

June 15, 2010

# Game Codes Newsletter of Games People Play

 Addresso'Set Publications

## Special points of interest:

- \* The Game Diagram has five moves, often times repeated and recycled before a Payoff. They are called Move #1 - Hook, Move #2 - Angle, Move #3 - Con, Move #4 - Gimmick, Move #5 - Payoff.
- \* Games are both necessary and desirable, and the only problem at issue is whether the games played by an individual offer the best yield for him.

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## Space, Time, and People

We are all placed on earth, in this universe, in this time and we figure out what to do and with each other. We depend on each other for strokes: a word, a brush touch, a hello, a look, etc. We learn from our Parents - And later from teachers / books / media. And we practice to get better: speaking, listening, walking, skiing, playing a violin, mastering chemistry, math, etc., and playing games.

We structure our time in several ways. As Berne wrote: "When one is a member of a social aggregation of two or more people, there are several options for structuring time. In order of complexity, these are: (1) Rituals (2) Pastimes (3) Games (4) Intimacy and (5) Activity, which may form a matrix for any of the other." "The solitary

individual can structure time in two ways: activity and fantasy." This alone time is colloquially called withdrawal. An individual decides how to use his "alone" time: for example (1) get-on with studying, practicing computer skills, or learning about games people play, (2) get-rid-of, (3) get-away-from reality in a fantasy or drunken stupor, (4) get-nowhere-with endless hours in front of the tv or video games, etc.

People decide to use the limited number of time they have being alive in their way. Some make peace with themselves, with who they are. It is rare though that a person admits he is playing a game, let alone understand games people play. This letter will remind the new and veteran students of games people play that there is an

Adult skill set that can be developed to use and understand games. Thus "Game Codes." Dr. Eric Berne wrote the book "Games People Play." My father F.H. Ernst Jr., M.D., a student of Berne, carried the game ball further down the field in his "The Game Diagram", "Handbook of Listening," and other writings. Thanks.



**"Mastery of the universe is proportional to the symbols man has by which to represent his universe."**

## Games Defined

On page 48 of "Games People Play" Eric Berne, M.D. says: "A GAME is an ongoing series of complementary ulterior transactions progressing to a well-defined, predictable outcome. Descriptively it is a recurring set of transactions, often repetitious, superficially plausible, with a concealed motivation; or, more colloquially, a series of moves with a snare, or

"gimmick." Games are clearly differentiated from procedures, rituals, and pastimes by two chief characteristics: (1) their ulterior quality and (2) the payoff. Procedures may be successful, rituals effective, and pastimes profitable, but all of them are by definition candid; they may involve contest, but not conflict, and the ending may be sensational, but it is not dra-

matic. Every game, on the other hand, is basically dishonest, and the outcome has a dramatic, as distinct from merely exciting, quality."

His choice of words is clarified when he points out that games are made up of maneuvers. He later says that games are not bad. He says that games are an essential way of giving and getting strokes to / from people.

## The Ernst Game Diagram

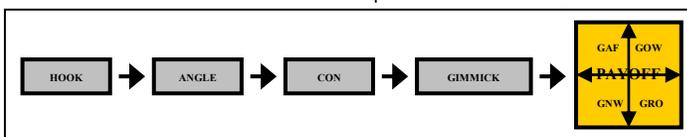
The Game Diagram is a systematic and methodical approach to games people play. The questions of games, which form the basic structure of emotional dynamics of individuals, families, and organizations can be better understood. Transactional encounters can be described with this diagram.

The Game Diagram has five moves, often times repeated and recycled

before a Payoff. They are called Move #1 - Hook, Move #2 - Angle, Move #3 - Con, Move #4 - Gimmick, Move #5 - Payoff. The Payoff can be of four types: (1) I'm OK and You're OK for a get-on-with, (2) I'm not-OK and You're OK for a get-away-from, (3) I'm OK and

You're not-OK for a get-rid-of, (4) I'm not-OK and You're not-OK for a get-nowhere-with. "

"The strokes a person exchanges during his/her encounters with others (encounter by encounter) have consequences." F.H. Ernst Jr., M.D.



**"The strokes a person exchanges during his / her encounters with others (encounter by encounter) have consequences."**

## "Cool It!"

In the game of "Cool It!" there are five distinct moves. Each one of these can and are repeated, recycled as the players play them. Move #1 - A warm up (of self to others). Move #2 - A cool off (of self to others). Move #3 - A rewarming (of the other person). Move #4 - "Cool It!" Move #5 - Payoff.

