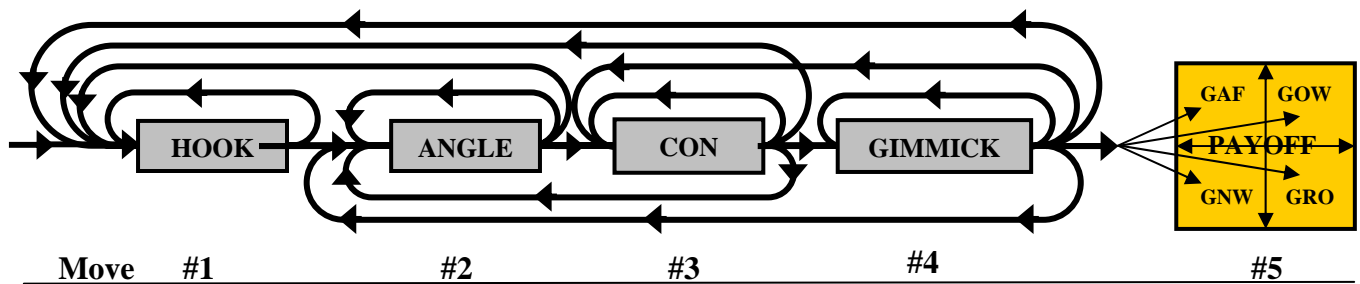
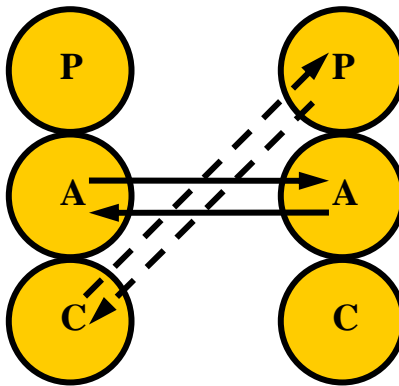


The Game Diagram

Second Edition

by

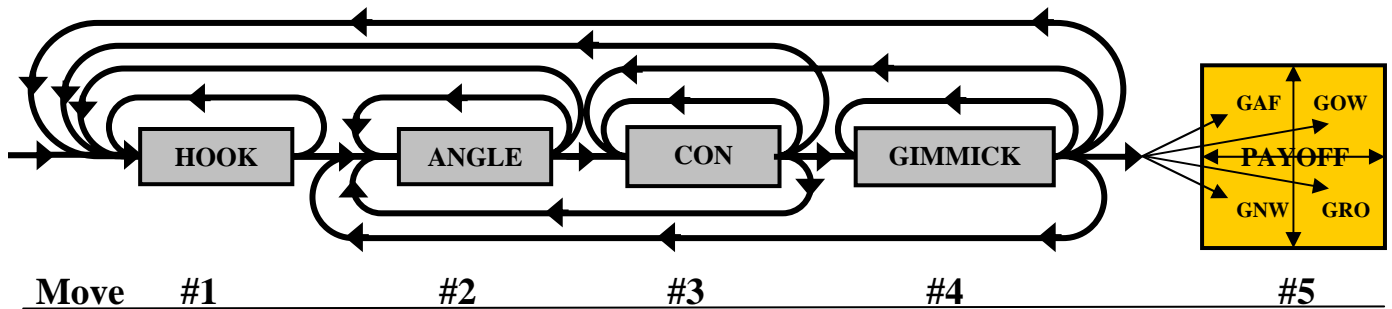
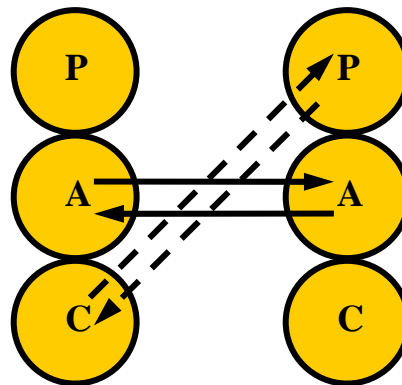
Franklin H. Ernst Jr., M.D.



THE GAME DIAGRAM

by

Franklin H. Ernst Jr., M.D.

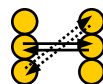


First Edition,
Copyright © 1972, 2004

Second Edition, Copyright © 2008

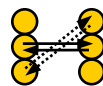
Permission is hereby granted to any person, magazine, newspaper, other periodical, or media to reprint this monograph in any single issue of the periodical in question, so long as two conditions are met: (1) the monograph is printed word for word, including diagrams, figures, and footnotes, and (2) the following reference is given at the bottom of the first page on which the reprinted article begins: "This article is taken from The Game Diagram by Franklin H. Ernst Jr., M.D.; Published by Franklin "Harry" Ernst III, Addresso'Set Publications, P.O. Box 3009, Vallejo, California 94590."

www.ListeningActivity.com



Contents

PURPOSE.....	4
THE GENERAL GAME DIAGRAM	4
INTRODUCTION	4
EXAMPLE OF A GAME PEOPLE PLAY.....	6
GAME MOVES IDENTIFIED.....	11
A DIFFERENT PAYOFF	11
THE ULTERIOR TRANSACTIONS OF GAME MOVES.....	12
THE COMMITMENT AND POST-COMMITMENT PHASE OF A GAME.....	12
ULTERIOR TRANSACTIONAL DIAGRAMS.....	14
RECYCLING OF GAME MOVES.....	24
SOCIAL VARIATION OF SAME GAME MOVE.....	24
GAME MOVE CHANGES.....	25
RECYCLING AND PROGRESSION OF THE GAME MOVES.....	26
THE RULES OF GAME MOVES	28
THE GENERAL GAME DIAGRAM	29
THE “BERNE GAME FORMULA”	30
APPLICATION OF THE “BERNE GAME FORMULA”	31
PAYOFF OPTIONS	33
CLASSIFICATION OF PAYOFFS	33
RACKET PAYOFFS.....	34
PAYOFF AND INTENSITY (DEGREE) OF A GAME	35
REFERENCES	36



The Game Diagram

by

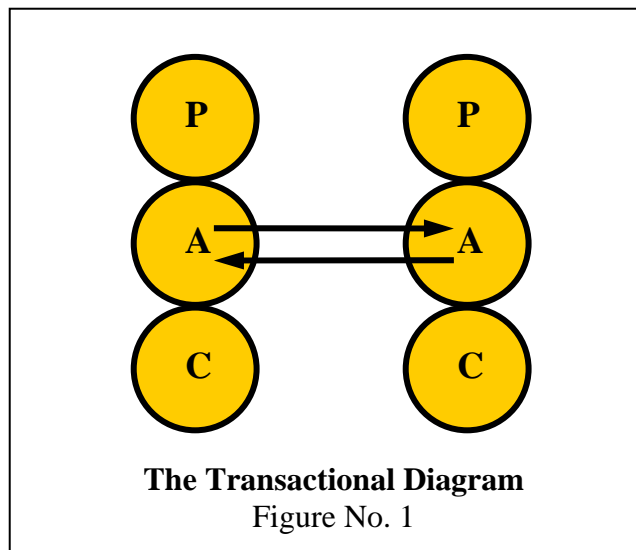
Franklin H. Ernst Jr., M.D.

The purpose of this paper is to describe and diagram:

- (1): The sequential nature of the moves in a game.
- (2): The progression of the ulterior transactional events in a game.
- (3): The recycling phenomena within one play-through of a game.
- (4): The availability of options for the payoff of a game.
- (5): The pre-commitment and post-commitment phases of a game.
- (6): The game as a unit of behavior.
- (7): Game playing regulates the occurrence and quality of intimacy.^{1, 2}

Introduction

Since its introduction in 1954, the transactional analysis diagram (Figure No. 1) has taught itself to neophyte students, advanced clinicians, and clinical patients alike. In 1957 the foundations for game analysis were laid with the presentation of "Why Don't You--Yes But."^{3, 4}

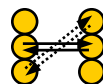


¹ Ernst, F.H. Jr., M.D.: "Formulation: Game Moves Unraveled / Sequential, Predictable, Logical, Teachable", The Encounterer, Vol.1 No.10, Golden Gate Foundation for Group Treatment, Inc. , 5-20-1969.

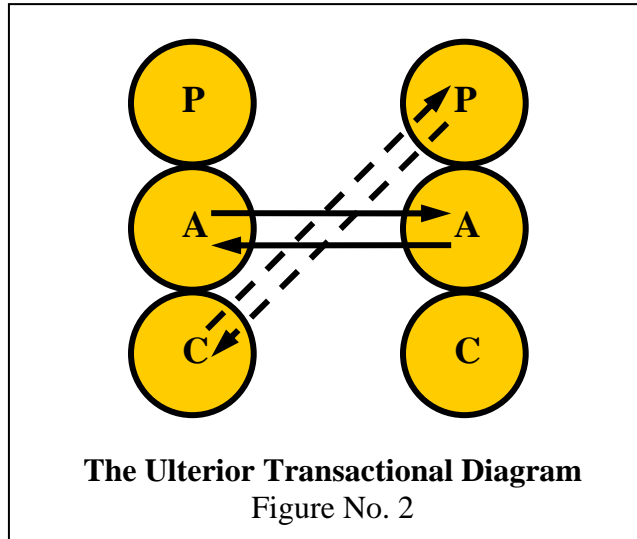
² Ernst, F.H. Jr., M.D.: "Formulation: Games and Game Moves", The Encounterer, Vol.1 No.20, Golden Gate Foundation for Group Treatment, Inc., 12-5-1969.

³ Berne, Eric M.D.: "Transactional Analysis: A New and Effective Psychotherapy", American Journal of Psychotherapy, Vol. 12, No. 4, 1958.

⁴ Berne, Eric M.D.: "Games People Play, The Psychology of Human Behavior", Grove Press, New York, NY, 1964.



A game is defined as a recurring set of transactions with ulterior transactions, concealed motivation, a gimmick and a payoff. ⁵ Berne used the particular variation of the duplex transactional diagram shown in Figure No. 2 to represent the ulterior aspects of a game. ⁶



Berne added the concept of switch in 1966 and introduced **The Game Formula**.

$$\text{Con} + \text{Gimmick} = \text{Response} \rightarrow \text{Switch} \rightarrow \text{Payoff}^7$$

This formula has been likened to a “multi-variable integral calculus function.” ⁸

What follows now will establish a basis for the number of variations of a game and the variableness of a game without contradicting “**Berne’s Game Formula**.”

⁵ Berne, Eric M.D.: “Games People Play, The Psychology of Human Behavior”, Grove Press, New York, NY, 1964, pg 48. “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”

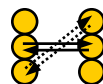
⁶ Berne goes on to say on page 49 of “Games People Play” “As far as angular transactions are concerned – games which are consciously planned with professional precision under Adult control to yield the maximum gains – the big ‘con games’ which flourished in the early 1900’s are hard to surpass for detailed practical planning and psychological virtuosity.

What we are concerned with here, however, are the unconscious games played by innocent people engaged in duplex transactions of which they are not fully aware, and which form the most important aspect of social life all over the world. Because of their dynamic qualities, games are easy to distinguish from mere static attitudes, which arise from taking a position.”

On pg 19 Berne says “.... The most gratifying forms of social contact, whether or not they are embedded in the matrix of activity, are games and intimacy ...; significant social intercourse most commonly takes the form of games ...”

⁷ Berne, Eric M.D.: “Sex in Human Loving,” Simon and Schuster, New York, 1970, pg 178 hardbound, p. 152 pb

⁸ Berne, Eric M.D.: Remarks at the Golden Gate Group Psychotherapy Society Meeting, Jack Tar Hotel, San Francisco, California, April 19, 1966.



