

ROLL FOR INITIATIVE USING GAMES IN THERAPY

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MA in Counseling Psychology from UCO

I work primarily with children, teens, adults, and families experiencing anxiety, grief, trauma, suicidal ideation, and stress.

As education specialist with the Oklahoma Counseling Institute, I coordinate trainings and write articles for mental health professionals on topics such as Oklahoma-specific resources for clients and legislation impacting providers.

• Also tech support and bagel arranging assistant.

HAYLEY THE NERD

Cohost of the Malthaus Games Podcast

• Biweekly podcast reviewing boardgames and brews.

Co-owner of way too many board games.

Cohosted the Closing Ceremonies of Token Con 2019





Knighted in the Tuesday Knight Games Podcast as a Dame

Regularly Present on the Psychology and Gaming


• Lectured at Gen Con 2018 on the Psychology of Rage Quitting

• Spoken on multiple panels throughout 2020 and 2021 on psychology, board gaming, and advocacy in the hobby.

WHAT A NERD.

UConn **UConn Team-Up Presents A Conversation on Returning to Public Events and Mental Health**
 Part 3: Offensive themes and language and being open to criticism



Alan Levitt
 Teaching Hospital Director

Brian Tannen Brock
 Wellness Center

Jason Perry
 Head Coach

WHAT ARE YOU HOPING TO LEARN TODAY?

GOALS FOR TODAY'S SEMINAR

Discuss research on using games in therapy.

Examine evidenced-based interventions that may be facilitated by using of board games.

Discuss therapeutic analog board games, online board games, and traditional board games that may be modified to facilitate interventions.

To give participants new, creative ways to incorporate games into the therapy environment without having a creative bone in their body, glue gun, or polished pinterest account.

In all, 42 different games-not including their virtual variants

WHY BOARD GAMES?

May be helpful in [developing rapport](#).

Utilizing board games [may be helpful in increasing motivation](#) to engage in learning.

Facilitating learning through games may [improve attention control and improve knowledge retention](#).

Board games are fun!

GAMES IN THERAPY

Board games are not an intervention.

- ADHD won't be cured through board gaming.
- Trauma symptoms won't dissipate through an RPG.

Board games should be used to facilitate evidenced-based interventions.

When considering using games in session, put the intervention first.

- What am I trying to teach my client that can be helpful by using this game?

AGENDA

Round 1: Explaining the Game

- Rapport Building
- Psychoeducation
- Coping Strategies
- Psychology of Rage Quitting

Round 2: The Mechanics

- Planning, attention, and executive functioning
- Behavior modification & activation
- Interpersonal skills

Round 3: Tally the Score

- Final questions

GAMES IN TODAY'S SEMINAR

- Classic games
 - Revisiting classics as well as modifying them for therapy
- Newer board and card games
- Easy teaches
- Easy finds
- No game time over 20 minutes

LEARNING ABOUT GAMES

- [Watch it Played](#)
- [The Rules Girl](#)
- [Jon Gets Games](#)

GAME STORES

- [Edmond Unplugged](#) in Edmond
- [Common Space Games](#) in Norman
- [Wizards Asylum](#) in Norman
- [Game HQ](#) in Oklahoma City
 - Online store now up and running!
- [Shuffles](#) in Tulsa
- [Carolina Comics](#) in Lawton

Target, Amazon, Walmart

WHAT WERE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE GAMES TO PLAY AS A KID?

DO YOU LIKE PLAYING BOARD GAMES? IF SO, WHY? IF NOT, WHY NOT?

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE GAMES TO PLAY AS AN ADULT?

RAPPORT

WHAT ARE SOME GAMES YOU ALL HAVE USED TO BUILD CLIENT RAPPORT?

RESEARCH: RAPPORT

Developing rapport:

- Related to an increase in client compliance
- Decrease in resistance

Builds client trust

Higher satisfaction with care

- Which is also correlated with improved compliance in treatment

Increase in client outcomes

Be aware of too much of a good thing.

RESEARCH: RAPPORT

Research suggests that using games in therapy can be helpful for building rapport.

