

WHAT GAME AND ROLE ARE YOU PLAYING? ACTIVITY

This activity is best experienced when you close your eyes and notice what sensations you feel in your body. Go deep and put your attention on the areas that are tight, constricted and tense. Notice the thoughts and emotions that surface when you focus on those parts of your body. Remember, when playing a game or a role, strong emotions are held in the body and will show up when they are denied and not released. You just need to learn how to own and release them in a healthy manner.

Your Game

1. What game are you playing? How will you know if you are winning the game?

When you think about winning the game you are playing...

What thoughts come to mind?

What emotions are surfacing?

Are you noticing any physical sensations in your body?

2. How will you know if you have lost the game?

When you think about losing the game you are playing...

What thoughts come to mind?

What emotions are surfacing?

Are you noticing any physical sensations in your body?

3. What price are you paying for staying in the comfort zone? Is it really that comfortable?

4. What is it that you REALLY WANT—and NOT EXPECT—in this situation?

This question has the dual effect of:

(a) allowing a need or desire to be brought into consciousness and safely expressed, thereby actually satisfying part of the need (to be able to express what you want).

(b) starting to focus on ways of getting what you want (i.e., getting into action and results).

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Your Role

The Karpman Drama Triangle states that we play roles in our lives that are not serving us well. Consider a drama that is currently happening in your life—it can be a recurring theme, such as not asking for what you want. Reflect, and then answer the following questions:

1. Describe your drama story.
2. What is the role that I play in this drama?
3. What is the win for continuing to play this role?
4. What do I gain by choosing a more healthy response?
5. What is the role that others are playing?
6. What is the win for others playing their role?
7. What will others gain or lose by you choosing a more healthy response?

Playing the VICTIM

Victims live in the “poor me” and “I cannot do anything about it” space. They feel powerless and weak—and part of them loves that because it removes responsibility. They feel persecuted and picked on, which means they can feel like martyrs and wallow in their suffering. Victims attract rescuers and persecutors.

Step Out of Role Remove yourself from the situation. Problem-solve. Repeat: “There are options that I can choose.”

Playing the RESCUER

Rescuers jump into “let me help you” and “I will make it okay.” They try to smooth everything over and keep things calm. For the rescuer, there are no uncomfortable conflicts. Doing all that rescuing makes them feel good—all those people really need them. They are often meddlers, but justify it with their “good intentions.” Rescuers love to save victims.

Step Out of Role Take no action until requested. Resist the short term “feel good” to jump in and help out.

Playing the PERSECUTOR

Persecutors love to waggle the finger—“it is all your fault” and “you are no good, stupid.” They use orders and threats and often vent their anger. They have to do everything because no one is good enough to get it done. They use anger and shame-and-blame as tactics to stay in control. Persecutors love picking on victims.

Step Out of Role Disengage! Step away from the situation, and let others sort it out.