This game can be played in weeks, months, even 12 seconds. For example as described in [The Game Diagram](#) "Thirty-three-year-old Sybil, and her 34 year old spouse, Saul, were seated for about a minute in their treatment session when:

(1) Sybil sat erectly, leveling her head, a smile came on her face, then brightly she announced: **"Well!"**

(2) Two seconds passed as she slumped slightly in her chair, her lower facial muscles sagging a little. Then, with a mild angle of her face and the setting of mischievous semi-scowl lines on her forehead, and surreptitiously looking to make sure she had the attention of Saul, she followed with a fading-out voice: **"Sa."**

(3) Within one second of this and quickly engaging the gaze of her spouse, she sat upright, tilted her

head some to the other side and subtly, archly came forward in her chair. Smilingly eyeing him, she vocalized: **"Okay!"**

(4) Another second passed as Saul started to leer-smile back at her while she slumped again, pulling her head and torso back: thus while turning her face away abruptly, and in an emphatic voice: **"Nothing!"**

(5) This was immediately followed by both Sybil and Saul breaking out in a mutual, infectious, warm, rich, sultry laugh.

## Listening

The activity of listening is manifested by visible, physical bodily movement.

Listening activity is to be differentiated from hearing. Hearing is a semi-automatic, auditory-environment scanning operation.

The non-listener is characterized by an absence of visible, physical movement, an eye-blink rate less than once every 5 seconds.

In most group meetings more than 90 percent of man-hours are spent doing something other than talking.

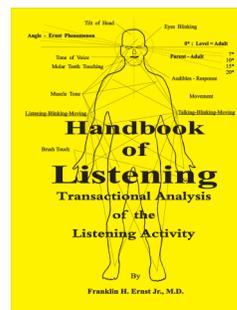
"Not-now-talking" time has been found to be of three different varieties: listening activity, thinking, hearing.

Listener attitudes and behaviors are Parent-Adult-Child.

Adult listening is associated with a "level," squared up countenance.

Parental and Childlike listening are accompanied by an angle of the face and head.

During childhood, very vigorous training is given to the child's developing listening-looking-pointing-talking activities.



The parental listener is concerned with approving (feeding) or disapproving of (prohibiting-disciplining) of the talker.

Repetitious, non audible activity, such as silent head-nodding in response to vocal stimuli, is experienced as deprivation by the talker.

The analysis of transactions (one stimulus and the other person's response to it) between two persons demonstrates: (a) The influence of the talker on the listener and, (b) The

influence of the listener (his gestures, postures, movements both manifested and withheld) on the talker. This latter phenomenon is perhaps better known under the euphonious (the misleading) terminology of "non-lexical" and "nonverbal communication."

Some (game) maneuvers are described in the text ... which are used by talkers to influence the listener, and others used by listeners to influence the talker.



Listen, read, study.

Some techniques used to improve listening operations are described ... : "Get-a-level" "Get-a-Move-On" "Give-with-an-Audible" "Select-Your-Own-Stroking" "Brush-Touch" "Sound Screen" "Duet Talking" People who are demonstrably improving their listening skills are listening between one and two thirds (of the time, content or event); i.e., maximum listening efficiency in the individual varies between 30 percent and 70 percent.

## Genesis of Games People Play (1964 AD)

Eric Berne, M.D. described the importance of games on page 58. "From the present point of view, child rearing may be regarded as an educational process in which the child is taught what games to play and how to play them. He is also taught procedures, rituals and pastimes appropriate to his position in the local social situation, but these are less significant. His knowledge of and skill in procedures, rituals and pastimes determine what opportunities will be available to him, other things being equal; but his games determine the use he will make of those opportunities, and the outcome of situations for which he is eligible. As elements of his ... unconscious life-plan, his favored games also determine his ultimate destiny ...:

the payoffs on his marriage and career, circumstance surrounding his death."

"While conscientious parents devote a great deal of attention to teaching their children procedures, rituals and pastimes appropriate to their stations in life, and with equal care select schools, colleges and churches where their teachings will be reinforced, they tend to overlook the question of games, which form the basic structure for the emotional dynamics of each family, and which the children learn through significant experiences in everyday living from their earliest months. Related questions have been discussed for thousands of years in a rather general, unsystematic fashion,

and there has been some attempt at a more methodical approach in the modern orthopsychiatric literature; but without the concept of games there is little possibility of a consistent investigation. Theories of internal individual psychodynamics have so far not been able to solve satisfactorily the problems of human relationships. These are transactional situations which call for a theory of social dynamics that cannot be derived solely from consideration of individual motivations."

