



## Special points of interest:

*"Because there is so little opportunity for intimacy in daily life, and because some forms of intimacy, especially if intense, are psychologically impossible for most people, the bulk of time in serious social life is spent in playing games. Hence, games are both necessary and desirable. 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." (E. Berne)*

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## Payoff and Intensity of a Game

The following is quoted from "The Game Diagram" by FH Ernst Jr., M.D., pg. 35

A first-degree game is one played through lightly, without an intensive or extensive buildup to the payoff. A first-degree game doesn't leave either player hard-up and aching at its conclusion. A few stamps may be issued and/or collected.

A second-degree game is played for a big payoff, but a payoff of a reversible quality. A third-degree game has reference to the maximized intensity of payoff which can be obtained. A hard game is often one which involves an irreversibility in the payoff as in third-degree "Ain't It Awful" with the Get-Rid-Of payoff of multiple surgeries or a physical assault on the other party.

Payoffs can be sorted into being reversible or irreversible. The irreversible payoff is more akin to a chapter of the person's script; i.e. "The Final Curtain."

The hard games of the winner variety are infrequently thought of as games inasmuch as theorists of "people games" do not see these players in the psychotherapeutic setting. The payoffs for these latter players are health promoting and often provocative of Get-On-With style

intimacy. Said differently, these players become "addicted" to securing their own mutually glowing moments of "I Am OK AND You Are OK, too. NOW!"

The most reliable pathway to an intimate moment is by proceeding from withdrawal to ritual to pastime to game ("the bridge to intimacy") to intimacy.

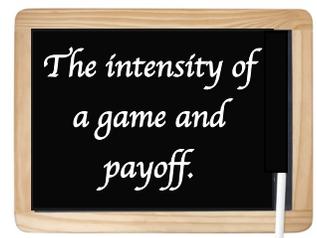
"Because there is so little opportunity for intimacy in daily life, and because some forms of intimacy, especially if intense, are psychologically impossible for most people, the bulk of time in serious social life is spent in playing games. Hence, games are both necessary and desirable. The only problem 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." (E. Berne)

This is in contrast to what is all too often said by people to each other "You should get-rid-of that (your) game."

It is in "the moment of truth," in the payoff, when the ego state experienced as "real Self" changes. Then the "real Self" and the executive come to reside in the same ego state.

To experience a moment of "I'm really alive" is seen as the game-player's drive. Getting to this is most effectively accomplished playing through, using, going through the sequence of transactional moves with another person. The game moves enable the game player to shift his own cathexis or power system over to the Child self within. The Child gets to be brightly illuminated and empowered; gets to be recognized.

The personal experience of changing from one point of view inside oneself to another point of view inside oneself is an enlivening, stimulating event to the person. This experience contributes to keeping him alive, keeps his tissues alive.



Keep track of the intensity of a game and the payoff.



"The Game Diagram"

pg. 28

### The Rules of Game Moves

The Rules of Game Moves can be understood in terms of "the game flow chart."

1. At the moment of realizing his payoff, the player will have just previously played through his GIMMICK for the last time in that particular game.
2. At some time prior to the last time the Gimmick move was played, the

game player will have played out his CON move at least once.

3. Just before the Gimmick was played for the first time in a game, the CON move had been played.
4. A HOOK move (with enough come-on in it to persuade the other person into giving some form of acknowledgment and responsiveness) is the first trans-

actional event which counts in the sequence of a game.

5. Any transactional offering, one party to another, will have a psychological level in it, e.g. "You are OK" or "You are not OK". This is in addition to any social level information that the offering may contain. For example: "It is warm today, isn't it?"



"The Game Diagram"

