

THE ENCOUNTERER

An Information Service for Group Psychotherapy Professionals. Published under the Auspices of the Golden Gate

FOUNDATION for GROUP TREATMENT, INC.

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CONFERENCE: Golden Gate Group Psychotherapy Society:
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SUCCINCTISM: "A KOOK is A Housebroke Nut!" In therapy groups run for the purpose of patients getting-well, this definition itself validates the authenticity and vitality of the "nutty kid" inside some persons who is loaded with vivacity and spontaneity. AND the definition also points the direction for getting-well.

FORMULATION: Parental Prefatory(?Predatory?)Phrases:

A parent of a child, the Parent ego state in a person, is basically concerned with two categories of behavioral operations-Nurturing and Disciplining (Berne). The What and the Why of disciplining-training is essentially a matter of opinion and prejudice (often unsubstantiated) taken over en toto from the individual's (biologic) parents. To accomplish this discipline-training some subtlety is at time useful. The following is a sampling of some introductory, prefatory phrases used to "creep up on" a second person, to persuade his believings and undo his reasonings in order "to make a believer out of him," "to bring him around and into line," ie, to bring on his Child ego state (to comply or rebel). To list:
"As I see it,-" "As it looks to me,-"
"As I was saying,-" "Well, anyhow(anyway),-"
"True, but,-" "In my opinion,-"
"As anyone(fool)can see,-" "Right!And,-"(dismissal)
"As everyone knows,-" "I consider that(to be),-"
"Of course, you,-" "Wouldn't you agree that,-"
"In other words,-" "It occurs to me that,-"
"In other words, you are saying that,-" "Has it ever occurred to you that,-"
"I was wondering if,-"

"(Well)It seems to me that..."
This last is probably the most readily recognizable. "It seems to me that-" when used with any frequency, is often directly decodeable as "My daddy (mommy) says that..." Rather regularly as the person continues past the introductory words and into the ensuing opinionated remarks 1. his body posture shifts(moving in his chair), his physical gestures and the angle of his head change and ii. his voice tone, pitch, volume, cadence of syllables and perhaps vocabulary also change. The Parental objective with these various maneuvers is to decrease the listener's data in-put, to instead offer comforting (words, strokes) with the implication of withdrawing them if necessary, in order to bring about the change of belief.

ENCOUNTER: Baloney Bob was given to periodic "Now that I've got the floor..." filibusters alternating with barely (blinking) listening to other talkers. Suzy, in group therapy to get well of her "dead-pan" was talking with warm animated face to unmoving sagging-faced Bob. The therapist asked Bob how come he was putting Suzy on. "Oh, I didn't think it showed" to the group's and his laughter.

B.B. described that to stop listening he would let the cheek muscles just below his eyes sag. As a small child he had learned that by doing this he could save himself from some of mom's rages and beatings. Later in therapy he told that along with decreasing the amount of "sagging" (of his face) at home by 1/3, his wife's rages at him were much less frequent and his trouble working with colleagues had become almost nil.

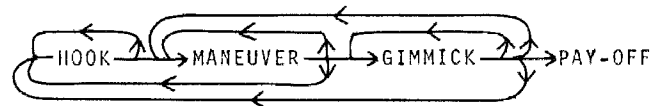
REPORT: The January 1969 issue of "The Laymens School Review" page 4 pictures a workshop on "The Activity of Listening." It shows the leader in the foreground demonstrating to the members a method for "leveling" (the head from a tilt). This procedure is the most reliable, most readily learnable method of getting a level head, your Adult, keeping-your-cool. It has been taught to non-patients including a baseball pitcher and a competitive skier with useful results. Many TA members have found this "Adult-locator" (listening) procedure advantageous.

FORMULATION: GAME MOVES UNRAVELLED: SEQUENTIAL, PREDICTABLE, LOGICAL, TEACHABLE. Original Contribution to the Theory and Practice of Transactional Analysis. Those who have read "Games People Play" (Berne) will recognize that various terms have been used in that text to describe different classes of moves in games; each term is well defined. The complexity not previously unravelled has been in learning what, if any, sequential nature was inherent to a game from player to player and from game to game. As a game spotter recognizes, a game presented by a new player in a group will have complexities that at first almost defy description. Up to this reporting no one has been able to define how these moves of games are related, ie, so that a "student" of games could, with the encoded information, then as a proprietor of his own therapy shop, decode and interpret a game for his own patient.

There are four major categories of moves in a game and as played in games, these moves in sequence are:

1. The Hook -Come on, Engagement
 2. The Maneuver-Con, Artful Ploy, Angling procedure
 3. The Gimmick -Trick, Wrinkle
 4. The Pay-Off -Ulterior(Hidden)motive,Jack-pot,Reward.
- The complexities of games are explained here by what is termed "The Recycling Phenomenon." This means that any one move or any sequence of moves can be and often is repeated.

TO SCHEMATIZE:



If the Hook does not hook it can be repeated. If the G does not get a P-0 the G alone or the M→G sequence or the H→M→G sequence can be repeated, etc.

In the two-sided game "Why don't you...?" (one side), "Yes, but..." (the other) the "Yes, but" player usually offers as his HOOK "I gotta (troubling) problem." This is followed by the would-be "Why don't you..." player's responsive counter-HOOK (eg, "Oh! What is it?") The "Yes, but..." then gives a statement ending with a pause. This statement-pause MANEUVER, has more than one part (as do most game MANEUVERS). The 1st part is the agreeable statement ("Yes is agreeable), the 2nd part is the pause. Once "Why don't you...?" is coming on, the "Yes, but..."er is seen fielding the suggestions with agreeable sounding "Yes..."s and a slight pause (replay of MANEUVER), followed by the GIMMICK of spitting out the offering with a "but" (or "however" or "although," etc). Re the pause: these two words, "Yes, but," are not slurred by players. The "but" may be hidden in the midst of other words after the "Yes." The "but" (word) is differently toned from the "Yes" and the "yes, but" player is changing posture across the comma between the "yes" and the "but." The "but" trick is often accompanied with a smile. The PAYOFF does not occur until everybody gives-up and that "give-up" by others is the PAYOFF. Another "Why don't you?" regularly initiates a recycling of the M→G sequence.

It may take 5 or 500 recyclings before the PAYOFF. To teach the logic of game moves means to teach that the patient in a group uses different postures, gestures, tones, word cadence for each category of move in his game.

To summarize: A people-game, as played, proceeds through a sequential series of steps:

HOOK → MANEUVER → GIMMICK → PAY-OFF

It is not a game until a PAYOFF is forth coming. At any step of the way (interruption, delay, etc) the move sequence can be back-spaced one, two or three steps in the sequence and recycling (re)initiated. A GIMMICK directly precedes a PAYOFF, a MANEUVER precedes the GIMMICK and a HOOK has preceded them all: "A HOOK WAS THE START OF IT ALL!"

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