

Emphasis - "Why Don't You . . . Yes, But."

Special points of interest:

- * "Yes, but" is not played for its ostensible purpose (an Adult quest for information or solutions) but to reassure and gratify the Child.
- * "Options" may be viewed as the games of "Why Don't You" and "Yes, But."

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In the book "Transactional Analysis in Psychotherapy" Dr. Eric Berne wrote on page 104: "Why Don't You . . . Yes, But" can be played by any number [of people]. One player, who is "it," presents a problem. The others start to present solutions, each beginning with "Why Don't You ... ?" To each of these the one who is "it" objects with a "Yes, But ..." A good player can stand off the rest of the group indefinitely, until they all give up, whereupon "it wins"

"Since all the solutions, with rare exceptions, are rejected, it is apparent that this game must serve some ulterior purpose. ..."

This game has useful application for a GNW (Get-nowhere-with) payoffs for everyone concerned. It can also be

Thesis — Antithesis

There is much to be learned from the examples in Berne's writings. Both in his "thesis" and "antithesis" as he writes them.

Berne states on page 120 of "Games People Play" that among therapy members the tendency is for members to get caught up in a "I'm

played for a Get-On-With (GOW) pay-offs, too. For the fun of it for everyone: for the stroke value given and received among people.

Berne goes on and says "The gimmick" in "Why Don't You ... Yes, But" is that it is not played for its ostensible purpose (an Adult quest for information or solutions) but to reassure and gratify the Child. A bare transcript may sound Adult, but in living tissue it can be observed that the one who is "it" presents himself/herself as a Child inadequate to meet the situation; whereupon the others become transformed into sage Parents anxious to dispense their wisdom for the benefit of the helpless one. ..."

This game is played among psychiatric group therapy members, other

types of groups, quasi (or neo) help groups, families, poker "buddies," at coffee meetings, church groups, and other social gatherings.

I've heard people play this ostensibly to get advice when not knowing what to do, too. "Tell me what to do."



"A Game (People Play) is an on-going series of complimentary ulterior transactions progressing to a well-defined, predictable outcome. ..."

Only Trying To Help You" game. Berne advises not to do this. As he says: "It is evident (seldom evident [emphasis FH Ernst Jr., MD]) that those who respond to White's first move, the presentation of her "problem", are playing a form of "I'm **Only Trying To Help You.**" (IOTHY) In fact YDYB is the inverse of IOTHY. In IOTHY there is

one therapist and many clients; in YDYB one client and many "therapists." The clinical antithesis to YDYB, therefore, is not to play IOTHY. If the opening is of the form: "What do you do if..." (WYDI), a suggested response is: "That IS a difficult problem. What ARE you going to do about it?" If it is of the form: "X **didn't work out**

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

Thesis - Antithesis continued

properly,” the response then should be “That IS too bad.” Both of these are polite enough to leave White at a loss, or at least to elicit a crossed transaction, so that his frustration becomes manifest and can be ex-

plored.* In a therapy group it is good practice for susceptible patients to refrain from playing **IOTHY** when invited. Then not only, White, but the other members as well can learn from anti-**YDYB**, which is merely the other

side of anti-**IOTHY**.

* The stimulation of “frustration” in the patient, as a procedure is to get at the more underlying conflict, confusion.

The movie “Dirty Harry”

Inspector Harry Callaghan is running to the end of a long tunnel in San Francisco when two would be bums, perverts, thieves stop him. They move in on him, and the one with the dark hair and black beard says “Whatch ya got in the bag man?”

Inspector Callaghan responds in his gritty, impatient tone “Get out of the way” and then belts him and the other guy. A struggle continues for a few moments; Callaghan clears the obstructionists and proceeds onto his rendezvous with another telephone

booth.

No time for options here, or a “Why Don’t You ... Yes But.”

Yes, but there were many options and dramatic scenarios considered by the script writers. Look at the game moves of “Cool It.”



The Encounterer Vol.1, No.5

The following is taken from Vol.1, No.5 of The Encounterer, edited by FH Ernst Jr., M.D.

