. EXPOSURE CLEARS THE AIR AND CREATES AN ATMOSPHERE WHERE OPEN COMMUNICATION CAN OCCUR. AT THE SAME TIME EXPOSURE INCREASES RESPECT FOR THE WOULD BE VICTIM.



List 3 reasons why exposure is probably the best reaction to a game transaction.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

(The answers are:

1. Exposure clears the air between the people.
2. This creates an atmosphere where open communication can occur.
3. Exposure increases respect for the would-be victim.)

GAME FREE
RELATIONSHIP

THE FINAL TYPE OF TRANSACTION THAT ERIC BERNE DISCUSSED IN HIS BOOK, THE GAMES PEOPLE PLAY, IS A GAME-FREE RELATIONSHIP THAT CAN BE DEVELOPED BETWEEN PEOPLE AND WITHIN A FAMILY.

RELATIONSHIP

- . OPEN
- . HONEST
- . NO ONE LOSES

A GAME-FREE RELATIONSHIP IS OPEN AND HONEST. NO ONE LOSES, NO ONE IS VICTIMIZED, AND NO ONE IS MADE TO LOOK FOOLISH. SUCH A RELATIONSHIP INCREASES MUTUAL RESPECT AND GIVES EACH PERSON A GREATER SENSE OF SELF WORTH.

Check (✓) the statements which are true about a Game-Free relationship.

- ☐ 1. A game-free relationship can only be established with-
in a family.
- ☐ 2. A game-free relationship is open and honest.
- ☐ 3. Someone always loses in a game-free relationship.
- ☐ 4. Game-free relationships increase mutual respect for the
would be players.

(Statements 2 and 4 are true.)



GAME FREE STRATEGY

IF A FAMILY WANTS TO DEVELOP A SET OF GAME-FREE
RELATIONSHIPS, WHAT SHOULD THEY DO? WHAT IS
THE BEST STRATEGY TO FOLLOW?

MUTUAL PACTS

ONE STEP IS TO MAKE GAME-FREE PACTS. A GAME-FREE PACT IS WHERE PEOPLE MAKE PACTS OR AGREEMENTS NOT TO PLAY GAMES WITH EACH OTHER. THIS IS REALLY WHAT WE ARE DOING WHEN WE FORM FRIENDSHIPS AND TAKE MARRIAGE VOWS. A GAME IS A VIOLATION OF THE FRIENDSHIP AND THE VOWS.

GAME NAMING

A SECOND THING PEOPLE CAN DO IS TO SET UP A PROCEDURE OF GAME NAMING. THEY DO THIS BY EXPOSING AND GIVING A NAME TO A GAME WHEN IT'S PLAYED. THEN THE NEXT TIME SOMEONE STARTS TO PLAY THAT GAME THE VICTIM SHOULD NAME THE GAME. FOR EXAMPLE "YOUR PLAYING WEREN'T FOR YOU ON ME". GAME NAMING BRINGS UNCONSCIOUS GAMES OUT INTO THE OPEN.

MUTUAL TRUST

FINALLY PEOPLE MUST DEVELOP MUTUAL TRUST. THAT IS, EACH WILL TREAT THE OTHER WITH FAIRNESS AND RESPECT. TRUST DOES NOT COME EASY. IT IS EARNED OVER A PERIOD OF TIME IN WHICH ONE FULFILLS HIS MUTUAL PACT.



Below are examples of ways to develop game-free relationships.
Match the example to the step it represents.

Steps

Mutual Pacts _____

Game Naming _____

Mutual Trust _____

Examples

1. "You're trying to get me to make your bed for you. I call that game Helpless Me. I know you don't like to do this, but it's really your job."
2. "I promise not to play games on you and you promise not to play games on me."
3. "My husband bowls on Wednesday night and I play bridge on Thursday night. We both recognize that we each need to do something on our own."

(Mutual Pacts - 2; Game Naming - 1; Mutual Trust - 3.)