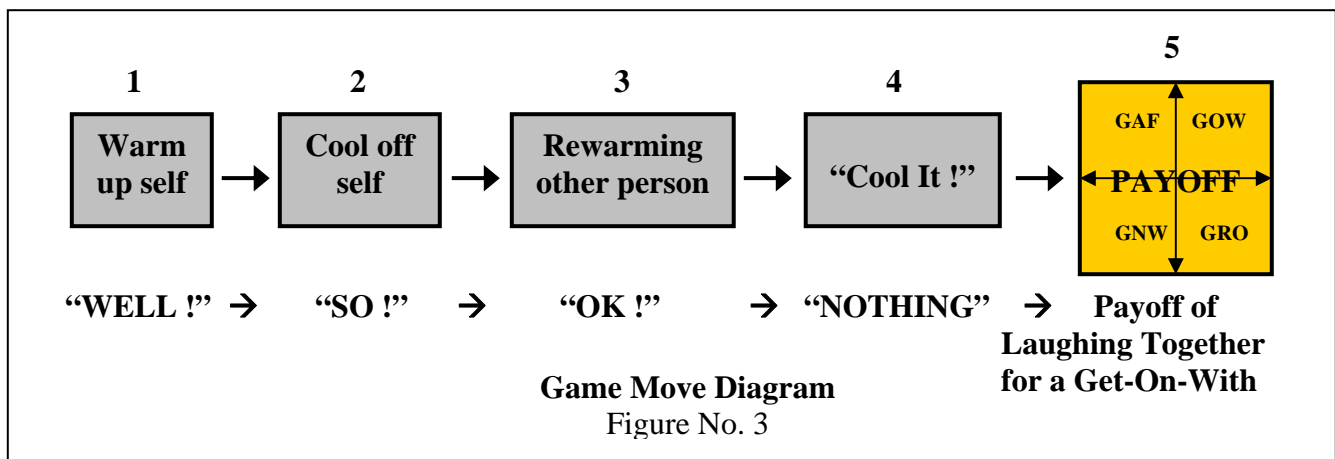
Example of a Game People Play

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: **“So.”**
- (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.

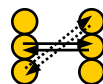
The above five completed transactions (stimulus and its related response) were played through from start to finish in twelve seconds, including the time for laughing. (Saul was moved by each of her single words.) **This was a complete game.** Each of the four single words was said with a different tone and at a different speed and with a corresponding alteration of her postural attitude. Each of these words exhibited a change in the ego state of Sybil. Each of the words AND the response of Saul to each of her words satisfied the criteria for each of their exchanges being called a transaction; that is to say one conversational stimulus and the related response. There were five transactions, counting the mutual and concluding laugh.

Sybil was familiar with the use of the OK CORRAL^{9,10} and fairly regularly selected which quality of payoff event she would have for her games. Her Adult was decontaminated and she knew how to manage her Child's “mess-up” racket. This was diagramed. See Figure No. 3.



⁹ Ernst, F.H. Jr., M.D.: “Transactional Analysis in the OK Corral: Grid for What’s Happening”, Addresso’Set Publications, Vallejo, California, 2008.

¹⁰ Ernst, F.H. Jr., M.D.: “The OK Corral: Grid for Get-On-With,” Transactional Analysis Journal 1:4, 1971.



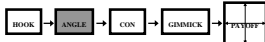
The following day, Sybil arrived at her group session late, which was unusual for her. The qualities of events directly after her arrival were graphic, and on the ulterior level were similar to those still listed on the blackboard from the day before. The game moves were:

**Move #1
Warm herself up.**



Coming through the door after group started, she gave bright, smiling hellos around the group that successfully invited six hellos in return before she was seated.

**Move #2
Cool her self off.**



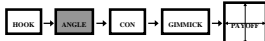
After turning around to be seated, she faced the group unsmiling, distant, austere, and somewhat haughty. She slowly looked around the room as if to fill herself in on the group action. Blinking, appearing attentive, she scrupulously avoided engaging her look with any one of those who had just the moment before said hello to her. She continued this behavior for about two minutes. The others had an awareness of what she was doing while they continued with group business.

**Move #1
Warm her self up.**



She then gave another bright smile to two members of the group, leaned a little forward, and with a sparkling face and vivacious tone made a remark intended for Gwen, one of the group talkers. This was responded to in a complementary manner by Gwen.

**Move #2
Cool her self off.**

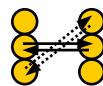


To this remark and attention by Gwen, Sybil responded with a chilled tone, face flattening, upper eyelids lowering to the rims of her pupils.

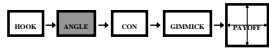
At this point this author wrote on the blackboard “ 1, 2, 1, 2 ” indicating the moves of the game so far.

- Move #1 **A warm up** (of self to others)
- Move #2 **A cool off** (of self to others)
- Move #3 **A re-warming** (of the other person)
- Move #4 **"Cool It!"**
- Move #5 **PAYOFF**

Sybil played out more moves of her game. And the author wrote more numbers on the blackboard, identifying each of her game moves as she continued playing her game.



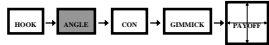
Move #2
Cool her self off.



Asked about her coolness by Gwen, Sybil coolly said she was not warm and bright when she first came into the group room.

1, 2, 1, 2, 2

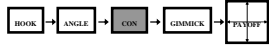
Move #2
Cool her self off.



When again told about her appearance coming into the group, Sybil again denied being warm.

1, 2, 1, 2, 2, 2

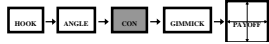
Move #3
Re-warming other person.



Then, sitting forward with a warm, inviting smile Sybil intoned: "Oh, I see, you mean with the last thing you said to me."
"Yes!" said Gwen, smiling back.

1, 2, 1, 2, 2, 2, 3

Move #3
Re-warming other person.



Sybil continuing warmly to Gwen, "I thought you meant when I came into the room tonight."
Gwen: "Yes, and that, too."

1, 2, 1, 2, 2, 2, 3, 3

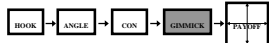
Move #4
"Cool It" said to the other person.



Sybil stiffly drawing herself up: "I was not warm and smiling at you when I came in tonight."
Gwen: (Beginning to cool off herself) "Yes, yes you were!"

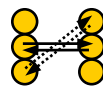
1, 2, 1, 2, 2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 4

Move #4



Sybil made another chilling transactional offering to Gwen.
(Note: the two game move #4's occurred in quick succession.)

1, 2, 1, 2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 4, 4



Move #3



Sybil was then seen re-warming towards Gwen. Sybil did this because she saw she was losing Gwen. So she backed up a step (a game move) in order to hold Gwen’s interest.

1, 2, 1, 2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 4, 4, 3

**Move #3
Re-warming other person.**



Sybil then turned and the group followed her gaze to center her interest on the sequence of numbers being written by the author on the blackboard under the **Game Moves Diagram**. To her bright-faced inquiry (to this author about what the numbers meant), she was told that they referred to the qualities of the moves of her game “Cool It!” as she was playing it. Then the number “3” was written down on the blackboard. 1, 2, 1, 2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 4, 4, 3, 3

**Move #4
“Cool It!” said to the other person.**



To this she was frosty and crackling in responsive tone. At this point, someone else began to chuckle a comfortable, easy laugh.

1, 2, 1, 2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 4, 4, 3, 3, 4

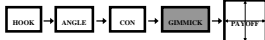
**Move #3
Re-warming other person.**



Sybil then turned to Gwen, who by now was also softly laughing.

1, 2, 1, 2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 4, 4, 3, 3, 4, 3

**Move #4
“Cool It!” said to the other person.**



Momentarily making a wry face to Gwen as if to withdraw from group action and then smiles which were centered on her, she instead quipped in mock outrage: “How can you say I was WARM coming into the room tonight?” (It was, in fact, cold outside!)

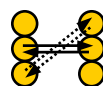
1, 2, 1, 2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 4, 4, 3, 3, 4, 3, 4

**Move #5
Get-On-With Payoff**



This was followed immediately by her own lead-off, big laugh and warm face which promptly ignited the same in others all around the room. See Figure No. 3 on the next page.

1, 2, 1, 2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 4, 4, 3, 3, 4, 3, 4, 5 (Payoff)



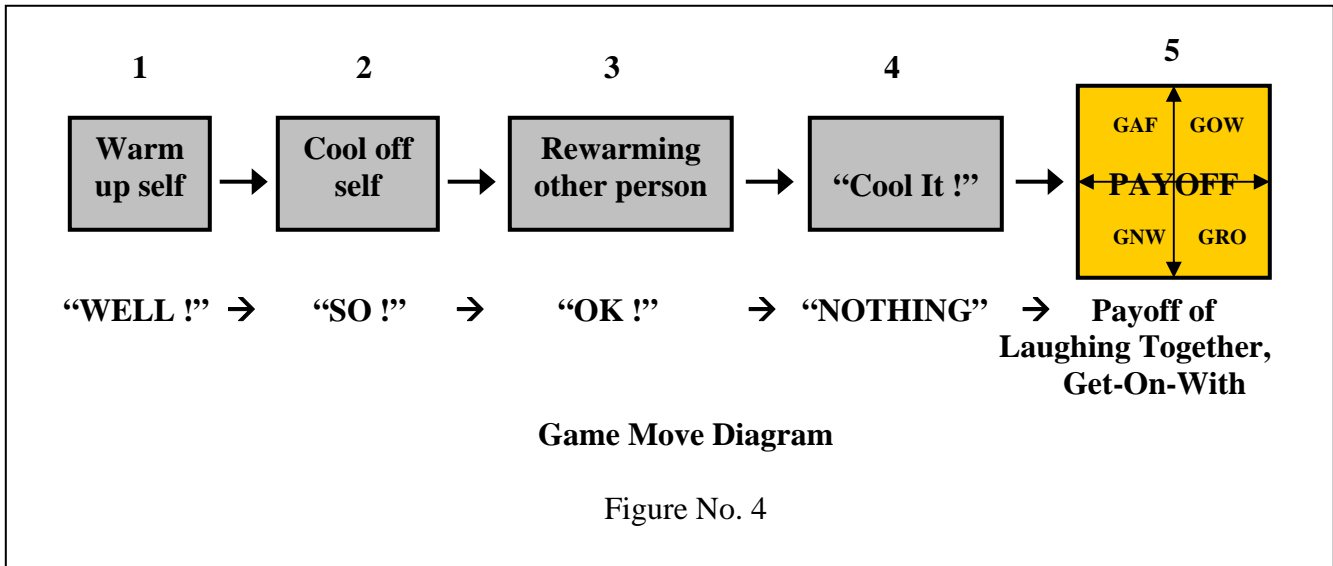
This was listed as a "Get-On-With" payoff of her "Cool It" game. The blackboard at the conclusion of this clinical event looked like this:

- Move #1 **A warm up** (of self to others)
- Move #2 **A cool off** (of self to others)
- Move #3 **A re-warming** (of the other person)
- Move #4 **"Cool It!"**
- Move #5 **PAYOFF** "THE MOMENT OF TRUTH"

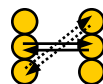
1, 2, 1, 2, 2, 3, 3, 4, 4, 3, 3, 4, 3, 4, 5 (GOW Payoff)

The numbers shown here represented the sequence of game moves.

"Cool It!" was played to the other party for a cool off (pushing off) of the other person but in a manner that provoked, incited, and reheated the other party. This colloquialism, this gimmick line, when carried out by a woman to a man is "Cool It, MAN!" Here the use of the gendered noun indicates the commitment to duplicity on the part of the woman. For the particular game of "Cool It," the noun (**man**) can be changed to "Baby," "Boy" or an adverb, as with "Cool It, Now!"¹¹



¹¹ Depending on the physical location where the game is played, it is also called "Buzz Off Buster," "Frigid Woman," "Nylons," "Neckline," or "Rapo." The name of the game also depends on the degree of intensity with which the game is played.

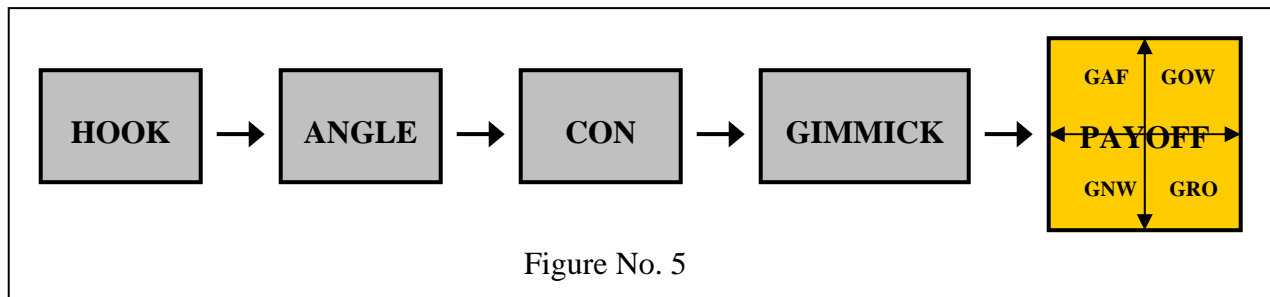


Game Moves Identified

From the example of the game just described game moves are now named as follows:

- Move #1 - **HOOK**
- Move #2 - **ANGLE**
- Move #3 - **CON**
- Move #4 - **GIMMICK**
- Move #5 - **PAYOFF**

Studies of ulterior transactional events of games have revealed each game has four distinct moves (stages) prior to payoff. (See Figure No. 5) Game moves can be played over and over again.