This includes:

- [Analog board games](#)
- [Virtual board games](#)
- [Video games](#)

Games don't build rapport; how the therapist uses the game builds rapport.

RAPPORT: INTERVENTIONS

Building rapport involves:

- Reflections and paraphrasing
- Open communication
- Engaging and interacting
- Collaboration
- Time

Using board games to facilitate an environment of discussion and sharing.

RAPPORT: THERAPEUTIC GAMES

[Ungame](#)

- Non-cooperative
- Communication

Both surface-level and contemplative questions

Ex. "What person from history would you have enjoyed knowing?" "Do you think you have a positive or negative attitude? What would your friends say?"

Plenty of opportunity for open-ended questions, paraphrasing and reflecting, and engaging.

May require some therapist self-disclosure

- Be mindful.

RAPPORT: THERAPEUTIC GAMES

Totika

Therapeutic Jenga for those of us without a creative bone in our body.

Participants remove a block, draw a card, and answer the question that corresponds with the color of the block.

Open-ended questions

- General about-me, self-esteem, motivation, and create-your-own questions

Different versions available, including a dice version, a stacking game, and more.

RAPPORT: MODIFYING GAMES

Blank

Cards played may change the rules of the game

Customizable card game

Play is similar to Uno

- But with ever-changing rules

Therapists can modify the rule cards easily with therapeutic discussion.

- Ex. If a blue card is played, then players must talk about 1 challenge they have overcome this week. If a 5 is played, players must share 1 fun fact about themselves.

Can also allow clients to create cards.

RAPPORT: MODIFYING GAMES

About Me Scavenger Hunt

Asking the child to find something in their home or search the internet.

Make sure to list these one at a time.

Use then to facilitate conversation

Show me...

- Something you are proud of
- Your favorite toy
- Your pet
- Your favorite book
- Something that makes you smile
- Other "about me" questions

RAPPORT: MODIFYING GAMES

Other games can be used to build rapport. Think about games that are:

- Low strategy
- Short
- Turn-based

With these games, you can still engage the client in conversation

Examples include:

- Battleship or [Battleship online](#)
- Connect 4 or [Connect 4 online](#)
- [The Game](#)

PSYCHOEDUCATION

ARE THERE GAMES YOU FIND HELPFUL FOR PSYCHOEDUCATION?

PSYCHOEDUCATION: RESEARCH

The object of psychoeducation is to provide knowledge about an illness and it's treatment, as well as aim to assist the client in developing insight into the etiology of a mental health related problem. It may:

- Normalize Symptoms
- Provide information on symptom development and maintenance
- Explore evidenced-based treatment options

PSYCHOEDUCATION: RESEARCH

Should be a discussion rather than a lecture; games may be helpful in relaying the information.

Facilitating learning through games may improve attention control and improve knowledge retention.

PSYCHOEDUCATION: THERAPEUTIC GAMES

Talking, Feeling, Doing Game

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Game

Gives opportunities for kids to talk about thoughts, feelings, and actions.

- Has a combination of surface-level and more explorative questions.

Can provide opportunity for therapists to explore the cognitive triangle with participants.

- Be mindful of therapist self-disclosure

Monitor for age-appropriateness

PSYCHOEDUCATION: ONLINE GAMES

[Mental Health Bingo](#)

[Anger Bingo](#)

[Addictions Bingo](#)

Available on TherapistAid.com

Each participant receives a PDF of a bingo card. The bingo hopper is electronic.

Bingo categories include psychoeducation, triggers identification, and coping strategies.

Can be used to facilitate topics of conversation in rapport building (ex. what are coping skills that help you get through hard times? What are warning signs that you are angry?)