IN THE FOLLOWING SECTION, YOU WILL FIND
PRACTICE ACTIVITIES. THESE ACTIVITIES WILL
PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU TO APPLY
WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED IN THIS UNIT
TO PROBLEM SITUATIONS WHICH ARE SIMILAR
TO THE PROBLEMS PARENTS OF HANDICAPPED
CHILDREN FACE.

"A SLIP IN TIME . . . SAVES NINE"

THIS CASE HISTORY PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY
FOR YOU TO ANALYZE A REAL SITUATION IN
TERMS OF WHAT YOU NOW KNOW ABOUT GAMES.

Mary Ables is the mother of a handicapped child. The child is eight years old. In addition to the handicapped child, she has two other children, ages five and two.

Mary feels totally inadequate to take care of her three children, especially with the responsibility of the handicapped child.

Mary's husband, Jeff, tries hard to be a good husband and provide for his family. Unfortunately, his job requires that he travel periodically, and to keep up with his work he has to spend extra time at the office.

Sometimes when Jeff is at work or is traveling, Mary feels very nervous and upset.

For some reason Mary has had a series of accidents. In the last three months she broke her leg, fell and injured her back, and burned her hand on the stove. Each time she had to spend time in the hospital. While she was hospitalized, Jeff had to give up his traveling and putting in extra time at the office.

See if you can analyze this situation in terms of the information you now have about Games. Try to answer these questions.

1. What games are being played in this situation? _____

2. Who are the victims? _____

3. What can Mary and Jeff do to eliminate the game playing? _____

4. Name some games that are similar to this one that are played in families where there is a handicapped child. _____

(The answers appear on the next page)

ANSWERS

1. Mary and Jeff are both playing games. Mary's game might be called "Get Hurt" where she is trying to avoid her responsibilities and also get Jeff to help. Jeff's game is "Cut Out". He is trying to avoid his responsibilities at home.
2. The children are the main victims in this game situation. However Jeff is Mary's victim when she plays "Get Hurt", and Mary is Jeff's victim when he's playing "Cut Out". Mary is also her own victim when she has her "accidents" in order to play "Pity Me".
3. Mary and Jeff should start by exposing and naming these games. Then they can discuss the reasons they need to play these games and work out alternatives. Once the games are named and the pay-offs are pointed out, Jeff and Mary will tend to abandon their games. In place of these games the couple should try to set up mutual pacts that they will try to cooperate more.
4. Parents who were asked to think of some games similar to those in this case history made the following suggestions:

I'm Tired
I'm Sick
The Headache Game
It's Your Duty
I Didn't Have Time
I Would Have But...

I Forgot
Helpless Me
I Don't Want To
Why???? Game
I Have To Go To The Bathroom

GAME NAMING EXERCISE

THIS EXERCISE WILL GIVE YOU AN OPPORTUNITY TO LIST SOME GAMES WHICH YOU CAN NOW IDENTIFY.

1. Name some games that are played between husbands and wives in families where there is a handicapped child.

_____	_____
_____	_____

2. Name some games that handicapped children play on the family.

_____	_____
_____	_____

3. Name some games that the other children play in families where there is a handicapped child.

_____	_____
_____	_____

4. Name some games that acquaintances play on families where there is a handicapped child.

_____	_____
_____	_____

(Some games which other parents suggested appear on the next page.)

Other parents suggested the following games:

1. Husband and Wife Games:

If It Weren't For You
Your Side Of The Family
You Were Responsible

2. Family and Child Games:

Helpless Me
Tantrums
Take Advantage

3. Other Children Games:

Cut Out
You Do More For Them Than Me
You Love Them More Than Me
Mama's Little Helper -- In Public

4. Acquaintances Games:

Ignore The Situation
You've Got To Have Faith
Finger Pointing
Martyr
What You Need To Do Is...
20 Questions

You may have used different names for the games, but the pay-offs in each game were probably very similar.