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**The Game Diagram is a systematic and methodical approach to games people play. The questions of games, which form the basic structure of emotional dynamics of individuals, families, and organizations can be better understood using this diagram. Transactional encounters can be described with the Game Diagram.**

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## Genesis of Games People Play - Genesis (8C)



The earth and the moon.

Several games have been decoded in the paper "Genesis of Games People Play" by F.H. Ernst Jr., M.D. These include "You Made Me Do It", "Now I Got You, You SOB" (NIGYYSOB), "Why Is This Always Happening To

Me?" (WAHM), "Look How Hard I'm Trying." These games came right out of the Book of Genesis in the Bible, as written by Moses. He tells the stories of Jacob and his 12 sons, Joseph being the lost son, "but he was found."



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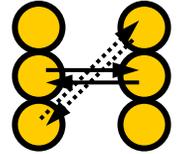
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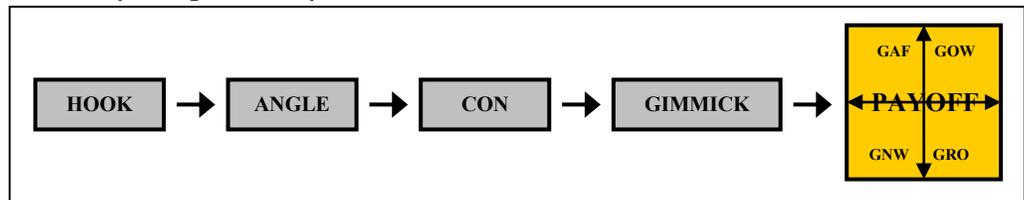
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A game is defined as a recurring set of transactions with ulterior transactions, concealed motivation, a gimmick, and a payoff. Eric Berne, M.D. used a particular variation of the duplex transactional diagram to represent the ulterior aspects of a game. Berne added the concept of switch in 1966 and introduced "The Game Formula."  $Con + Gimmick = Response > Switch > Payoff$



The "Ernst Game Diagram" as described by Franklin H. Ernst Jr., M.D. in his paper "The Game Diagram" shows the phenomena of the variableness of a game and number of variations without contradicting "Berne's Game Formula." The Game Diagram" has five moves: Move #1-Hook, Move #2-Angle, Move #3-Con, Move #4-Gimmick, Move #5-Payoff. Diagrammatically it looks like this:



We're on the Web.  
www.ListeningActivity.com  
www.ErnstOKCorral.com

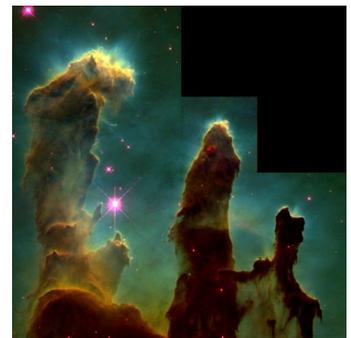
*"Mastery of the universe is proportional to the symbols man has by which to represent his universe."*

## The Function of Games

"Games are both necessary and desirable, and the only problem at issue is whether the games played by an individual offer the best yield for him. In this connection it should be remembered that the essential feature of a game is its culmination, or payoff. The principal function of the preliminary moves is to set up the situation for this payoff, but they are always designed to harvest the maximum permissible satisfaction at each step as a secondary product. Thus in "Schlemiel" (making messes and then apologizing) the payoff, and the purpose of the game, is to obtain the forgiveness which is forced by the apology; the spillings and cigarette burns are only steps leading up to this, but each such trespass yields its

own pleasure. The enjoyment derived from the spilling does not make spilling a game. The apology is the critical stimulus that leads to the denouement. Otherwise the spilling would simply be a destructive procedure, a delinquency perhaps enjoyable." page 61 of "Games People Play"

The payoff can be of four types: (1) I'm OK and You're OK for a get-on-with, (2) I'm not-OK and You're OK for a get-away-from, (3) I'm OK and You're not-OK for a get-rid-of, (4) I'm not-OK and You're not-OK for a get-nowhere-with. "The strokes a person exchanges during his/her encounters with others (encounter by encounter) have consequences." F.H. Ernst Jr., M.D.



A view of space, the final frontier.

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