Encounterer: At the close of a conference on “Social Crisis,” which to that point, had not produced a crisis, the workshop leaders formed a panel to summarize. Ten minutes into this closing part of the program, **PROFESSOR PAUL**, manifestly out of turn, usurping the time of the speaking panelist, was seen rising, putting coat over forearm. In a stage whisper to the chairman, “I’m terribly sorry but I have another engagement I am late for already” (this, after committing himself to attend).

Chairman: “Oh: Professor Paul could you please give us your thoughts then before you leave.”

PAUL: (Continuing to be the only one standing, briefcase now on conference table, coat still on forearm, tipped his tilted head ten degrees back): “Well, really must be leaving; but there is

just one little thing I want to say ... (the “just-one-little-thing” maneuver will reliably subvert an agenda and turns out to be more than two tangential items. In group treatment this “li-l-ole-me” maneuver can be handled by “want to bet!” - that it is just one thing).

Then holding forth for three minutes in tones sonorous and pious about his “concern for human beings,” this erudite gifted person’s tones waxed eloquent in passionate fervor for the assembled audience to “act on the basis of your feelings, if you feel the way I do.” Seemingly, his closing words were: “What is needed is more action in the social (community) ... We all sit around and talk ... and don’t get anything done ... now, don’t get me wrong ... I’m not for violence ... and if you feel this as strongly as I feel it, you (sic) will take action and stop collecting information ...” picking up his briefcase as if leaving the scene of the “action” which predictably would

follow this parting remark.

THOUGHTFUL-AUDIENCE-MEMBER (TAM): “You would have us stop gathering data?”

PROF. Paul: “Yes ... we have collected enough data ... We don’t need to plan and think anymore ... We have done enough of that and it has gotten nowhere ... I believe you (sic) should blow up the memory banks (of the computers) ...” (as if computing were the trouble). Then taking a one-half second pause ... “I have to leave, now; you know, another engagement (again looking at his watch) ...” but he continued to talk. By this second use of the “doing-you-a-favor” maneuver, he seemingly was being imposed upon if his last words were queried.

TAM (musing): “Don’t collect anymore data? No more thinking to do on this? Hum!”

PAUL: “No ... we’ve thought too much,” etc., repeating. Further inquiry by

THOUGHTFUL AM about PP's degrading of cool headed solutions was variously handled with tones of piety, contempt, reverence and sneering.

Finally PP, tipping his head further back, index finger shaking at TAM, snarled: "Are you for real?"

TAM in clear, un-intimidated, level voice: "Yes, I am talking straight, sir!", generalized audience laughter!

To summarize Paul's (game) moves:
 1. Stage whisper to usurp floor,
 2. Use the maneuver "I'm-doing-you-a

-favor (by staying)" and "I-have-just-one-little-thing-to-say" to gain and to hold center stage.

3. Decry thoughtfulness in fervored tones, thus stimulating audience restlessness, in order to

4. If possible, get himself and his ideals "kicked" as he left the scene.

This describes one sequence of conversational (game) moves played out in some therapy groups, leading then to "group crisis." If Pious Paul had, in fact, been able to get a return snarl or a "cussing at" from an audience member then a social group crisis would

surely have followed.

And, after all, who could have blamed PP. All he did was to grant a favor and "throw-out to (throw up on?) the audience his parting thoughts" to then be "mistreated-for-his-efforts." Who among the subsequent arguers would have admitted to being promoted into a fighting mood (either for or against) by someone else, let alone a person no longer present.

GAME: "Now-let's-get-our-problem-ironed-out-here."

Musings about "Options"

About 6 months prior to Dad's demise in June of 2009 he wrote some thoughts regarding "options."

"Options?

Yeah, sure, you know:

- 1. Why don't you ... a ... a ... a ... ?
- A. Yes, but ... 1. 1. 1. ?
- 2. Why don't you ... b .. b .. b .. b.. ?
- B. Yes, but ... 2 ... 2 ... 2... 2... ?
- 3. Why don't you ... c ... c ... c ... c ... ?
- C. Yes, but ... 3 ... 3 ... 3 ... 3 ... ?
- 4. Why don't you ... d ... d ... d ... d ... ?
- D. Yes, but ... 4 ... 4 ... 4 ... 4 ... ?
- 5. Yes, but that's a game isn't it. ?