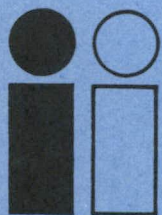
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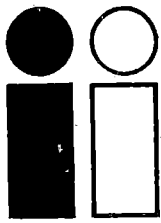
GAMES

UNIT 9



PARENTAL SKILLS PROGRAM HANDICAPPED CHILDREN





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TEXT

UNIT IX - GAMES

PARENTAL SKILLS FOR PARENTS OF

HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

PROGRAM

By

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UNIT IX

GAMES

In families where there is a handicapped child, just as in all families, people run into problems getting along with one another and with people outside the family. Sometimes, it is difficult to understand just what these problems are because the people are so much a part of the problem that they can't stand back and take an objective look at what is happening.

People within a family often get into a habit of dealing with each other in ways that aren't good for anyone. Yet somehow, they keep right on behaving in the same ways, having the same old arguments, or griping about the same old things. The children keep on with disruptive behavior that drives the parents up the wall. The parents withdraw or complain or blame. Everyone is uncomfortable and miserable.

An interesting way to get insight into what causes these problems and how to correct them lies in "game theory." This is a way of looking at interpersonal relationships developed by Eric Berne in his 1964 book, Games People Play. Dr. Berne said people get into habits of behaving in certain ways because this behavior provides a "payoff" or benefit to them. However, someone else has to be the victim (is manipulated) in order for the payoff to occur.^(a) He called such happenings between people "games". He pointed how destructive games can be in human relationships.

(a)

See 1, 2.

There are many ways to look at what is happening between people. Game theory, or transactional analysis as it is often called, is just one way. But it is one which can help with the problems we have in our day-to-day family lives. An understanding of the "games people play" can help change some of the things in our family which aren't good for anyone.

WHAT IS A GAME?

Let's define what a human-relations "game" is. A game takes place between people when the following things happen:

1. First, there is an ulterior (hidden) motive.^(b) That is, a person behaves in a certain way to get a payoff or benefit.
2. Second, there is a victim. That is, for a person who starts the game to get his benefit or payoff, another person must be manipulated or controlled into behaving in a certain way which will enable the first person to get his payoff.
3. Third, games are repetitive. People find ways to get what they want in their dealing with another person. Then they repeat the same games over and over whenever they want payoffs. Games become repetitive when they always give a payoff.

(b)

See 1, 2.

Here are some examples of games and how they work.

A temper tantrum is a perfect example. A child does not want to go to bed. He begins to cry, kick, yell, and scream. The parents can't stand their child in such an unhappy state. They give in - "Okay, you don't have to go to bed." Then the next time the child doesn't want to do something, he throws a tantrum. The parents give in and the child gets his payoff. All three characteristics of a game are present:

1. the child has an ulterior or hidden motive--

he doesn't want to do something.

2. the parents are victimized by his behavior.

They do the opposite of what they want--

they give in and let the child have his way.

3. the whole procedure is repeated over and

over with the child having his tantrum and

the parents giving in.

Berne identified a sequence of games between husbands and wives - "Weren't For You" and "Uproar".

Weren't For You - Let's say a husband wants a night out with the boys. He knows that if he tells his wife the truth, she will feel hurt and unhappy and will complain about his leaving her alone again. This will make him feel guilty and he probably won't go. So instead, he goes home and says to his wife, "If it weren't for you I'd be successful...", "If it weren't for you . . . this", and "If it weren't for you . . . that". She counters

with some "Weren't For You's" of her own, and an argument starts.

Uproar

As the argument grows, the husband game player moves into another game called "Uproar". He becomes angry, both begin to shout, and he walks out and slams the door. He has finally received his payoff in the game -- he's out for the evening. He leaves his wife home feeling guilty about her part in the argument -- she is a victim. Later in the night some husbands come home and play "Make-up". The payoff is to be able to sleep in the house.

In using a "game" to analyze transactions between people, remember that every one of us is a little selfish. We have desires and needs to fulfill. Even though we are adults, we all have inside us the small child who wants the "biggest piece of candy". We unthinkingly continue these patterns until someone, somehow, stops our game.

CONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS GAMES

People play games at two levels, the conscious and the unconscious. When games are "conscious", the person starting the game knows he is playing the game. He knows the payoff he is trying to get. He knows that if he behaves in a certain way with this person, he can get the payoff. When games are played at the conscious level, the game is "out in the open."

Some games are played at the unconscious level. As it is with much of our behavior, we don't analyze what we are doing. We accidently stumble on a way to get a payoff.

Many arguments, for example, between husbands and wives provide the payoff of letting off some steam and getting rid of some stress energy. But the people in the argument would never recognize the game unless the payoff is pointed out to them. For many couples, arguments lose their destructiveness once the individuals recognize that when things become stressful they play "Uproar". Arguments then can be looked at for what they are, a way of letting off steam.

GAME VICTIMS

In a game transaction there is always a victim. Without a victim and a payoff, there is no game. People tend to be victims in a game for three reasons:

1. They do not know they are involved in a game.
2. They know what is happening, but don't know how to stop the game.
3. They know what is happening, but don't want to stop the game.

Sometimes people don't know they are "gaming". They do not recognize that the other person seeks a payoff. They may not know the person well enough to see that he repeats the game over and over on victims. For example, some people put others down and make them look bad to make themselves feel adequate. Such people start a series of events with someone (a spouse, for example) which puts the other person in a bad light. Someone who is around such a person often can begin to see the pattern in this behavior and can recognize the motive and the payoff. When the game is played on a stranger, it might be hard for the stranger to identify this game.

Still other people can't put two and two together and see the repetitive pattern in how

an individual behaves toward them; nor can they identify the payoff that such a transaction provides. With children, the motives are usually obvious. The behavior is so repetitive that parents identify the game quickly. Children are amazed that their parents "read" them so well. With adults, the motives can be complex and hard to identify, especially when there is little communication between people.

The second type of game victim knows that he is involved in a game but he is not able to stop it. For example, there may be a pattern of put downs ("Weren't For You's) between husband and wife. It is difficult not to respond with "Weren't For You's of your own when someone puts you down. However, this pattern of response keeps the game going.

The third type of game victim knows a game is going on but doesn't want to change the situation. This person may be getting some payoff from the game himself. He may have something to lose by stopping the game. This person may be lonely or feel unworthy, for example. To him a game transaction is better than no interaction at all. Martyrs are often like this.

TYPES OF PAYOFFS

Game transactions offer many types of payoffs. Some common types are:

1. Avoidance payoffs - The benefit is avoiding something the person doesn't want to do, such as work, responsibility, or school.

2. Control payoffs - The benefit is controlling others or situations involving others. In this way the person gets to do things he wants in ways he wants and avoids compromise.
3. Need fulfillment payoffs - Many games are initiated to create opportunities for fulfillment of social needs and needs for esteem. In such games attention, praise, recognition, or expression of caring are the payoffs.

Many game players are very imaginative in developing games to avoid work or responsibility. Often such games involve a person "having something more important to do" and leaving the victim to do the work. Temper tantrums are a good example of avoidance payoffs. An angry outburst is a game some people use to make other reluctant to ask them to do things. Crying is also a game children use to avoid things.

Some game players start transactions which will put them in control and allow them to do things their way. They may withhold information and keep others in the dark. They are in charge because they are the only ones who know what is going on. Other game players don't let people in on the plan, or they insist that others don't know what they are doing.

Some parents continuously reward behaviors in their children which are passive and conforming. In this way they play the "control" game. By keeping their children dependent they control them. Husbands do this with wives and wives with husbands. Bosses

do this with subordinates and vice versa. Some sophisticated game players involve us in games that play on our needs for approval and attention. They manipulate us into doing all sorts of things because we need the approval and attention they give us. The motives of such game players are diverse. They use this type of game playing to get others to work toward their goals, needs, and plans. In this way they control others. Their victims seldom realize they are victims in a "control" game.

Need fulfillment payoffs are probably the most common type behind game playing. Most of us try to manipulate our interactions with others into situations where we look good in others' eyes, and where we get attention, recognition, and other reactions that fulfill our needs.