A Different Payoff

About five minutes after the conclusion of this above second game event Sybil, ("pulled a switch" inside herself) played through another sequence of her game moves, again with some recycling of the moves. Her payoff this time was to bring off a mild "Get-Nowhere-With" instead of "Get-On-With" event; a payoff that supported her childhood-based position.^{12, 13} The payoff, this second time, was a 30 seconds long pout with some obscenities which effectively blocked further transactions between Sybil and Gwen.

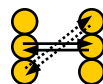
When later asked about this instance of playing her "Cool It" game again she said: "I knew after I had started talking the second time that I wasn't being Adult but I felt I just had to go through with it, so I decided I would. It was to keep my racketeering Child from going underground and coming out later. So far my Child has a hard time letting me stay being a winner!"

The fact was that at the conclusion of each of the three sets of recurring ulterior transactions there was completion. Other events and work did take place in her group session between these completed units of social behavior.

The act of **identifying, naming, and numbering** the ulterior transactional events of a game has the effect of aiding the person in gaining Adult control of his social-psychological, duplex-level activity.

¹² Ernst, F.H. Jr., M.D.: "Leaving Your Mark, Use of the Graffito in Group Treatment", Golden Gate Foundation for Group Treatment, Inc., Vallejo, California, 1968.

¹³ Ernst, F.H. Jr., M.D.: "Getting Well With Transactional Analysis / Get-On-With, Getting Well, and Get (to be) Winners", Addresso'Set Publications, Vallejo, California, 2008.



The Ulterior Transactions of Game Moves

"A game is a recurring set of ulterior transactions!"¹⁴ At some point in his sequenced (ulterior) transactions the player becomes committed to fully playing out his game. Before this commitment, the player can back himself off from playing his game, discontinue playing his game. After some specific and particular transactional event occurs many a player has recognized:

"I knew if I said one more word I would be a goner. I knew if I went any farther I couldn't tell when or if.... I would be able to get out of it alive. I did say the word. And I knew I was a goner as soon as I said it. I know. Well, to make a long story short"

Students of games people play have been asked: "What was the last thing you said before there was no backing out? Did you recognize you had reached the point of no return?"

The Pre-commitment Phase of a Game

The fact is that at some point in playing a game, the player makes this commitment to his game.¹⁵ The transactions before that commitment are here called the pre-commitment phase of the game.

- (1) The HOOK
- (2) The ANGLE
- (3) The CON

The Commitment and Post-commitment Phase of a Game

The commitment to a game occurs when the game player plays his gimmick move, Move #4, the first time. The gimmick move of a game is the fourth quality (ulterior transaction) of a game move in each game. Before the gimmick move of a game has been played (the first time) the playing person has already played the hook move, the angle move and the con move each at least one time. The commitment to playing a game is different from the earlier moves of his particular game.

What happens at the first time Move #4 is played is that the executive in the player (the ego state that is in charge) changes from one ego state to another, for example from Adult to Child in the game of "Cool It." This is explained more thoroughly later in this paper.

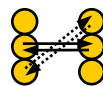
Move #4 is a gimmick (artful stratagem) in two ways: first, the stimulus that the person offers to the other person (responder) is a trick, and secondly the individual offering his next stimulus changes his ego state with a sleight-of-hand or artful stratagem in order to initiate the change of face he will wear at the time of achieving payoff.

It is in playing the Gimmick move of the particular game the first time that the person's Child captures the executive, takes over in the person. And there is nothing wrong with this.

The Child in a person wants recognition. The Child wants to keep it a secret how he is trying to get in charge, be the boss of the grownup; that he wants to be in charge.

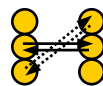
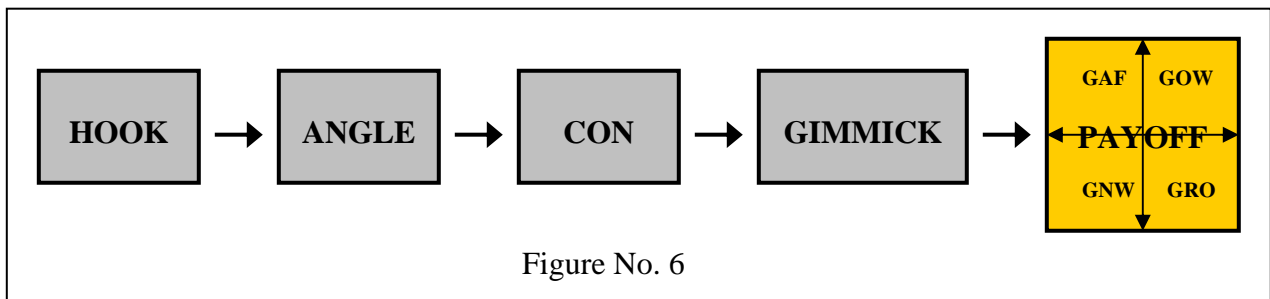
¹⁴ Ulterior transactions are of two kinds: duplex transactions and angular transactions.

¹⁵ Games are one way of structuring time.



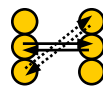
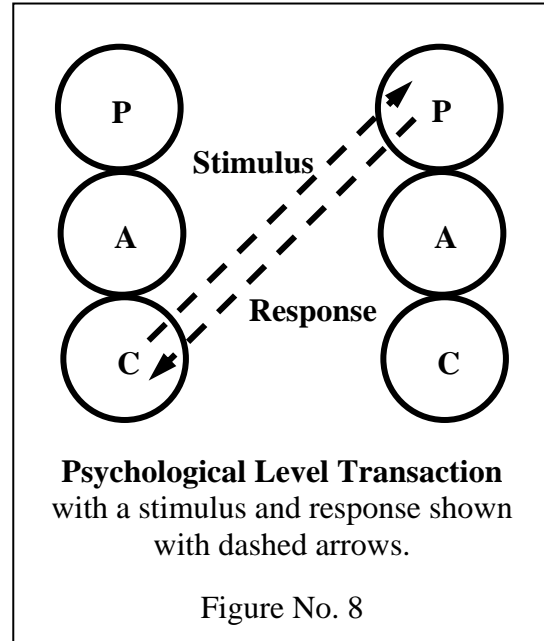
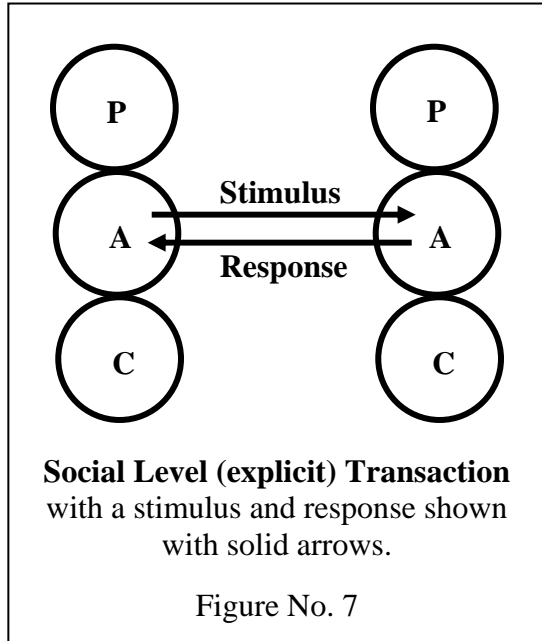
The Adult in the person can handle this in many ways: play with the Child, put the Child out front, be aware, be glad for that.

In the Gimmick move the person's stimulus offering of a transaction type changes from a tentative duplex ulterior transaction to that of a committed duplex ulterior transactional offering.

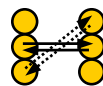
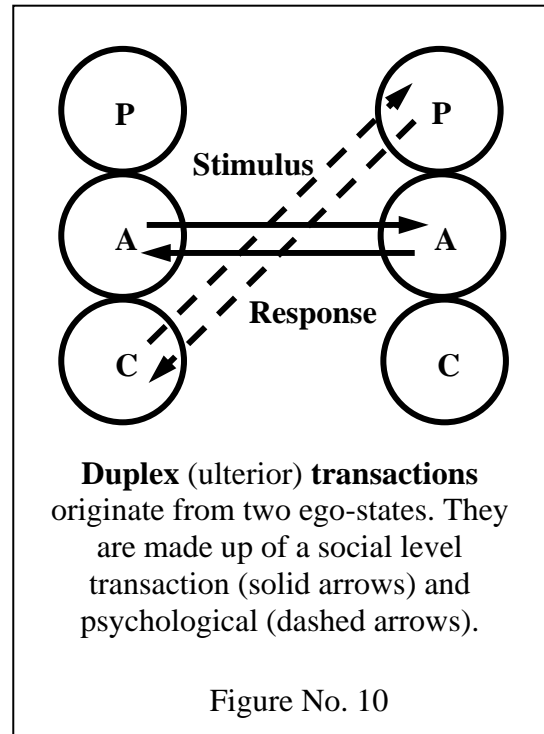
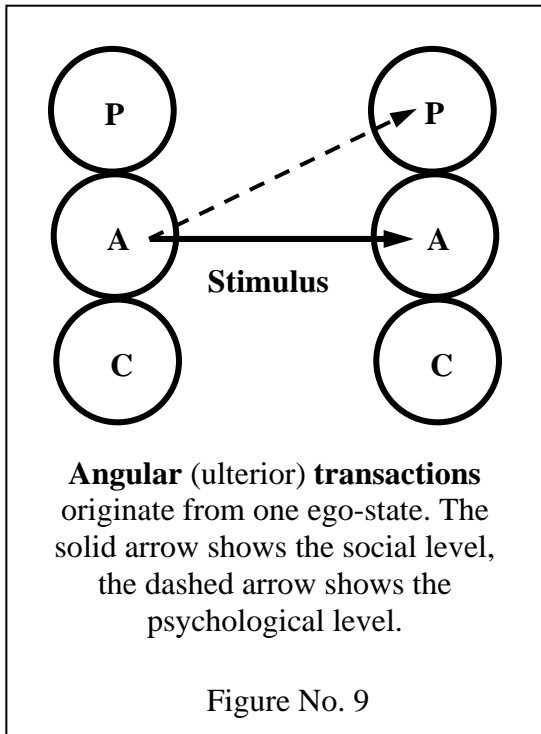


Ulterior Transactional Diagrams

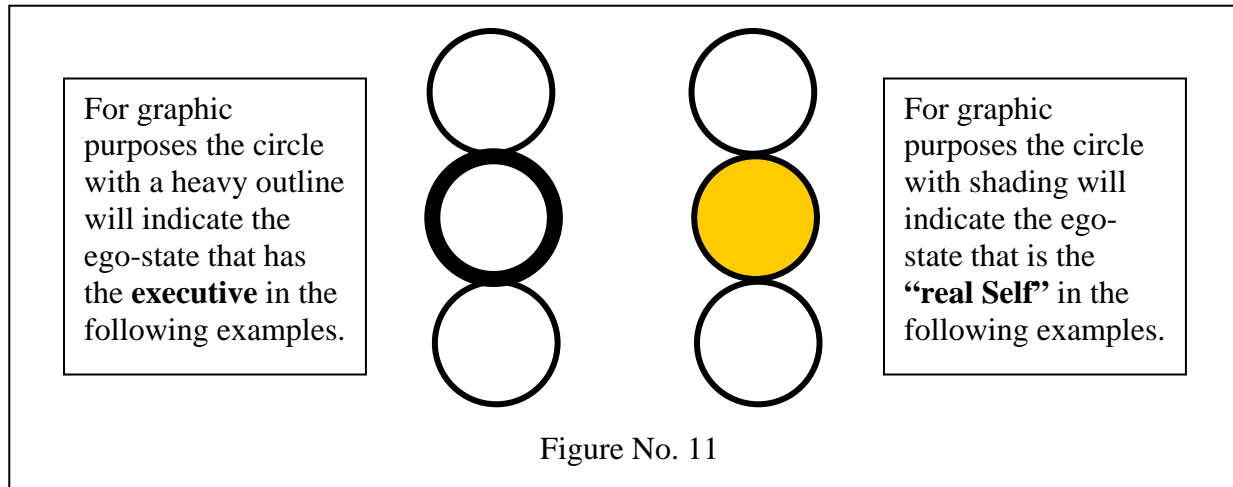
Each of the game moves has two levels: the social level shown in Figure No. 7; and the psychological level, as indicated by dashed arrows shown in Figure No. 8.