pg. 33

### Payoff Options

#### CLASSIFICATION OF PAYOFFS

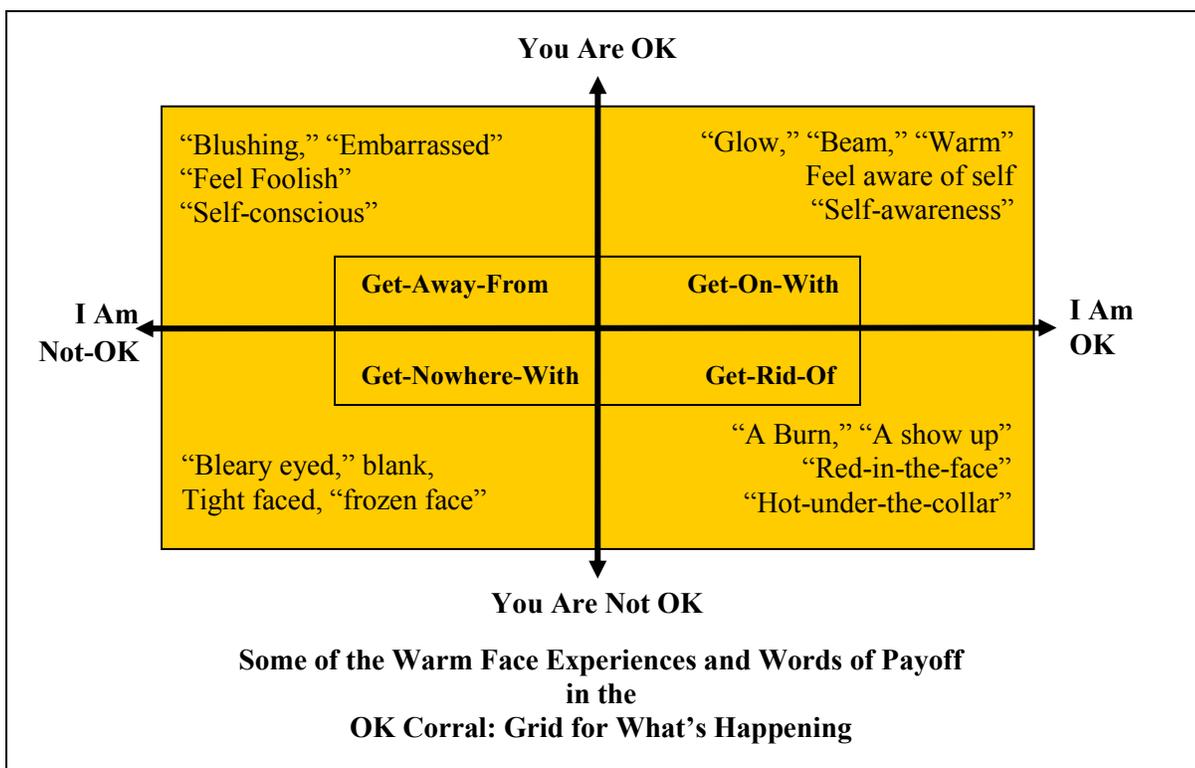
Payoff time is a feeling, emoting, emotional event. It is one of a mutually vivid stroke exchange. The payoffs of the person can be sorted into the four quadrants of the OK CORRAL: Grid for What's Happening.

1. A **Get-On-With** payoff: for example, a mutual laugh after the gimmick is played.

2. A **Get-Rid-Of** payoff: for example, screaming the other person out of the room.

3. A **Get-Away-From** payoff: for example, after slamming the "Uproar" bedroom door, the person stays alone and away from his/her playmate all night on the other side of the unlocked door.

4. A **Get-Nowhere-With** payoff : for example, a post-binge hangover, where the party with the "hangover" will not let anyone make a sound around the house while he is suffering, yet he also implies "another drink would take the edge off this if you'd leave" thus effectively preventing the other people from doing anything.





## The Encounterer Vol. 2, No. 36 : Psychological Rackets

The following is taken from Vol.2, No.36 of The Encounterer, edited by FH Ernst Jr., M.D.

**FORMULATION:** Alphabet of Behavior Letter No. 4: The Psychological Racket Diagram.

This alphabet letter, the racket diagram, succinctly encapsulates that a racket involves specialized strokes solely of a "You are not OK with me" nature (Fig. 1) When the particular racket is identified, such as a tears racket, the word "tears" is written inside the dotted line to describe the U - quality of strokes being given by the tearful person (Fig. 2).

Figure 1

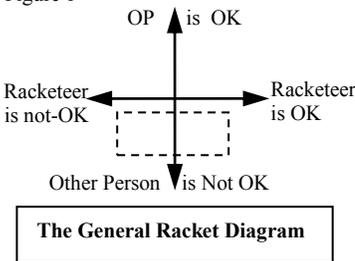
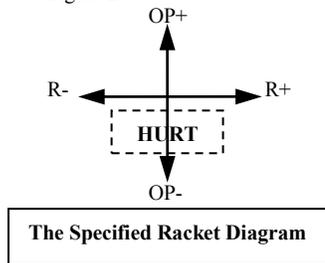


Figure 2



Early in life people learn that the display of a certain emotion at home has the effect of bringing other events of the homestead to a halt, e.g., when mother bursts-into-tears or when "father is tired," when mother isn't talking to anyone or when father is wrathful. Little people learn that these feeling displays secure certain advantages. The child experiments with the use of one or more of these emotions

and learns that, so also for himself, these shows of feeling give him (blackmail) advantages over others, especially at home.

A RACKET is a repetitively displayed emotion with coercive intimidating qualities which can be used for a game payoff. A racket aims to 1) bring about the outward consent of the Other Person; 2) hampers the chance for get-on-with pleasure for either person; 3) restricts the choices of OP to either inaction, retreat or avoidance; and 4) puts a burden on OP. A racket is a show of feeling to which there is a lack of personal commitment. The feeling shown is a "You" feeling, not an "I" feeling, therefore it is said to lack authenticity, it is more a show.