Games are played in all families. Some of the games are harmless enough. Sometimes children start games to get out of a chore, or to go to bed later, or to stay home from school, or to get attention. Such games aren't very harmful. But they show that lack of communication in the family may be creating the need to play games, or perhaps that a parental script is ineffective. Some games are very harmful to people in the family.

ATMOSPHERE FOR GAMES

Many families have an atmosphere that is ripe for game playing. Let's look at some conditions that can create a situation where family members play games and manipulate one another to get what they want, or to fulfill their needs.

1. One person is trying to dominate and sets the goals for another. Controller and Martyr parents are excellent examples of people who are in

charge and controlling everything without involving others in plans.

Controllers and Martyrs are often victims themselves. In these games, spouses and children manipulate them into changing their minds. Or family members create a game in which they can have an excuse to do something they want.

2. One person is inflexible and insists on doing things in certain ways, at certain times. Here, there is no tolerance for changing plans or adapting to new situations. Other people in the family then must resort to games of their own to get something done or to do something different. They must manipulate the inflexible person into changing in some way.
3. Lack of communication -- When people don't communicate, there is usually game playing. With little information, empathy and understanding of others is difficult. People in the family don't know how the others really feel, or what they expect, what they think, what they want or need. People who lack information often resort to games because they aren't sure of how another feels.
4. Basically different points of view concerning roles, expectations and philosophy of life -- When basic differences in belief exist between spouses, in-laws, or children (usually as they become teenagers), people often resort to games to manipulate one another into doing or not doing something. In such cases people's ideas and expectations are so different

that they have many barriers to communication.

5. Lack of respect for others' rights, needs, ideas and preferences. Some people seem to have little respect for others, and consider themselves first. They often manipulate others to get what they want. Other people, in turn, must manipulate the manipulator to have any rights at all.

In some families relationships become largely based upon game playing. Quite often the game players are not aware that they are playing games. Usually one or more of the characteristics described above are present. The family relationship is superficial. There is little real communication, cooperation, and respect for others. The unfortunate thing is that the family atmosphere becomes one of cunning, manipulation and mistrust.

Often husbands and wives play games on each other because they have basically different ideas about the role each is supposed to play. They have not merged their roles into a team relationship. A good example of this type of game is "It's your job". Here, a wife may be forced into the role of housewife that she doesn't desire and which does not satisfy her intellectual needs. Another example is where the father "is supposed" to provide the money. If financial stress occurs, no one goes out to help earn money because it's "the man's job" to do that.

Parent-child relationships are ripe for game playing. For example, some parental scripts consist of ideas and behaviors that practically force children into game playing. The Controller, Abdicator, Martyr, and Cavalier parent scripts often create circumstances where

a child must play games to get his way, to get to do something he wants, or to get his needs fulfilled.

In some families so much game playing is going on and some of the games are so destructive that mental health of family members is greatly harmed. Unfortunately, people in such families are often unaware that game playing is going on. Often they realize something is drastically wrong, but they do not know how to change the situation.

FAMILIES WITH A HANDICAPPED CHILD

Families with handicapped children play the same games played in other families. In these families games may be more intense because the handicap creates a situation where people may feel trapped. On the other hand, there may be less game playing because the family has a mutual problem.

In families with a handicapped child, husbands and wives may cling to old scripts. Both may have to resort to game playing to have any freedom or opportunity to fulfill their social needs or their needs for self-expression. This is especially true when one parent insists that every minute be devoted to the child, or where communication breaks down and parents don't let each other know how they feel.

Games can be played by the handicapped child, by one or both parents, and by the other children. Let's look at some examples of games that are played by these family members.

"The Handicap"

Perhaps the most common game played in families with a handicapped child is

the "Handicap Game". Here, "the handicap" is blamed for all the problems in the family. For example, a husband and wife may be having troubled relationships. They may have a sex problem. They may have a communication problem. They may have a stress problem. Rather than looking at the real problem, a couple very often says "if we didn't have a handicapped child we'd get along fine", or "if it weren't for the handicapped child, I'd be happier, or nicer, or more loving, etc."