Game moves are made of a series of ulterior transactions. An ulterior transaction is made up of a social level and psychological level. These ulterior transactions occur between people and are of two types: angular and duplex. An angular ulterior transaction originates from one ego-state and is aimed at two ego-states of the other person. (Figure No. 9) A duplex ulterior transaction originates from two ego-states and is aimed at two ego-states of the other person (Figure No. 10).



The “real Self”¹⁶ ego-state is indicated by shading in one of the circles as illustrated in Figure No. 11. Also, the heavily outlined circle indicates the ego-state having the executive.¹⁶



Game Moves

There are four classes of ulterior transactions in each game. They are: the tentative angular ulterior (Move #1 in a game), the committed angular ulterior (Move #2 in a game), the tentative duplex ulterior (Move #3 in a game), and the committed duplex ulterior (Move #4 in a game). These classes of ulterior transactions are referred to here as game moves. Each game move has both social level and a psychological level. The psychological level contains the ulterior aspect of the particular transaction.

In the transactional diagrams (Figures No. 12 thru 21) shown on the following pages the other person's responses are deleted for clarity.

¹⁶ Berne, Eric. M.D.: “Transactional Analysis in Psychotherapy”, Grove Press, NY, NY, 1961, pgs. 38 - 41. Berne postulated two kinds of psychic energy (cathexis).

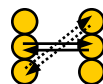
- (a) There is energy in each ego state which is **nontransferable** to another ego state. This energy can be turned off (bound) or be turned on (unbound).
- (b) There is energy called “**free energy**” which can be directed within the person from one ego state to another. “Free energy” is **transferable**. And “free energy” can flow from one ego-state to another.

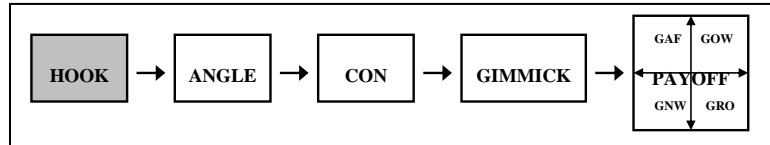
The executive is the ego-state with the most unbound plus free energy.

The “real Self” is the ego-state with the most free energy.

Note: Two ego-state activities exist: (1) The executive, (2) The “real Self.”

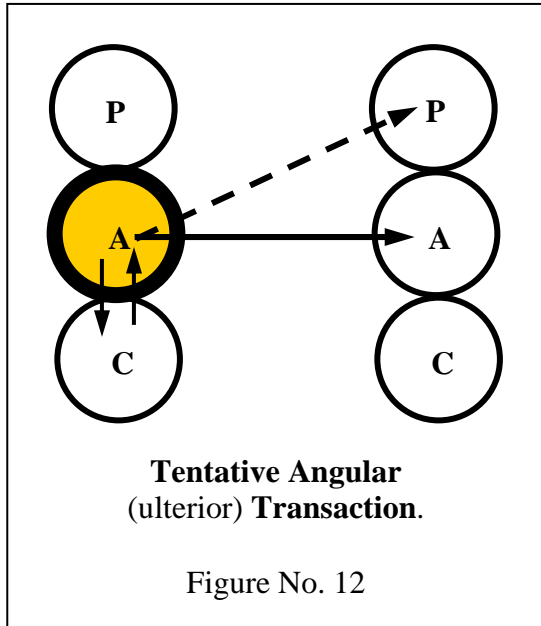
Read Berne’s example about Mrs. Tettar and “real Self” starting on page 40 in “Transactional Analysis in Psychotherapy.”





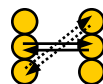
The Hook - - Move #1

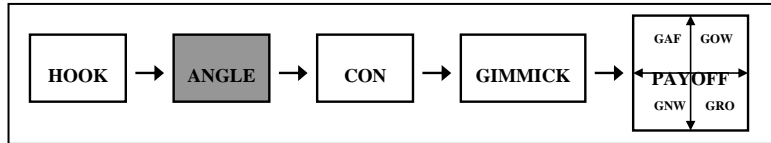
Tentative Angular Transactional Game Move



The Hook, Move #1 is the Tentative Angular Transactional Game Move (Figure No. 12). The HOOK in a game is an Adult-programmed (executive and “real self”) transactional stimulus adapted to the external circumstances and to the internal stroke hunger of the first party, the person initiating this particular social event. This quality of stimulus by this initiator is aimed at the other person's Adult, but with just enough seasoning added to it to whet the appetite of the second party, here shown by the diagonal dotted line aimed at the potential fellow game player. The goal is to encourage the potential responder's Parent into nudging his own Adult to ask for more strokes.

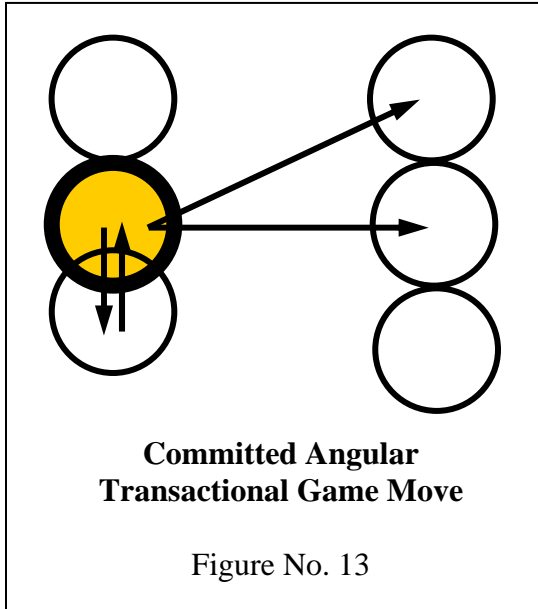
The Adult of the person initiating his game, in this instance, has used the information at his disposal in making up a program for his Hook stimulus. This has included tapping into his own intuitive Child who has personalized information about how best to arouse the response of the other party. This internal dialogue of the initiator (stimulator) is shown by the pair of vertical arrows. The internal dialog is sometimes referred to as “I was talking to myself.”





The Angle -- Move #2

The Committed Angular Transactional Game Move



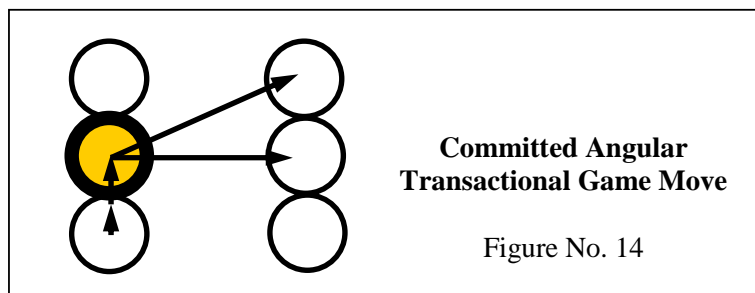
Here, in this example, the transactional offering is programmed by the Adult, **who has the executive and is the "real Self."** (Figure No. 13) The horizontal stimulus arrow represents the social level and the diagonal arrow represents the psychological level. The commitment to the angular psychological exterior stroke is represented by the solid diagonal arrow.

The Child's contribution is now being embraced by the player's Adult. This is shown by the Adult taking the Child self partially into his Adult self. This overlapping of the Child circle into the Adult circle, or Child contaminating the Adult, facilitates the Adult access to the Child's fund of information and also to yield to the Child's own enticing, "Teacher, teacher, I have an even better way to keep things going!"

The stimulus is seen emanating from the non-overlapped portion of the Adult. The Child has become intrigued to make some form of commitment to the proceedings, perhaps from a mild counter-teasing received from within the responder's comeback. Then he may see the Child of the party #1 (himself) and the player of party #2 (the other potential game player being enticed) to maybe come out and become more explicitly engaged in playing.

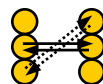
Here the reservoir of intuitive information might be said to be more in the service of "bugging" than "arousing" the other party. "Bugging" can be considered an extended continuation of the state of arousal in the responder.

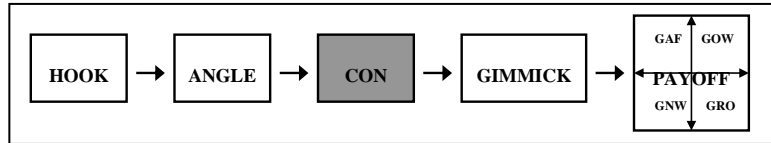
The Adult of the initiating game player recognizes that his Child's contribution to the programming will and does result in a continuation of the state of arousal in the other person. The Adult of the player may not know why it works on the responder, but he can see that it does get the continuation of recognition coming to himself from the other party, the responder.¹⁷



¹⁷ **Note:** (Figure No. 14)

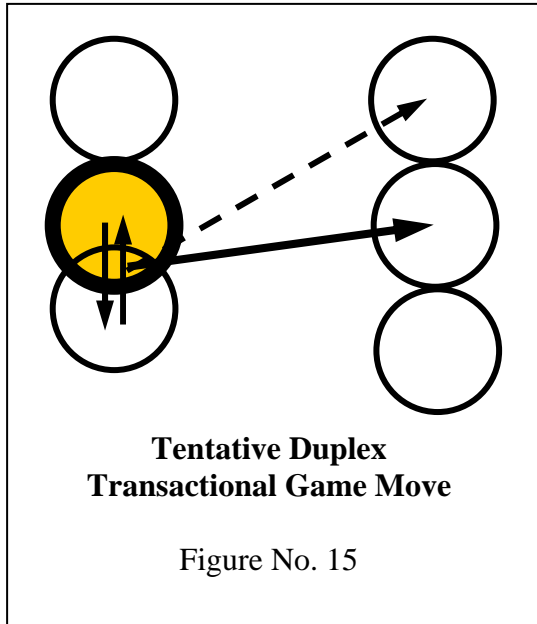
This shows another way to handle this game move (Move #2, The Angle). The Adult and Child circles are not overlapped. The Adult is listening to his own childself and going ahead with a committed angular transaction.





The Con -- Move #3

The Tentative Duplex Transactional Game Move



Move #3, the CON, is a TENTATIVE DUPLEX transaction as shown in Figure No. 15.

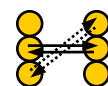
By the time the Con move of the particular game has occurred the first time, the Child has convinced his own Adult as to the Child's usefulness and he is now entering into the position of conjointly making policy decisions along with the person's Adult regarding the programming of the next move in the sequence of ulterior transactions. This is shown by the overlap of the Child circle into the Adult circle and that the transactional offering arrow originates and goes out from the over-lapping portions of the Child and Adult. Note, the executive and the "real Self" continue to be in the Adult. But at this third game move, the Child has begun to take over part of the executive and the "real Self." The Child is now a co-author of the programmed ulterior transactional offerings.

During the Con game move, the Adult is indulging his own Child some more and enjoying being intrigued by the operations of his game player machinery and the effects he can bring about in the other person when he uses his own grown-up equipment and knowledge of game playing he (his Child) has at his disposal. The Adult of the player at the same time is relying heavily on his own Child for imaginative ideas and zest, and also for personal motivation. The Child's own personal power supply gets turned on (his unbound free energy increases, and his "real Self" becomes more alive).

It is unlikely that the Child will contribute very long in this manner unless he can visualize taking over some of the Executive and "real Self" in order run his own show.

There is, however, still the chance for the Adult to call a halt to the progression of these ulterior events and exclude the Child from influence and policy making. This is true since the Adult still has charge (has the executive cathexis) and the Child has not taken over any large portion of the "real Self" power supply, from the supply of free energy (cathexis).