PSYCHOEDUCATION: ONLINE GAMES

[Anger Monsters](#)

Available on TherapistAid.com

Participants choose their "Anger Monster"

Module includes:

- Psychoeducation memory game
- Interactive psychoeducation story book
- Coping strategies

Clients earn stars with every module they complete

PSYCHOEDUCATION: ONLINE GAMES

[Worry Bug](#)

Available on TherapistAid.com

Participants choose their "Worry Bug"

Module includes:

- Psychoeducation memory game
- Interactive psychoeducation story book
- Coping strategies

Clients earn stars with every module they complete

PSYCHOEDUCATION: MODIFYING GAMES

Candy Land

Many ways to modify this game

- Celebrate client drawing "doubles" by reading off and discussing a piece of psychoeducation (many handouts on therapistaid.com)
- Assign an emotion to a color and discuss a time client felt the feeling (If yellow discuss happiness, if green discuss anxiety, etc)

The game itself is not therapeutic; how it is modified may help with client engagement and facilitating discussion.

COPING STRATEGIES

WHAT ARE SOME DIFFICULTIES IN FACILITATING THE LEARNING OF COPING STRATEGIES IN CHILDREN?

COPING SKILLS

Coping does take skill building and practice.

• Learning coping strategies may be-dare I say-boring for some kids.

Board games may be helpful in information retention.

Utilizing board games [may be helpful in increasing motivation](#) to engage in learning.

COPING: THERAPEUTIC GAMES

Matching

Print two sets of Coping Cards from Therapistaid.com

• [Anger](#)

• [Worry](#)

Lay the cards out, face down.

Once a match is found, practice the coping skill

Easy game to give away as homework 😊

COPING: THERAPEUTIC GAMES

Grounding Skills

5 Senses

• Show me

I-Spy

• Easy for parents to facilitate

Why do they work?

COPING SKILLS: ONLINE

Coping Strategies Scavenger Hunt

Asking the child to find something in their home or search the internet.

Show/Tell me...

- Something that makes you feel calm
- Something that makes you feel happy
- Somewhere that makes you feel safe
- Something that helps when you feel sad
- Something that helps when you feel overwhelmed

COPING SKILLS: MODIFYING GAMES

Board games may be helpful in encouraging coping strategy practice.

- The client may ~~throw a tantrum~~ have some opportunities to practice coping strategies.

Choose a given coping strategy the child would like to practice

- Belly breathing, 1 minute break, draw anger, etc

Identifying warning signs with client

- Do your fists tighten up when angry? Do your ears get red? Do you start to tear up?

Watch for the signs and encourage client to identify them.

- I see you frowning. It seems like you are feeling frustrated. Should we take a break to use a coping skill?

COPING SKILLS: MODIFYING GAMES

Talk to parents before this intervention

- Give treatment rationale

Encourage client to use the coping skill BEFORE they have a melt down.

- If they do so and calm down, PRAISE THEM HEAVILY.

If they have a fit, give them a moment to calm down and direct them to practice the coping skill before you start the game again.

- Revisit what warning signs told them they were about to become angry.
- PRAISE THEM HEAVILY after practicing the coping skill.

Take opportunities to model the skill.

- Practice the strategy yourself throughout play

COPING SKILLS: MODIFYING GAMES

Choose a board game that:

- The child enjoys
 - If it isn't a preferred game, the client may not want to engage after all.
- Is relatively short
 - 5-15 minutes MAX
- Is random or the therapist has some control
- Doesn't take much between turn planning
- Who is "winning" or "losing" can change play-by-play

Choose a game that the client wants to play that will give multiple chances to use their coping strategies and win.

COPING SKILLS: MODIFYING GAMES

Try to end on a positive note (a win for the client)

Don't be afraid to *not* play by the rules...

- Modify the game or the rules for therapeutic benefit or the child's level of cognitive development.
- Remember: the object of therapy is not to play a game. It's to facilitate a treatment intervention.

COPING SKILLS: MODIFYING GAMES

Classic:

Battleship or [Battleship Online](#)

Connect 4 or [Connect 4 Online](#)

Guess Who or [Guess Who Online](#)

Other Games:

[Kitty Paw](#)

[Flipover Frog](#)

[Sushi Go!](#)

RAGE QUITTING

I'M SURE NONE OF US HAVE EVER RAGE QUIT BEFORE.