Many parents believe that the handicap of their child is at the basis of all of their troubles. They never look any deeper. They never recognize that they have terrible communication, or that they have long since stopped cooperating, or that they have grown apart, each going his own way. They blame their sex problems, money problems, and other difficulties on the handicap. This often provides an easy excuse to not do something about the real problems.

An example is a young man who really didn't want to finish college. He could have easily done so. But his handicapped child provided a convenient reason to avoid finishing. It also provided him with a personal excuse whenever he failed at anything. It wasn't his fault that he didn't do well on his job - he had a handicapped child. Another example is a person who uses alcohol to escape emotional problems. The handicap of his or her child provides the excuse to the person himself and to outsiders for why there is so much drinking. The sad thing about the "Handicap Game" is that it stops so many families from

looking at the real causes of their problems. It stands in the way of their doing anything about them.

Not only parents play this game. Handicapped children in a family where it is played also learn to blame their handicap for all their problems and failures. Other children in the family may blame their problems on the fact that they live in a house with a handicapped brother or sister.

"Helpless Me"

"Helpless Me" is a game often played by handicapped children. In playing "Helpless Me", the child acts more helpless than he is. Others have to do more things than are necessary for him. The payoff in "Helpless Me" is attention and not having to do things for oneself. Often in situations where the child plays "Helpless Me", he has the support of another family member. This is usually a parent who follows a Martyr script. This parent is also playing a game which might be called "Victim", which has a sympathy payoff. Both players need each other in order to play their games. Because these two games reinforce each other, it is difficult for other family members to break them.

"Expert"

"Expert" is sometimes played by one parent with other family members. In playing "Expert", one parent becomes the family expert on the handicapped child and his problems. As the "expert" in the situation, the parent squeezes other family members out of situations involving the child. Ideas and contributions

of other family members seem unimportant. The payoff in "Expert" is that the parent gets to control every situation and receives all of the recognition. Often, the parent playing "Expert" refuses to listen to the suggestions of physicians and other professionals. As a result, the handicapped child becomes the real victim.

"Cut out"

"Cut out" is a game sometimes played by other children in the family. In playing "Cut out" the other children leave early to avoid chores or helping the handicapped child. The payoff in "Cut out" is that the game player gets out of doing his share of the work. There is a variation of "Cut out" which is called "raw deal". The other child says, "Why do I always get picked on?" or "Why doesn't he (the handicapped child) have to do something?" The parent is sympathetic or wants to avoid an argument, so the child is allowed to "Cut out".

Other Games

Many other games are played in the family that has a handicapped child. "Poor me", for example, is played by the parent who constantly seeks sympathy. In this game the parent makes everyone feel guilty about the burdens he has to carry. This is the primary game played by the Martyr parent.

"I would have but . . ." may be played by a teenager when he does not come home from school and help out. The parent asks the child why he didn't come home and help with the work. The teenager answers "I would have but . . ." In this game, the

conversation runs something like the following:

Parent: "Why didn't you come home and help me out?"

Child: "I would have but . . . I had to study."

Parent: "Why didn't you come home and study?"

Child: "I would have but . . . I lost my book and had to read a copy in the library."

Parent: "Why didn't you check the book out?"

Child: "I would have but . . . I lost my card when I lost my book."

There is no end to the "I would have but . . ." game. Every time the parent probes into one "I would have but . . ." the child answers with another "I would have but . . ."

MANAGING GAMES

Some game playing will occur. How, then, do we manage games? First, let's look at what the victim of a game can do to manage the game situation. Then let's consider how we may develop conditions in a family that create a "game-free" atmosphere."

Recognizing a Game

Many game victims are unaware they are in a game. Obviously, one cannot cope with what one doesn't recognize. Fortunately, it is fairly easy to identify a game when you recognize (1) the benefit or payoff, (2) the victim, and (3) the repetitive nature of the behavior sequence.