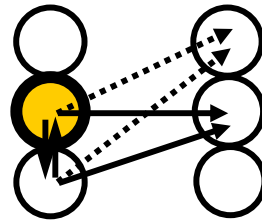
For purposes of a person remaining "free" of the commitment to playing a game, this is the farthest in the progression of the game moves that a person can indulge himself and not get pulled into going through his own game to a payoff. The next move in the progression of a game is the one that is over his Adult's head. If he the game player "cannot swim" in the payoff - deep water, he should consider backing out and breaking off contact with the other (game playing) party. The commitment to a game occurs when the game player plays his gimmick move the first time.



The transactional diagram for the Con move can be drawn in a second way as noted in the footnote below.¹⁸ This is probably representative of those people who have gotten well of playing their particular game, that is, for whom a game is not feared or unpredictable. These latter individuals more often than not will play their particular game for Get-On-With purposes rather than to support a personal racket or a personal Child loser position.

**Tentative Duplex
Transactional Game Move**

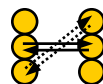
Figure No. 16

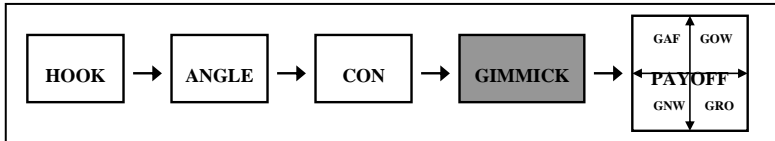


¹⁸ **Note:** (Figure No. 16)

The drawing is a variation of the Con move, Move #3. The Adult and Child circles are not overlapped. The Adult has confidence both in his own Child and in his Adult ability to keep track of his own Child. He can recognize when his Child is skewing the transactional action into coming out in a desirable method or not for the occasion. For example, nudging the game's payoff results into an OK or not-OK direction in his own OK Corral.

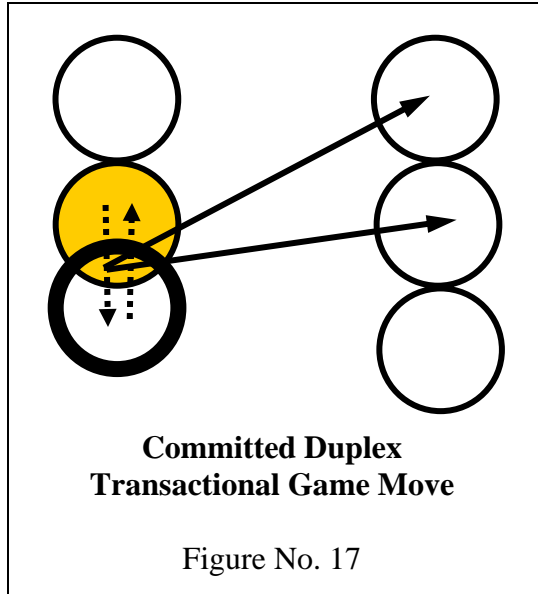
Here the Adult gives his Child the opportunity to be in charge, mix in the play and stimulation, while the Adult continues to get a steady flow of intuitive information from his own Child. The Adult, in this form of the Con move diagram keeps his own individuality and lets his Child keep his Child individuality also.





The Gimmick - Move #4

The Committed Duplex Transactional Game Move



In the GIMMICK move, (Figure No. 17) the Adult has relinquished his position of being in the executive. His Adult has been “seduced”, “lured”, and/or “tricked” by his own Child. AND the Child of the other party in the game has been seduced, lured and/or tricked into giving up the driver's seat of running his own “personality.” The Child is now directing policy and is programming the ongoing events as well as interpreting the meaning of incoming information. The Adult continues to retain possession of the "real Self." The Adult may be saying: "Yes, Sir, that's me. I am the one who is really in charge here." But the "real Self" here is rather more like a figure head, especially as the Child is now actually in the executive AND has another program. He (the person's Child) now wants to get to come out and play, really play, to get to be

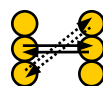
“really me”, and have the "real Self" move over from the Adult and into his Child self, at least for awhile. For the Adult, this Gimmick situation is an unstable one; for the Child it is only a matter of time until he gets to be clearly in charge of the whole person, i.e. at Payoff time.

The first time the individual plays Move 4, the Gimmick, he effectively makes a commitment of himself to playing through his duplicity to payoff. In other words, **the executive** inside himself will move into the second ego state, here the Child.

It is useful for persons, patients, and students alike, to be told that when they want to be sure to stay free from playing a game with a particular person, they can safely have **ONLY** three transactions with the particular troubling person. After three transactions conclude, **STOP** talking to that other particular troublesome party. He should stop transacting with that person and check out (think) what the other party is doing with him or preferably talk to someone else, do something with somebody else for an interval.

A variation of this when conducting seminars is to announce ahead: “You can make three comments or ask me three questions and then I'm going to talk to someone else so that I get all the way around the group. If we have time I'll come back to those with more comments or questions. Thank you!”

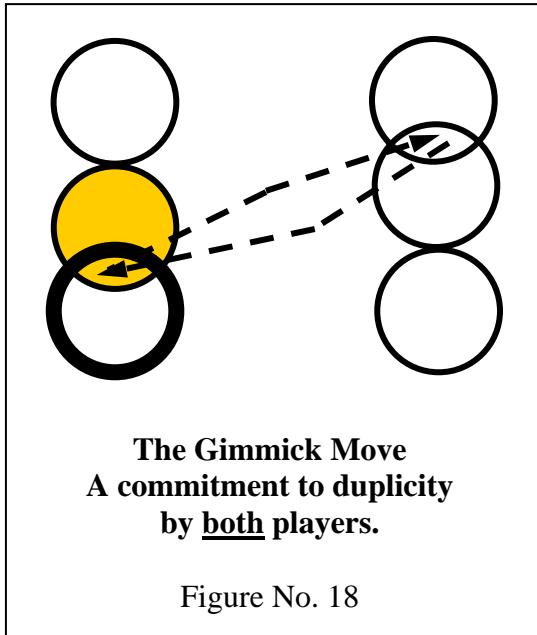
People in seminars or in treatment can be asked to count the number of their transactions in an unbroken sequence with another person. Rather regularly they lose track and forget how many transactions they have had after these specified three have taken place. When asked about this, most will replay “Oh, I forget! Five or six?”



The commitment to duplicity is seen to involve "the player" ego state overlapping the Adult "social level" ego state (Figure No. 18). This also infers that the player has become committed to "hoodwinking" the other party of the game into his own complementary overlapping, if possible, or at least get him to shift his executive ego state. Once this shift of executive in the other person has taken place, the payoff can be gone after.

Having the executive (shown by the heavy circle), the Child is now in control of the source of his own power supply and also has some muscle to get the "real self" (shown by the shading) for himself. The Child and the Adult still continue to jointly issue the "communiques and directives."

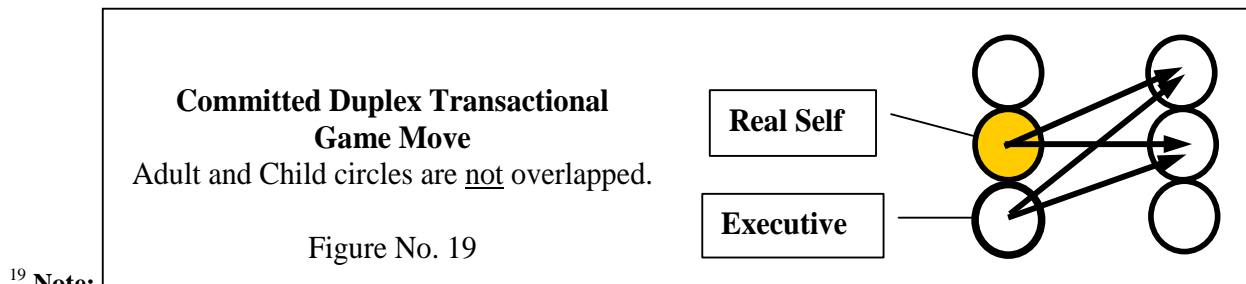
The program at this Gimmick stage still calls for an appearance of reasonableness. This reasonable appearance should continue at least until the game player of the other party has become energized enough to also take over the Executive from **his** respective Adult.



It is not until the other person has counter-played **his** complementary responsive gimmick back to the first party that the payoff will be obtainable for either party (Figure No. 18). To repeat: It is not until the second party has played his own gimmick back to the first party at least one time that the payoff will be obtainable for either party. People exchange gimmicks, play artful stratagems with each other.

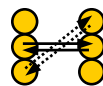
In other words, for payoff, it is not until the other person has also made his complementary commitment to duplicity and indicates his readiness to shift his "real Self" to the game-playing self, that there is an existential meaningfulness to the payoff event, that event of shifting "real Self." To prematurely shift "real Self" to the psychological level (Child) before the other person is also readied to give out a return "surprise" would be to chance feeling an unreal "real." It would be unrealistic.

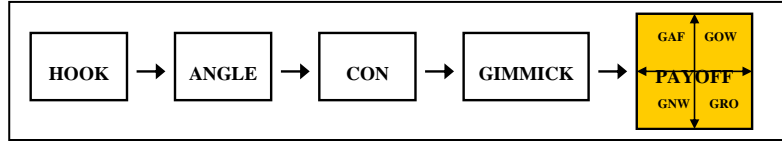
An alternative view of a Committed Duplex Transactional Game Move is shown in the footnote below. (See Figure No. 19) The Adult and Child circles are not overlapped. ¹⁹



¹⁹ Note:

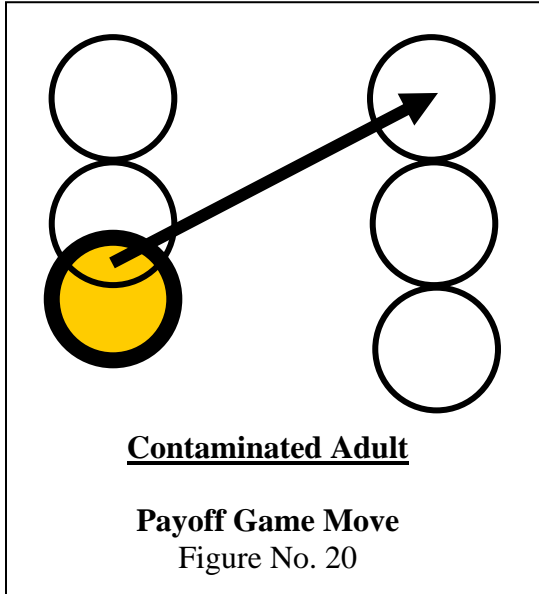
(Figure No. 19): Another Ulterior Transactional Diagram of the Committed Duplex game move. The Adult and Child circles are not overlapped. "It's OK to be Child, have a Child" said with one's Adult.





The Payoff - Move #5

Payoff, the Denouement, the Moment of Truth

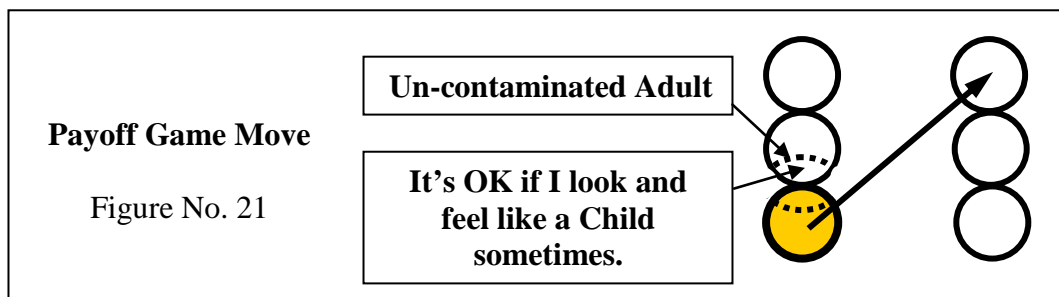


In the fifth move, the PAYOFF of the game, the Child has captured and taken over possession of the “real Self” life energy system of the person. This is why the Payoff is sometimes called "the moment of truth." The hitherto hidden, underlying forces and motivations at work are unmasked and seen to have been emanating from the Child. (Figure No. 20)

This second ego state, which has been diligently at work in the background, can **now** come out and be on stage, be recognized for himself, in his own right, and claim the credit for the accomplishment of achieving payoff. The payoff chosen (Get-On-With, Get-Away-From, Get-Nowhere-With, or Get-Rid-Of) is the one the Child had in mind, the one which also may substantiate his existential life position. It is at this moment he will collect his stamps, if he is going to.