RAGE QUITTING DEFINITIONS

Rage Quitting: becoming angry while playing a game and quitting. Can happen in board games, video games, or other nerd and non-nerd activities

Frustration: a response that occurs when a goal is interrupted

Anger: a strong feeling of annoyance, hostility, or displeasure

Aggression: violent or aggressive behavior

* Flipping the board game, yelling at others, other clinically jerk-like behaviors. Can be verbal, emotional, or physical

WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF GAME-INDUCED AGGRESSION YOU HAVE FOUND IN CLIENTS?

RAGE QUITTING

If they make us mad, why do we like them?
Humans love social interaction!
Humans love goals!
• Goals increase self-esteem and positive emotions

So, humans love board games!

RAGE QUITTING

Even if we like board games, they are still frustrating
Frustration is the blockage of goal attainment
• Always a goal in board games
• Build a road, destroy communism, breeding sheep, etc
• When too high, frustration can lead to quitting

So why is that?

RAGE QUITTING

Frustration leads to thwarted autonomy, competence, and self-efficacy

- Makes us feel like we don't have control
- Frustration threatens self-esteem
 - Example: not drawing the right card

RAGE QUITTING

This threat to self-esteem can lead to:

- Anger
- Aggression
- Blaming others
- Thinking others are being jerks

RAGE QUITTING

Low self-esteem increases perception that others are out to get you

- Feeling like others are out to get you decreases self-esteem EVEN MORE
- **Cycle of misery!**

This perception that others are out to get you is more prevalent in ambiguous situations

- Mean games, anyone?
- Ticket to ride: Were they really taking that resource for their own benefit?

RAGE QUITTING

If we think others are being hostile, we are more likely to become angry and aggressive

- Anger is associated with other blame
- Especially if there is low self-esteem

The lower the self-esteem, the more likely we will get angry, so the more likely we will blame others.

RAGE QUITTING

If we get angry and aggressive with others, likely they'll get angry and aggressive with us.

This leads to another cycle of misery.

- Because they really are mad at us for flipping over the game, that negatively affects self-esteem, which brings us back to the cycle of misery.

When we get aggressive, we can rage quit. Or others may quit us.

- Who wants to play with someone who gets angry, calls others names, or refuses to finish a losing game?

RAGE QUITTING

Aggression is more likely to occur if you come to the game with a bad attitude

- Also more likely in males
- Higher levels of testosterone, the more likely one will engage in verbal or physical aggression when angry

You're more likely to become aggressive with a same-sex friend

But everyone experiences aggression

RAGE QUITTING: WHAT HAPPENS IN THE BRAIN?

Parts of the Brain: Prefrontal Cortex

PFC is part of the frontal lobe

Responsible for:

- Personality expression
- Decision making
- Moderating social behavior
- Making goals
- Rational thought

It isn't fully developed until age 25

- Think back to decisions you made in your teens and early 20s. Makes sense, huh.

RAGE QUITTING: WHAT HAPPENS IN THE BRAIN?

Parts of the Brain: Amygdala

- Part of the Limbic System

Plays a role in processing emotions

Activation is correlated with aggressive behaviors

RAGE QUITTING: WHAT HAPPENS IN THE BRAIN?

Basically, inversely activated

If your PFC is active and you are in the workflow zone, you really don't feel a lot of negative emotions

However, if your amygdala is activated, it sometimes makes it hard to make rational decisions

- Think about how that relates to test anxiety, arguments with significant others, etc

QUITTING RAGE QUITTING

- Identify Triggers
- Practice Coping Strategies
- Examine Consequences

SUMMARY

Frustration leads to anger, which can lead to aggressive behaviors, like rage quitting

Someone is more likely to become angry when frustrated if they have low self-esteem.

When someone gets angry, it inhibits their ability to think clearly

But there are many ways to avoid the rage quit drive

RAGE QUITTING SOURCES

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QUESTIONS?

BREAK!

DOES ANYONE HAVE A BOARD GAME WIN STORY THEY ARE MOST PROUD OF? OR A CRAZY STORY?