Identifying a payoff isn't very difficult in the case of children's motives, which are usually simple. However, it is sometimes hard to identify an adult's motive. This is

especially true when the game player doesn't play the game consciously and doesn't know he's working for a payoff. Remember the kinds of payoffs:

- Avoidance payoffs
- Controll payoffs
- Need fulfillment payoffs like
approval, acceptance, praise,
belonging, feeling safe and secure.

All of us have motives for wanting to avoid things, control things, and to have our needs fulfilled. A hidden motive is the first characteristic of a game. If we are open and honest about wanting such payoffs, there is no game - only the opportunity to compromise and talk things out.

Once a game is identified, it can be managed with a number of alternative moves. Many people are victims in a game because they do not know how to get out of it. They respond in ways that keep the game player playing the same game on them over and over. They do not know any alternatives to get out of the victim role.

Victim's Behavior

To manage a game, first recognize that the victim's behavior is the important factor.

The way the victim reacts to the person who starts the game usually determines whether or not the game continues. For example, in the situation in which the husband wanted a night out and started the "Weren't for You" game, this game would have ended quickly if the wife had not tried to outmatch his "Weren't for You's." If she had kept quiet, he

could not have started an argument. He could not have gone into "Uproar", and stormed out of the house.

In the example of the child's tantrum, if the parents had not given the child his payoff of staying up, this game would have ended in a few minutes.

How can victims respond once they realize they are in a game?

1. They can play the game.
2. They can refuse to play.
3. They can counter with power.
4. They can counter with a game of their own.
5. They can expose the game.

Play the Game

If the victim plays the game, he becomes the victim. This should be avoided, because once a game works, the game player will play the game again and others. The victim will be a victim over and over.

Refuse to Play

If the victim refuses to play, the payoff is denied the game player. However, the game player will often seek to create a new game to get the payoff.

Counter with Power

If the victim counters with power, gets angry, threatens or hurts the game player, this starts a war. In war, there has to be a winner and a loser. Such games can often

lead to serious problems between the game players.

Counter With a Game

If the victim counters with a game of his own, this starts a game and counter-game relationship. For example, "I'll get even with you," is a counter-game that can go on and on.

Expose the Game

If the victim exposes the game, he names the game and the payoff. This brings the game out into the open. This stops the game, and temporarily stops the game player from starting a new game.

To illustrate how each alternative works, consider the tantrum game that many kids play. Kids "throw a fit" to get their way, or the payoff.

Playing the game - One alternative in the tantrum game is to play the game and become the victim. In playing the game, the parent gives the child his payoff. Many parents do this because it is the only thing they know to do or it is an easy way to avoid a hassle. The child will keep playing the game as long as he gets his payoff.

Refuse to play - The second alternative is to "refuse to play". The parent thus ignores the tantrum, goes into another room, or acts as if nothing is happening. The child does not get his payoff. Without a payoff, the child will discontinue the game. This does not mean the child will not develop a new game, but he will slowly drop the tantrum game.

Counter with power - A third alternative is to counter the tantrum game with power and punish the child. Punishing the child may stop the game temporarily, but the child may counter with power also. He may threaten to run away or hold his breath. As a result, the parent must continually raise the level of punishment to stop the game wequence each time it is played.

Counter game - A fourth alternative is to counter game with the child. For example, the parent might get on the floor and throw a tantrum herself to tease the child. The child may see his own game through his parent's game and laugh at the situation. Although counter gaming may work, it sets a pattern of game and counter gaming in the parent-child relationship.

Expose the game - The fifth alternative is to expose the game and become temporarily game-free. In exposing the tantrum game the parent simply says "I know you are playing a game because you want your way. But you are not going to get your way no matter how long you cry and pound your fists." By letting the child "cry it out" the parent will end the game. The child will not be likely to try the game again because he received no payoff. Of all the reactions to a game transaction, exposure is probably the most successful. Exposing a game usually stops the game and establishes that the parent isn't falling for game behavior.