The game playing Child by now has convinced the Adult inside himself to join with him in order to prove to the world and to himself the reasonableness of the payoff outcome. He dissuades the Adult from questioning him any further. Now **there will be NO comments**, such as “Hey, how come it came out this way? What could I have done differently? Is this really how I wanted it to come out?”²⁰

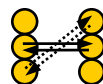
It is particularly true that persons with rackets to play, their Adult is contaminated and will be a participant at payoff time. Their "real Self" does not move well, does not get across fully and cleanly, from one ego state to another. Interestingly, racketeers are experienced by those around them as not having authentic feelings.²¹



²⁰ **Note:**

(Figure No. 21): Another Ulterior Transactional Diagram of the Payoff (Move #5) game move. The Adult is not overlapped by the Child. Here the Adult is saying “Okay, so this is how it came out. I can still think of myself as OK.” This person is "in charge of his own diagram." He is less intent on collecting stamps. His Adult is less preoccupied about proving he had no other choices, he is less intent on berating his own Child later. He feels free to go on to the next event at hand. He may want to later review the game sequence to see if there were alternatives in case he becomes involved in a similar situation again, at another time.

²¹ Ernst, F.H. Jr., M.D.: “Coercive Feelings, Psychological Rackets in the OK Corral”, Addresso’Set Publications, Vallejo, California, 2008.



Recycling of Game Moves

Studies of ulterior transactional events of games have revealed each game has four classes of moves (stages) prior to payoff. Game moves can be played over and over again. The three factors to take into account in the recycling of the moves of a game are (1) social variations of the same game move, (2) game move changes, (3) game move recycling.

1. Social Variation of Same Game Move

A game player can use a variety of words and muscular activities to convey the same ulterior quality in his game move. These variations are the varieties of ways the particular ego state has at his disposal to keep the transactions going. A game move can be carried out with different words and different muscles, but each variation will be coming from the same functional quality of ego state, the same point of view inside himself.

The ulterior, the psychological aspects of the second move of a game, the ANGLE move of the ‘Cool It’ game described earlier, was accomplished in a variety of ways by Sybil in order for her to convey the same quality of “Cooling myself Off.” In each of those offerings she was clearly portraying primness, portraying “lady-like behavior”: eyes down, hands folded when not in the conversation, “not acting pushy.”

She was the picture of a proper young matron, determined to “not let anyone get the wrong idea about me just because I was trying to be friendly.” Sybil had her game move organized around a combination of her Adult and her compliant Child play-pouting in order to appear to be leaving it up to the other person and for their benefit, more than her own pleasure if and when she went ahead.

She did this at different and separated times by:

- a) her haughty distant silence and
- b) a chilled tone, flattened face as she talked
- c) first statement of “**I was not warm when I came in,**” spoken in crackling, frosty syllables.

Other examples of these social variations in another game would be:

The more sophisticated game of “Why Don’t You, Yes, But”. Players of this game have a wider repertoire of phrases to use, such as:

“That’s entirely correct, just as you say..., and then on the other hand, there is the other point of view”, or the shorter versions: “Yes, however,” “That’s true, although”, and “Although what you say is correct, there is the other side of ...” (All synonyms of “Yes but ...”)

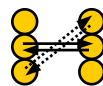
In the game of “Do Me Something” (DMSO) the variations of phrases a fifty-year-old woman used in the third, the CON move of her DMSO game were:

An oscillating movement of her ankle.

An oscillating motion of her wrist.

Increasingly long intervals taken to respond to the words of the other person as if considerably waiting for the other person to say more, finish what they were saying, and as if they had not yet told her anything useful or understandable yet to herself.

In each of these three examples shown above, the social variations at the ulterior level were meant to convey at the psychological (ulterior) level: “Can’t you see I am waiting for help, I need help and I am trying not to impose on you even though it almost makes me cry!”



2. Game Move Changes

The act of CHANGING from one GAME MOVE to another involves changing from one ego state function to another. This means that in changing from one psychological quality of game move to the next one to be played, a corresponding change of ego state (appearance and set of words) will show in the player.

Changing from one ego state function to another is the method of going from one game move to another.

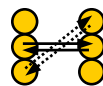
The game player self has at his disposal all of his ego states **and** their functions from which to draw while carrying out the moves of his game.²² These include the nurturing Parent, the scolding Parent, the make-believe-Mother's helper, (compliant) Child, the Adult, the overwhelmed Child, helpless compliant Child, the rebel Child, the natural Child, etc.

The game player looks, acts, behaves, sounds and feels differently with each change from one game move to the next. He is a different person for each of the four different pre-payoff game moves. And at the time of payoff he is yet another **different person** again.

In the "Cool It, Now" game described earlier, the functional qualities of the ego state were:

- Hook (Move #1): Friendly. "Warming myself up": This was an Adult program, tinged with the spirited animation of a natural Child in a pretty, vivacious young woman. This quality regularly attracted responses from others. She conveyed, "It sure is fun to be here!"
- Angle (Move #2): In the "Cool It" game the Adult monitored (chaperoned) compliant pouty Child who is being internally cautioned by her internal Parent: "Don't be pushing yourself onto others, you don't want people to get the wrong idea about you, do you?"
- Con (Move #3): "Re-warming the Other Person" was portrayed by the function of a saucy, vivacious young woman, the natural Child with spontaneity, with touches of rebel Child appearing to be shaking off the internal Parental cautioning yet also complying with mother's teaching, "Be nice to your friends, dear!" This natural/rebel Child in being Adult monitored (chaperoned) is at the same time implying "It sure would be fun to get to know you better." She showed evident pleasure at being able to create a stir in another person.
- Gimmick (Move #4): "Cool It, Now!" This was conveyed by the scolding, bossy, playing-mother function of her compliant Child with a touch of Parent disciplining added, probably via an internal dialogue. This initial gimmick move was made to look reasonable as it was carried out. This is the element of a seeming-Adult reasonableness: "I was too, cold, when I came in tonight!" referring to the fact that it was cold outside as she came into the building and group room. The wrinkle was to chase off, scold off the other person just hard enough so that they turned around and came back for some more warm up (or a payoff) with her. Either way it came out this player would have done the right thing as far as her internal Parent was concerned. Also, in case the other person's Child asked for reassurance about pushing ahead, she could scold "I already told you to leave me alone!" without, in fact, restating it.

²² Ernst, F.H. Jr., M.D.: "Handbook of Listening / Transactional Analysis of the Listening Activity", Second Edition, Addresso' Set Publications, Vallejo, California, 2008.



3. Recycling and Progression of Game Moves

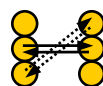
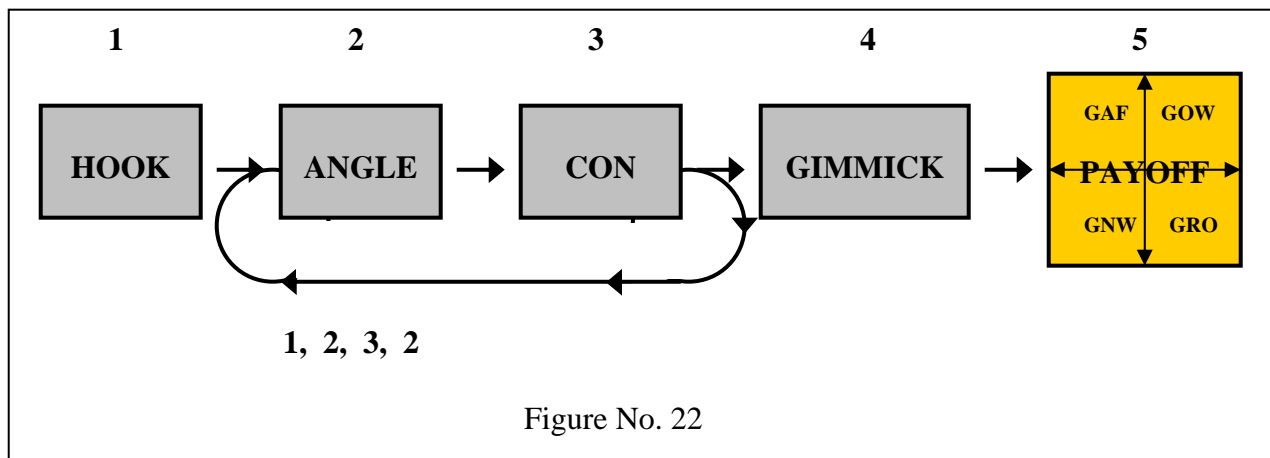
A game move may be successively replayed several times in a row in order to more firmly bring along the other player, to seduce (lure, attract) the other player to join up with the other party. If a player finds that at some point in the mutual activity (game) he is losing the interest of his fellow player or has gotten out of step (for example) with the fellow player, he can “backspace” to anyone of the preceding (ulterior) moves of the game. If the players miss coupling onto each other at some transactional exchange, then they will recycle back to some one or more of the previously engaging moves in order to mutually bring their game along.

A player of a game, even if he has the opportunity, will rarely go directly in sequence through the four buildup moves to get to his payoff. This is clearly in contrast to the example of Sybil and Saul written about at the beginning of this paper. A quality game can be likened to a quality seduction, where the buildup of tissue tension, moisture, turgor and psychological suspense heightens the satisfactions and gratifications on the horizons for the parties.

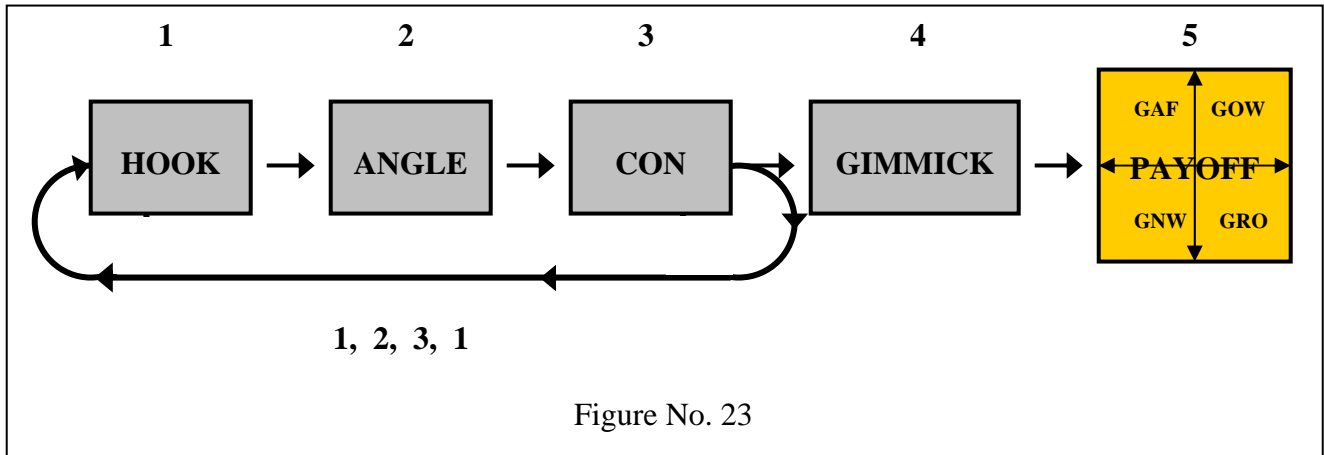
A quality style of Get-On-With payoff to a game has more than a few similarities to a quality seduction. A short game, as in the first example of twelve seconds, was a “Quickie” (Sybil and Saul).

This latter quickie is in contrast to the situation of a new person coming into a treatment group who is in the position of adapting his game to one or more of his fellow group members in the room. He is seen making tentative moves, testing out various members for receptiveness to playing a complementary game back to him. He may make several false starts with different individuals before finally locating one with whom he can count on playing through to a vivid “moment of truth” (Payoff) for himself.