Example: A 37-yr.-old woman burst into the group room at the same time bursting into tears. She was comforted by the assemblage and her tears subsided. She then was asked if other events and people could be gone ahead with. She responded with renewed tears. At that time in the marathon other events of greater moment were in need of handling. Therapist then gently asked if she'd like to go with an assistant across the hall. "No. No. I'll be all right." and the sobbing abruptly stopped in less than 20 seconds as she regained her composure.

In practice a racket is a blackmailing operation, wherein a special brand of "You are not OK with me" strokes are given out until placated or given in to. A racketeer is effectively saying "No matter what, you are not OK with me. You can't get the best of me. I may end up being OK with myself (GRD You) or I may end up being not OK (GNW You) but if I do go down for the 3rd

time, I ain't going alone." The dotted line in the lower half of the OK Corral depicts an enshrined form of stroking with the dynamic of "You are not OK with me" (U-) for a "put down," to "bring down," to show "You can't get the best of me now while I'm worshipping in the temple of this, my sacred feeling." This "You can't get the best of me" is 2-edged: 1) There are none of the best (U+) strokes coming from the racketeer and 2) "I won't go down alone if I go down."

Not only are OP's unconditional strokes to racketeer rebuffed but also OP receives back "OP You are not OK with me!" until racketeer's demands have been met. Rackets are noteworthy for the lack of unconditional "You are OK strokes" and the tenacity of giving only "You are not OK" strokes; no free smiles, no free "thank you's." A racket can be the payoff to a game and when it is, the racketeer either has a get-rid-of or get-nowhere-with the victimized other person.

The next issue of THE E ncounterer V2N37 describes the specific stroking sequences by which a racket is invoked, game vs racket, diagnosis of Parent vs Child racketeer, an Rx for GW of a racket.



A **game** is a social activity which regulates intimacy. It is one of the six ways of structuring time. Repetitively carried out, its elements are a seemingly reasonable opening objective, concealed motivation, ulterior transactions, gimmick (with a switch as part of this artful stratagem) ending with a payoff. A payoff is a bright, vivid "moment. The payoffs of games, the denouements, can be classified into four varieties: Get-On-With, Get-Away-From, Get-Rid-Of and Get-Nowhere-With.

**RACKETS** are different. *Phenomenologically*, a racket is a repetitively displayed emotion with fraudulent, coercive and intimidating qualities which brings about the outward consent of the victim.

*Operationally*, a racket is an emotional display lacking authenticity, preventing other emotional displays AND victimizing the recipient's choices to either inaction (GNW) or avoidance (GAF). *Pragmatically*, a racket is a specialized display, which places a burden on the other person. In the criminal protection racket, the victim purchases protection from "the protector"-predator.



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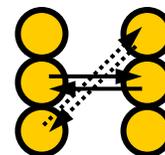
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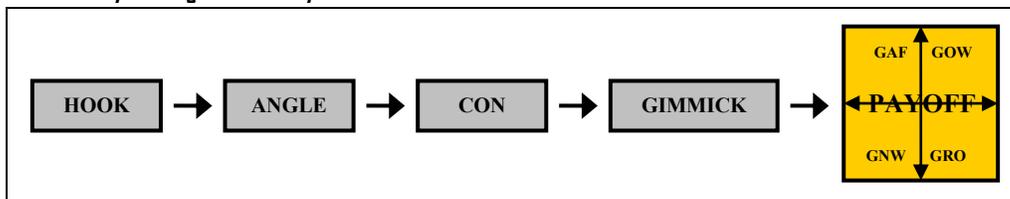
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A game is defined as a recurring set of transactions with ulterior transactions, concealed motivation, a gimmick, and a payoff. Eric Berne, M.D. used a particular variation of the duplex transactional diagram to represent the ulterior aspects of a 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:



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



"The Game Diagram"

pg. 34

### Racket Payoffs

The person with a racket form of payoff will be restricting the choice of payoff of the other party. This is because the racketeer has payoffs which will take place in one of the two lower quadrants of HIS OWN OK CORRAL, either a **get-nowhere-with** or a **get-rid-of** by the racketeer. The racketeer in his payoffs is most concerned that

the other person sees that "You can't and didn't get the best of me." Either way, the racketeer is dedicated to not giving the other person a You are OK. (Figure No. 27)

The racketeer's payoffs are either 1) "I am not OK AND you are not OK" for a Get-Nowhere-With payoff or 2)

an "I am OK AND you are not OK" for a Get-Rid-Of payoff. A racketeer with a "guilty" payoff will make the other person feel guilty. The "hurt feelings" racket does in fact hurt the other person. The "suffer" racket makes the other person suffer. The "tears" racket tyrannizes the other person.

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