Husband - Wife Example

Let's see how the five alternatives work in the husband and wife example we discussed earlier. The husband got out for the night by playing "Weren't For You" and the "Uproar".

One way to deal with the game is to play it. If the husband starts "Weren't For You", the wife may respond with her own "Weren't For You's". This is exactly the response the husband needs to move into "Uproar" so he can eventually get out of the house.

Another way to deal with the "Weren't For You" game is to refuse to play. When the wife refuses to play and does not counter with "Weren't For You's" of her own, there is no argument, and the husband cannot move into "Uproar". When you refuse to play, you deprive the game player of his payoff.

Another way to deal with the game the game is to counter with power. When the husband starts his "Weren't For You's", the wife may threaten to walk out. Now he can move into "Uproar" faster.

Another alternative is to counter game. Here the wife allows the husband to play games and go out. Afterwards she gets a babysitter and goes out herself.

The final alternative is to expose the game. When the husband starts his game, the wife merely says, "I don't feel like playing "Weren't For You" and "Uproar" tonight." After exposing the games, the players are temporarily game-free. As in the tantrum game, exposure is probably the best alternative once such a game is started.

MANAGING GAMES IN A FAMILY

Let's assume that your family plays a lot of games. Perhaps your handicapped child plays games in which he blames his handicap. He uses it to get other people to do things,

or to get out of things. He may make other family members the victim. He may manipulate everyone in the family.

Perhaps your other children play games related to your handicapped child. They may play "He's really not one of us," or "Let's not include Joey." They may play games to get out of doing things which can help their handicapped brother or sister. Perhaps you and your spouse have stopped communicating and have started game playing to get along with one another.

Perhaps you are assuming that your child's handicap is creating most of your problems when that isn't the cause at all. If so, you may be playing "The Handicap" game. The question is, what can you do if everyone is playing games on everyone else?

Identify the Games and Give them a Name

To begin to manage games in a family, identify the games and name them. Then as the games are played, say "I'm not going to play the handicap game with you," or "you are just starting to play the handicap game again." Soon everyone knows the names of all the games. They can recognize when they start. The children can point out the games when their brothers and sisters play them, or when their parents play them.

The best way to manage a game once it is started (and a person sees he is to be the victim) is to name the game, identify the payoff, and bring the thing out in the open. This temporarily stops the game. However, for any long-term decrease in game playing, a family needs a game-free atmosphere.

Game Free Atmosphere

Certain conditions in a family can minimize game playing. In this good atmosphere, people do not have to resort to game playing as often as in families where game playing conditions prevail.

Games can be more easily detected and curtailed in families with these characteristics:

1. Open communication
2. Family members' expectations for one another are realistic
3. Goals and plans are made and all family members are included.
4. Stress is managed successfully.
5. Parents have developed a game-free relationship, exhibiting behavior that teaches their children to be game-free.
6. Family members cooperate rather than each going his own way.
7. Family members tolerate rather than judge and "put down."
8. Family members recognize the kinds of needs people have.

Obviously, no family has all of these. But it can build and strengthen those it has.

Open communication, respect for the rights of all family members, equality among all family members, and tolerance for individual differences can go a long way in creating a game-free atmosphere.

The Activator parent creates many of the conditions described above. In families with a handicapped child, parents who use an Activator script understand the needs and rights of their children. They have more realistic expectations for their children. And

their behavior toward their children fosters openness, honesty, and skills which help children fulfill their own needs.

Remember that people resort to games when they have no other way to:

- (1) Avoid something they dislike doing
- (2) Do something they want to do
- (3) Get someone else to do something their way
- (4) Fulfill their needs for acceptance, love, approval and a good self-image.

Families that have control, inflexibility, lack of communication, and lack of respect for desires and needs have to resort to "game playing". The alternative to this is to be open and honest about what we like and what we want. We share and cooperate so everyone can be included in plans. Wishes and desires can be considered. In such an atmosphere, the people in the family do not play games as often as in families where game playing conditions are maintained.

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