In playing through the moves of a game, it may happen that the other person will be successfully hooked and remain engaged for the first two moves, but then lose interest in talking further to him (the new group member) as move #3 is first tried. The new game playing group member has the option of going back to either of the two previously successful qualities of self with his earlier game moves. He may decide to backspace to the ANGLE move. This is diagrammed in Figure No. 22.



A game player may also decide to backspace to the HOOK and replay back through both the Hook and the Angle moves again. This is diagrammed in Figure No. 23.



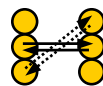
To repeat once again: the first time a person has played the Gimmick move of his game, it is very unlikely he will forsake the search for one of the four qualities of payoff event. Each pre-payoff move of a game, whether the Hook, the Angle, the Con, or the Gimmick move may be played through any number of times prior to payoff.

Once a commitment to duplicity is made by a person, the other person, whether patient, therapist, or social acquaintance does well to take note of this fact and then see if events can be influenced in order to regulate the quality and intensity of that reciprocated payoff event conducive to his own reasoned objectives.

At times an individual is seen playing more than one move of a game in one transaction. This is exemplified in the use of the prefatory phrase “Well, it seems to me that...” as one game move is followed by the next game move with its change in voice pitch, tone and angled countenance; as the person goes ahead to recite his opinion.

On occasion a player is seen going through three game moves within one vocal offering, but in these instances observed, the responding fellow player is visibly, manifestly following along with his own complementary game moves as he is seen shifting his responsive physical posture and physical listening attitude. The listener here is seen to be confirming that the talker's words are producing a related moving and shifting of both physical and psychological attitude; i.e., a complementary shifting of his own ego states which are both internally experienced and externally perceived. The non-vocal person in these instances was not ever more than one game move behind and usually was seen keeping up with the talker. Interestingly, in the transactional analysis of listening, there have been those occasions where the non-vocal listening person is seen anticipating the next move of the vocalizing fellow player.²³

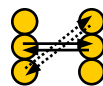
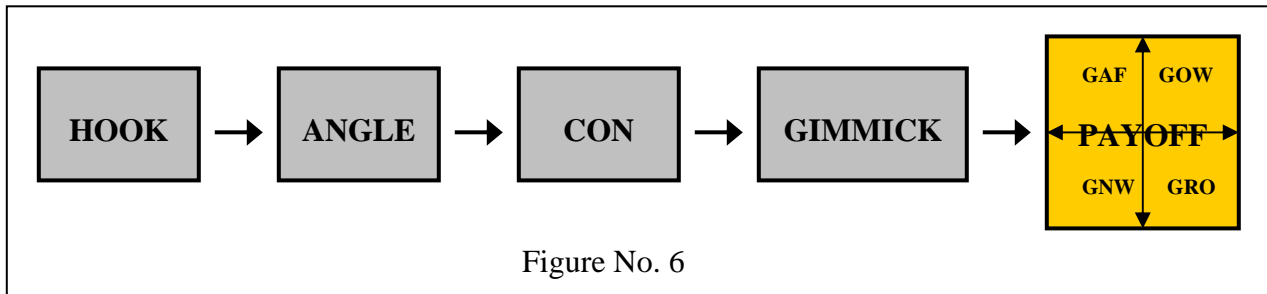
²³ Ernst, F.H. Jr., M.D.: “Handbook of Listening / Transactional Analysis of the Listening Activity”, Second Edition, Addresso'Set Publications, Vallejo, California, 2008.



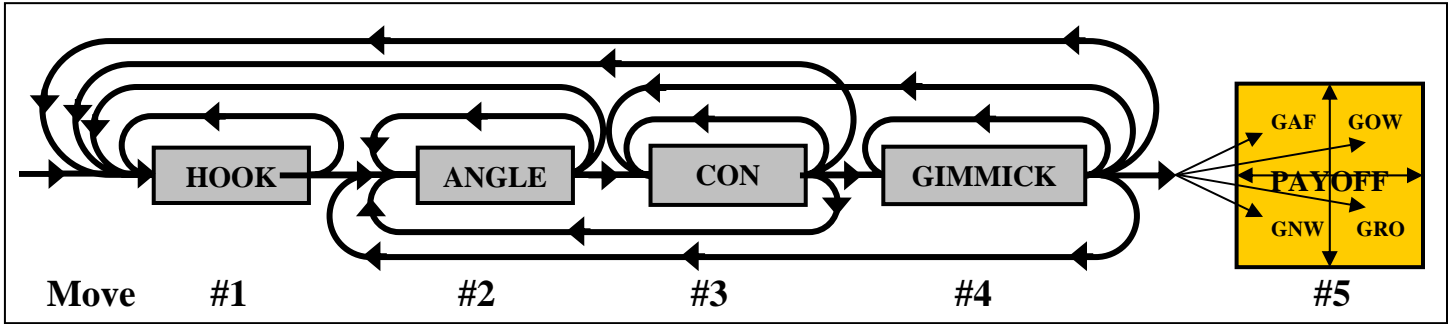
The Rules of Game Moves

The Rules of Game Moves can be understood in terms of “the game flow chart.”
(See Figure No. 24)

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 transactional 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 **General Game Diagram** shown below has also been likened to a **flow chart**.



<u>Move</u>	<u>Colloquialism</u>	<u>Other Terms</u>	<u>Ulterior Transactional Term</u>
#1	HOOK	Engagement, Come On	Tentative Angular Transaction
#2	ANGLE	Maneuver 1, Play	Committed Angular Transaction
#3	CON	Maneuver 2, Snare	Tentative Duplex Transaction
#4	GIMMICK	Trick, Wrinkle	Committed Duplex Transaction
#5	PAYOFF	Moment of Truth, Reward	Denouement

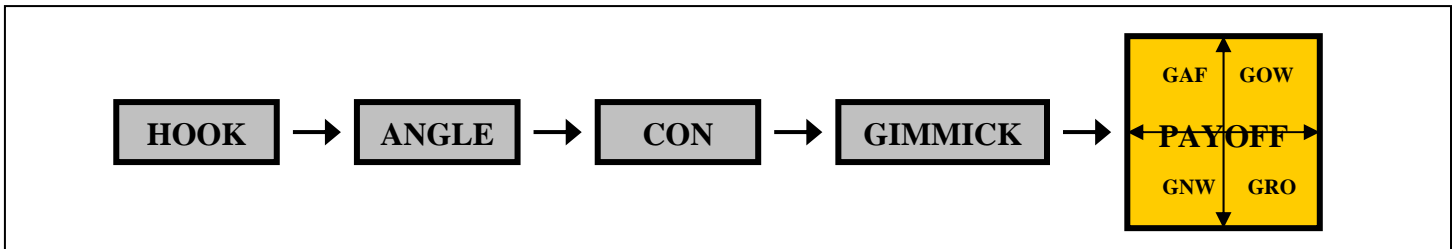
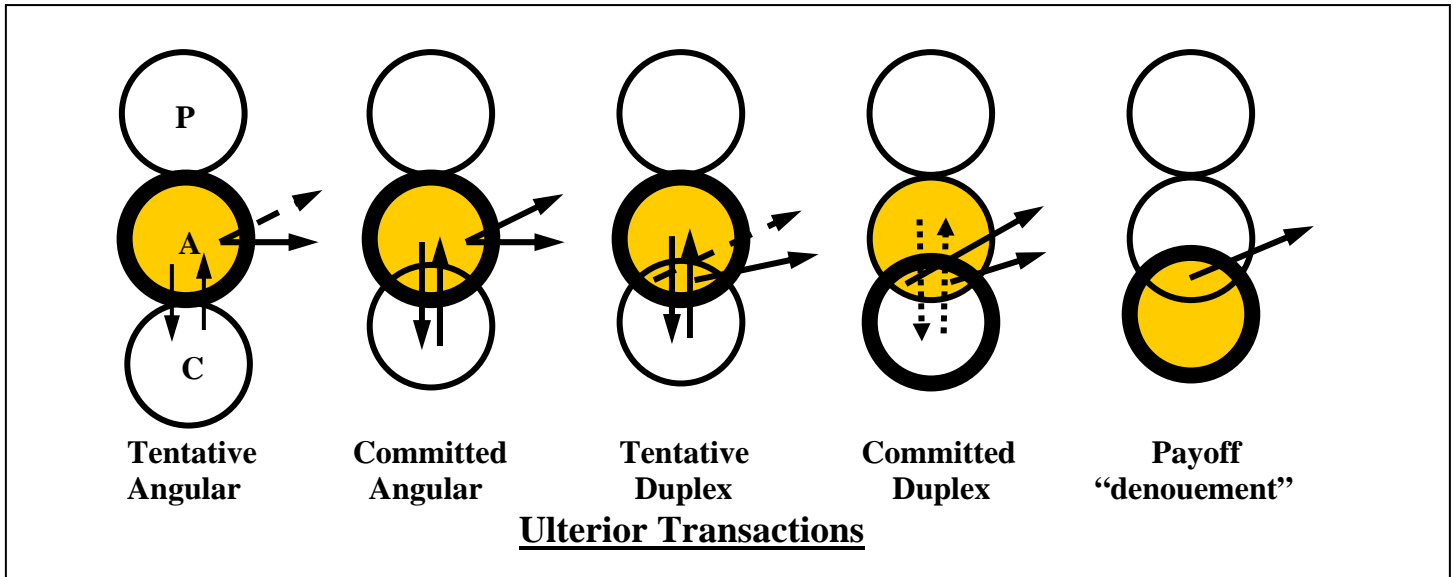
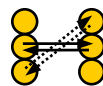


Figure No. 25



The “Berne Game Formula”

CON + GIMMICK = RESPONSE → SWITCH → PAYOFF
(plus) (equals) (leads to) (leads to)

CON + GIMMICK:

Practically speaking, the "Con" in the “Berne Game Formula” refers to all the ulterior transactions prior to the "Gimmick" move of a game. This is to distinguish the separateness of the commitment to the duplicity of the game (i.e. the Gimmick) from those social and those ulterior (psychological level) transactions which precede the commitment (i.e. playing of the Gimmick move of the particular game the first time).

= RESPONSE:

There are three categories of response events.

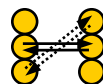
1. The transactional events coming back to the player from the identified other party have a distinct bearing on the identified player's return offerings which are called the "Response."
2. There are numerous occasions when “Response” will also refer to the recycling of the transactions back through the game moves after the commitment to duplicity has been made.
3. "Response" may also refer to a preliminary game and its payoff event, which payoff has not been appreciably influenced by the Childhood existential position. This form of response would be in the mutual simultaneous laughter between both players in the first and second times “Cool It, Now” was played by Sybil in the earlier example.

SWITCH:

There are three varieties of switches for games.

1. There is the replaying of the entire game again after the first payoff; going through all the moves to a **different quality of payoff**. This replaying will occur if the preceding payoff event cathected and threatened the Child's existential position. This is described in Sybil's Adult explanation for playing out her game the third time to a “mess-up” payoff.
2. There is the occurrence of switching to a complementary game²⁴, as for example “Now I've Got You, You SOB” player may change to “Why Is This Always Happening To Me.” A “Yes, but” player may switch to the complementary game of “Why Don't You”. Sometimes this is referred to as switching roles. This switching phenomenon is additionally exemplified in three-handed games where the player's actions are typified by the social modalities diagram of intervenor-stimulator-responder.

²⁴ Berne, Eric M.D.: Complementary games. See “Games People Play,” “Transactional Analysis in Psychotherapy.”



3. "Switch" also refers to the quality of maneuvers of the ANGLE (Move 2) and the CON (Move 3), as in the game of "Cool It, Now" where in the Angle move the player is "Cooling off **self**" and in the Con move the player is "Re-warming **other person.**" This switch is also seen in the game of "Corner" where the player is working in an oscillating manner to psychologically box the other into an untenable position, such as "Well, now, friend, wouldn't you say that ..." to later use "Cornered's" admitted, own words against him.

PAYOFF:

"Payoff," as Berne saw it, has reference to the cashing in of (brown) stamps in order to get the hurt feelings, the hangover, the divorce, etc.²⁵ Berne saw these latter are the events which support a person's playing his rackets. He saw them as being vivid moments, full of meaning for the person's Childhood-based existential position, the slammed door in the game of "Uproar."