E. Yeah sure, but (yes, but), it keeps the conversation going doesn't it ?

6. Yes, but now the therapist has something to do and he would not have anything to do if his patients (clients) were not talking to each other in his group, would he ?

F. Oh, you mean talking to patients to keep their options open is so that the psychotherapist can be busy "breaking up the patients and getting paid for doing it."

I see! I see! The inventor of the OPTIONS theory was one very bright guy. He should have gotten the Eric Berne Memorial Scientific (annual) Award of the International Transactional Analysis Association !

Yes, but I completely agree (disagree) with you. In fact, I think it was arranged for him to get that award again. Why don't you check your copy of the Transactional Analysis Journal to see if you can't find out who got the Award for the Options idea ! And what year that was."

Option as defined in "Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language, College Edition" 1964.

- 1. a choosing; choice
- 2. the power, right, or liberty of choosing.
- 3. something that is or can be chosen.
- 4. the right, acquired for a consideration, to buy or sell something at a fixed price within a specified time.

Speaker of the "House" musings

The Speaker of the House of Representatives is keeping her options open. She is one bright lady. She should get an award for her work in Congress. And yet everyone seems to be locked onto her: complaining, and it

seems unbreakable. Why don't you "cross transactions." Why don't you look at the "advanced options." Why don't you look at "other options." Maybe you could get some more training in your RAP groups. Have you tried

a good game of "Stupid" in response to a journalists queries? Oh, then control is the main assignment.

Self-rekidding anyone? How about self re-parenting?

"...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."

pg. 58-59 GPP



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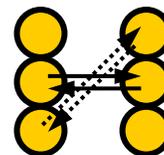
"Game Codes Newsletter of Games People Play"
 Franklin "Harry" Ernst III, Editor
 P.O. Box 3009
 Vallejo, California 94590
 Phone: 707/643-5100
 Fax: 707/644-6358
 E-mail: harrysternt@aao3news.cnc.net

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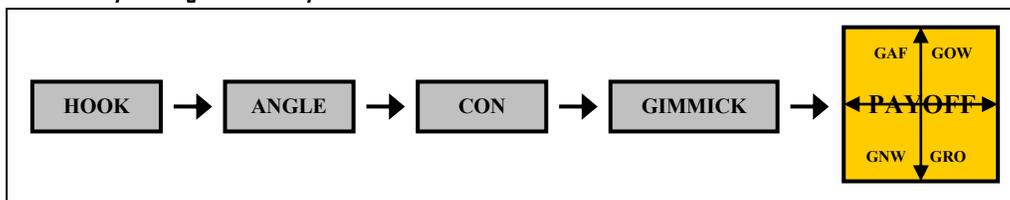
"Mastery of the universe is proportional to the symbols man has by which to represent his universe."

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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." $Con + Gimmick = Response > Switch > Payoff$

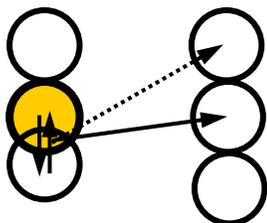


The "Ernst Game Diagram" as described by Franklin H. Ernst Jr., M.D. in his paper "The Game Diagram" shows the phenomena of the variableness of a game and number of variations without contradicting "Berne's Game Formula." The Game Diagram" has five moves: Move #1-Hook, Move #2-Angle, Move #3-Con, Move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



Alternative of the Con Move, Move #3 of a Game

Most games involve the Child ego-state circle overlapping the Adult ego-state circle.



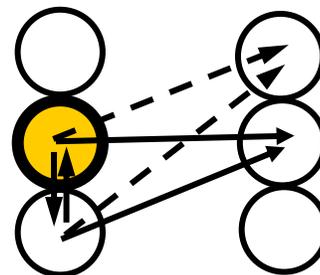
The drawing at right is a variation of the Con move, Move #3. The Adult and Child circles are not overlapped. The Adult has confidence both in his own Child and in his Adult ability to keep track of his own Child. He can recognize when his Child is skewing the transactional action into coming out in 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.

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 imagina-

tive 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).



Tentative Duplex Transactional Game Move without Adult-Child overlap