Application of the "Berne Game Formula"

To diagram the event of Sybil's game at the first of this paper with THE GAME FORMULA:

Con + Gimmick = Response → Switch → Payoff

CON + GIMMICK:

Represented by the numbered moves of the first day -- 1,2,3,4,5

RESPONSE:

Represented by the next day's numbered events -- 1,2,1,2,2,2,3,3,4,4,3,3,4,3,4,5 (GOW)

SWITCH:

"A Different Payoff" (see page 11), that set of unnumbered transactions which were followed about five minutes later by a mumbled get-nowhere-with "mess-up" (GNW) payoff.

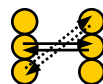
PAYOFF:

The concluding thirty-second pout with mutterings of a few obscenities for a "You Won't Get Nowhere With Me" "mess-up" payoff event.

There are several conclusions to be drawn from this:

1. The total sequence of events which took place over the 24-hour interval can be represented as one game.
2. The interval of the 24 hours was a chapter of a script.

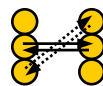
²⁵ Intriguing to note is that often a person's payoff coincides both with his collecting and his cashing in brown stamps. He is paying off the other person (maybe getting even with) while getting his own payoff.



3. The series of (Sybil) events recorded here were three separate episodes of a recurring set of ulterior transactions, each with a denouement (payoff).

With this last point of view, there is treatability of the recurring event. It might be added that Sybil's view was, "This is the third time since yesterday that I've noticed I played that game."

The position of this writer is that one effect of a game payoff is to offer the player a refreshing shift within himself from one point of view and attitude to another point of view. One of the advantages of a payoff is the change in what is experienced as the "real Self." There may or may not be a biological advantage in having the executive ego-state and the "real Self" ego-state be the same. The change of point of view which occurs at the interfaces of ego states does, however, offer the opportunity to perhaps rectify a previous misapprehension or relieve an unnecessary tedium. This is implied by the colloquialism "the moment of truth."

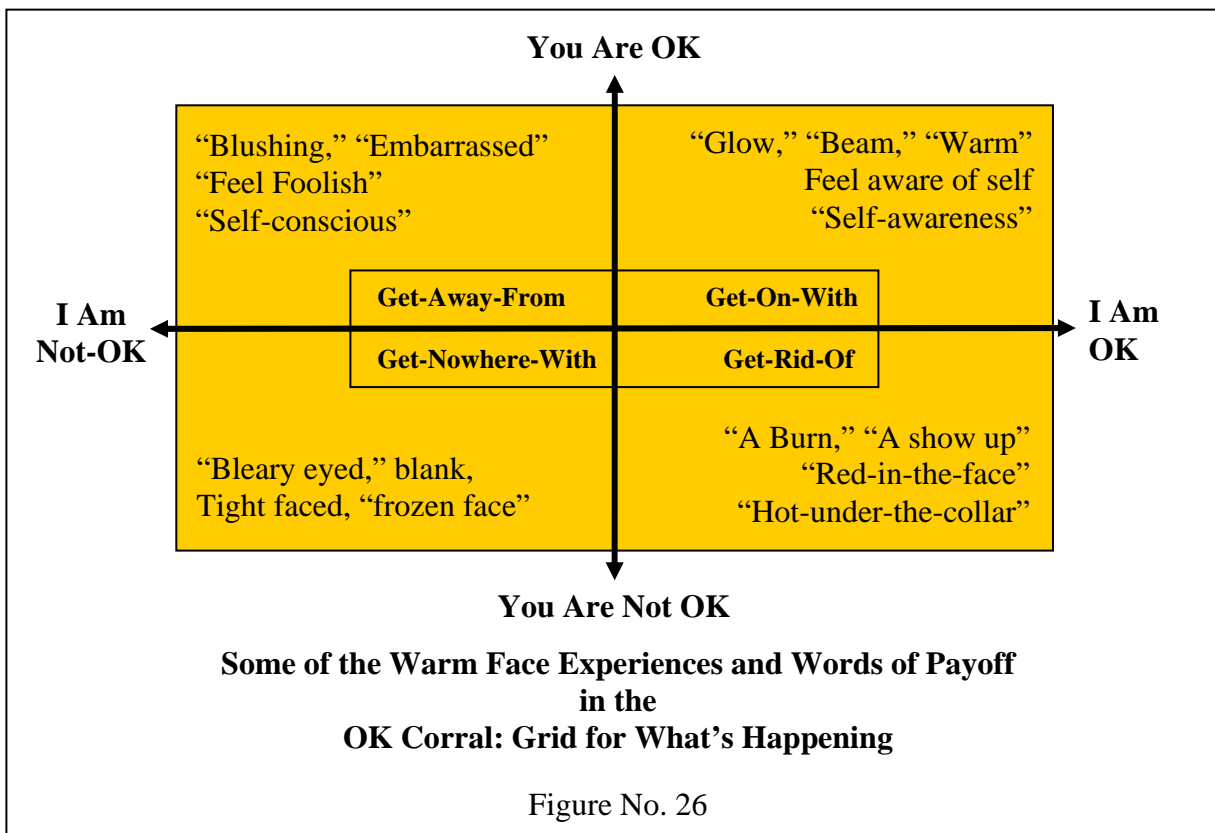


Payoff Options

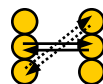
CLASSIFICATION OF PAYOFFS

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.²⁶ (Figure No. 26)

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.

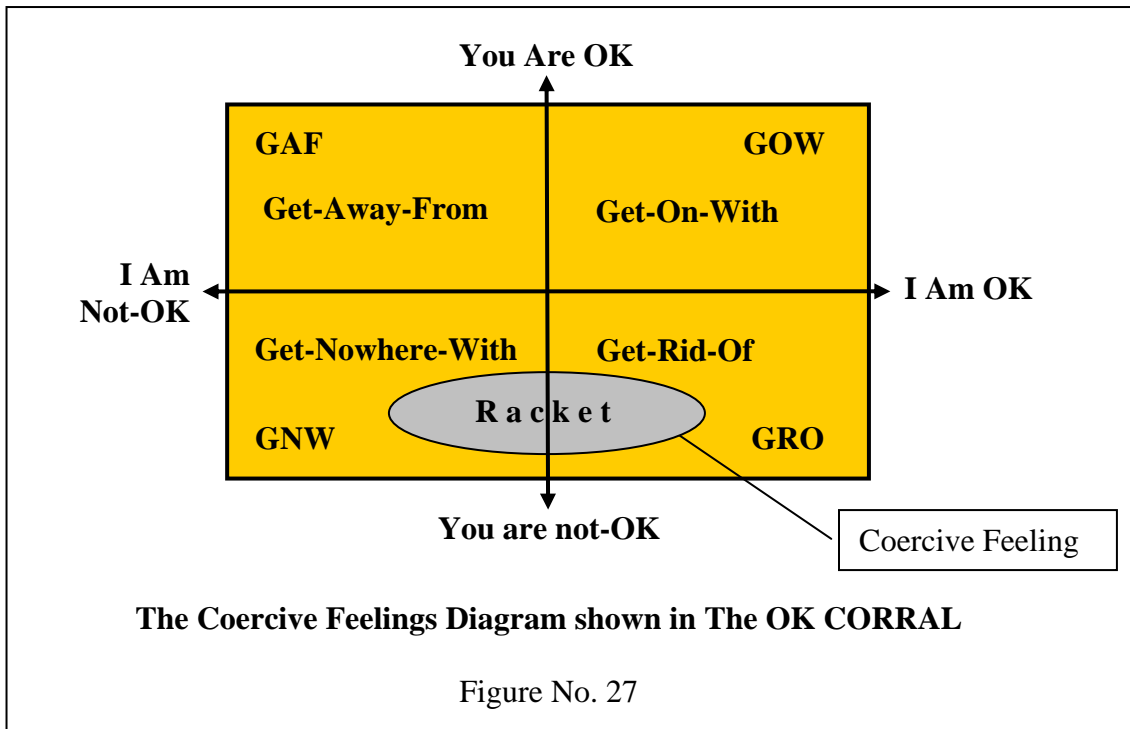


²⁶ Ernst, F.H. Jr., M.D.: “Transactional Analysis in the OK Corral: Grid for What's Happening”, Addresso'Set Publications, Vallejo, California, 2008.



Racket Payoffs

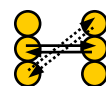
The person with a racket form of payoff will be restricting the choice of payoff of the other party. This is because the racketeer has payoffs which will take place in one of the two lower quadrants of HIS OWN OK CORRAL, either a **get-nowhere-with** or a **get-rid-of** by the racketeer. The racketeer 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.^{27, 28} (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.

²⁷ Ernst, F.H. Jr., M.D.: “Coercive Feelings, Psychological Rackets in the OK Corral”, Addresso’Set Publications, Vallejo, California, 2008.

²⁸ Berne, Eric M.D.: “Games People Play, The Psychology of Human Behavior,” On page 18 Berne says “The essential characteristic of human play is not that the emotions are spurious, but they are regulated. This is revealed when sanctions are imposed on an illegitimate emotional display.”



Payoff and Intensity (Degree) of a Game

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.

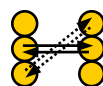
"Because there is so little opportunity for intimacy in daily life, and because some forms of intimacy, especially if intense, are psychologically impossible for most people, the bulk of time in serious social life is spent in playing games. Hence, games are both necessary and desirable. The only problem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



References

- Berne, Eric, M.D.: "Games People Play, the Psychology of Human Behavior", Grove Press, New York, NY, 1964.
- Berne, Eric, M.D.: Remarks at Golden Gate Group Psychotherapy Society Meeting, Jack Tar Hotel, San Francisco, April 19, 1966.
- Berne, Eric, M.D.: "Sex in Human Loving," Simon and Schuster, New York, NY, 1970.
- Berne, Eric, M.D.: Transactional Analysis Bulletins, 1964-68.
- Berne, Eric, M.D.: "Transactional Analysis: A New and Effective Psychotherapy," American Journal of Psychotherapy, Vol. 12, No. 4, 1958.
- Berne, Eric, M.D.: "Transactional Analysis in Psychotherapy", Grove Press, New York, NY, 1961.
- Ernst, F.H. Jr., M.D.: "Coercive Feelings, Psychological Rackets in the OK Corral", Addresso'Set Publications, Vallejo, California, 2008.
- Ernst, F.H. Jr., M.D.: "Formulation: Game Moves Unraveled / Sequential, Predictable, Logical, Teachable", The Encounterer Vol.1 No.10, Golden Gate Foundation for Group Treatment, Inc., 5-20-1969.
- Ernst, F.H. Jr., M.D.: "Formulation: The Game Troubled Couple", The Encounterer Vol.1 No.12, Golden Gate Foundation for Group Treatment, Inc., 7-5-1969.
- Ernst, F.H. Jr., M.D.: "Formulation: The Moves of the Game DO-ME-SOMETHING", The Encounterer Vol.1 No.17, Golden Gate Foundation for Group Treatment, Inc., 10-20-1969.
- Ernst, F.H. Jr., M.D.: "Formulation: Games and Game Moves", The Encounterer Vol.1 No.20, Golden Gate Foundation for Group Treatment, Inc., 12-5-1969.
- Ernst, F.H. Jr., M.D.: "Formulation: The Gimmick Move", The Encounterer Vol.2 No.26, Golden Gate Foundation for Group Treatment, Inc., 5-20-1970.
- Ernst, F.H., Jr. M.D.: "Fourth Millennium of the Alphabet Fetes the Transactional Analysis Diagram", Transactional Analysis Journal 1:4, 1971.
- Ernst, F.H. Jr., M.D.: "Getting Well With Transactional Analysis / Get-On-With, Getting Well and Get (to be) Winners", Addresso'Set Publications, Vallejo, California, 2008.
- Ernst, F.H. Jr. M.D.: "Handbook of Listening, Transactional Analysis of the Listening Activity" Second Edition, Addresso'set Publications, Vallejo, California, 2008.
- Ernst, F.H. Jr., M.D.: "Third Circle, The Diagramed Parent: Eric Berne's Most Significant Contribution", Addresso'Set Publications, Vallejo, California, 2008.
- Ernst, F.H., Jr. M.D.: "Transactional Analysis in the The OK Corral: Grid for What's Happening", Addresso'Set Publications, Vallejo, California, 2008.
- Zechnich, Robert. "Kiss Em: Antithesis to Kick Me", Transactional Analysis Bulletin 8:3, p. 34, April 1969.