USING GAMES FOR SPECIFIC INTERVENTIONS

ROUND 2: THE MECHANICS

Planning, Attention, and Impulse Control
Behavior Modification & Activation
Interpersonal skills

PLANNING, ATTENTION, AND IMPULSE CONTROL

PLANNING, ATTENTION, AND IMPULSE CONTROL

Research has found [that playing abstract games](#), such as Chess or Go, may be helpful in improving executive functioning, including attention, working memory, and decision making.

Research has also suggested [incorporating abstract games](#) into therapy may be helpful in improving short-term memory, processing speed, and comprehension knowledge.

PLANNING, ATTENTION, AND IMPULSE CONTROL

Incorporating games into treatment may be helpful in reducing symptoms of ADHD or other impulse control challenges in children, but one should not rely on chess alone to treat the child.

PLANNING, ATTENTION, AND IMPULSE CONTROL

ADHD treatment consists of:

- Problem solving interventions to improve organization
 - Coping strategies
 - Identifying and problem solving reducing or avoiding triggers to hyperactivity.
 - Encouraging socially appropriate behaviors
 - Contingency plans
 - Self-control strategies
 - Improving executive control
- May be a combination of parent management training, individual therapy, and/or medication.
- Which of these interventions may be facilitated through board games?

PLANNING, ATTENTION, AND IMPULSE CONTROL

No matter the intervention, it is important to collect data to make sure your intervention is working.

- Such as the [SNAP-IV Questionnaire](#)

Utilize the board game in tandem with other evidenced-based treatments.

- If all homework was turned in this week, earn 1 game in session.
- Stay on task for 15 minutes of game play, earn a sticker

PLANNING, ATTENTION, AND IMPULSE CONTROL

Abstract Games

- Go or [Online Go](#)
- Checkers or [Online Checkers](#)
- Chess or [Online Chess](#)

I HATE CHESS.

ABSTRACT GAMES

Hive

Two player game

Each bug has a different moving ability

Goal is to get the other player's queen bee separated from the rest of the hive

Planning, strategy, attention, coping with thwarted goals.

ABSTRACT GAMES

Gipf

More advanced Connect 4

Slide the pieces across the board. First player to have 4 in a row wins!

Strategy, planning, attention

ABSTRACT GAMES

Patchwork

Two-player Tetris

15 minutes

Older kids

Draft quilt pieces to fill your board

Pieces give you a button "income" that allow you to buy more pieces

Planning, strategy, attention

IMPULSE CONTROL

Farkle

Dice-based game

Press your luck-do you keep rolling for more points?

Practice impulse control and facilitate discussion

IMPULSE CONTROL

Can't Stop

Dice-based game

Press your luck- Do you keep rolling to reach the top? Be careful!

Practice impulse control and facilitate discussion

One of the pricier ones on the list-but a favorite

ONLINE GAMES

Research on the efficacy of online "brain training" games is in early stages

* For some games, research is exploring if the game is improving executive functioning or just making kids better at the game.

Research has found that playing games may protect against cognitive decline in older adults.

Many games claim to provide therapeutic benefits for executive functioning

* FDA approved brain training game for ADHD EndeavorRX

Research the efficacy of the game before assigning it; pair it with other evidenced-based interventions.

* Look for research that compares actual pre/post-assessments for symptoms, not just reaction speeds, etc

ARE THERE ANY OTHER GAMES YOU USE FOR PLANNING, ATTENTION, OR IMPULSE CONTROL?

BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION

BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION

Identify:

- Which is the target behavior
- Which is the desired behavior
- Use the game to facilitate the intervention through either
 - Practice
 - Reinforcement

BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION

Playing board games may be a helpful way to practice:

- Using coping strategies
- Staying on task
- Communication
- Following directions
- Social skills-we'll talk about this more later ☺

Think of the task first; what are we trying to change and how can board games help us to facilitate that change?

BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION

Collect data:

- During a 15 minute board game, client left the game 4 times.
- During a 10 minute board game, client had 1 tantrum

As these moments happen, use them as an opportunity to discuss why the behavior was inappropriate and what you would like them to do differently.

PRAISE when you catch them staying on task or see improvement week-by-week.

Follow-up after the game:

- I saw you used lemon squeezes when you lost that turn! How did that work out for you?

BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION

Reinforcement

Games may be reinforcing for kids.

- Give them opportunities to earn PREFERRED games.

If you only have chess and the kid hates chess, what incentive do they have to complete the task?

BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION

Reinforcement

Opportunities may be:

- Complete all goals for session and earn 10 minutes of game time.
- Complete goal identified by parents (ex. turn all homework in without being asked), choose the game of the session.
- Stay on task during therapy exercise, earn a round of battleship

Ask the client to choose their reward.

BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION

[Kingdomino](#)

15 minutes of play

Tile drafting and placement game

Listening, taking turns, following directions.



BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION

[Code Names](#) or [Code Names Online](#)

15 minutes of play

Listening, communication, staying on task

Facilitating therapeutic discussion on communication

BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION

Love Letter

Card game

• Also a Batman version

10-15 minutes of play

Coping with goals being thwarted, taking turns, honesty

• If client did not tell the truth about their secret card, it is easy to deduce and gives opportunity to have a conversation about honesty and fairness.

WHAT GAMES HAVE YOU FOUND TO BE HELPFUL IN
BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION?

BEHAVIOR ACTIVATION

BEHAVIOR ACTIVATION

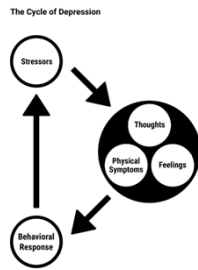
Depression can lead to anhedonia

BA is engaging in productive or pleasurable activities
 despite depression

Breaks the cycle of depression

Insert Hayley's explanation here.

BA interventions often take place outside of session



BEHAVIOR ACTIVATION GAMES

Pokémon Go

Phone app

Catch Pokémon, battle, and hatch eggs

Exercise!

Go outside!

BEHAVIOR ACTIVATION GAMES

Pikmin Bloom

Phone app

Walk to grow more Pikmin

Plant flowers

See the flowers you plant along your walk in the virtual map

Exercise!

Go outside!

BEHAVIOR ACTIVATION GAMES

Encourage clients to:

Play with friends online

- Be careful to discuss pro-social ways to engage with friends

Go to game nights

- Edmond Unplugged D&D nights for kids
- Making friends, prosocial behaviors, social skills, etc

WHAT ARE OTHER WAYS YOU CAN USE GAMES TO ENCOURAGE BEHAVIOR ACTIVATION?

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Research suggests incorporating games in therapy may be helpful in [cultivating interpersonal skills](#).

Using board games to explore:

- Communication Skills
- Prosocial Behaviors
- Parental Involvement

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Communication strategies

- Assertiveness
- Prosocial communication
- Collaborative problem solving
- Paraphrasing and reflecting
- Active listening

Prosocial behaviors

- Losing and winning graciously
- Receiving and giving directions respectfully

Teach the skill first. Then use board games to facilitate practice.

ASSERTIVENESS, PRO-SOCIAL BEHAVIORS, AND COOPERATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

Cooperative Games

Share one common goal-everyone wins or loses as a team.

Individual counseling or group counseling settings.

- In individual counseling: therapist and client work together

Encourage use of communication skills while playing

ASSERTIVENESS, PRO-SOCIAL BEHAVIORS, AND COOPERATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

Cooperative Games

Encourage each player to partake in the game

- Use assertiveness skills to identify and discuss which route the team should take.
- Opportunity to redirect a child who is being too passive or too aggressive in the collaboration.

Allow for client(s) to engage in problem solving strategies to meet the goal.

- Allowing clients to rely on others to meet the goal.

Gives opportunities to facilitate discussion

- The therapist "messed up" and cost the team a point. What kinds of skills can they use to address this?

COOPERATIVE GAMES

Verbal:

[Escape: The Curse of the Temple](#)

Timed at 10 minutes

Roll dice to get the tools needed to gather treasure and escape from a cursed temple

Communicating for help, collaborating on a shared goal, problem solving

Can be used in individual or group work

COOPERATIVE GAMES

Verbal:

[Hanabi](#) or [Hanabi Online](#)

Collect elaborate fireworks to hold a display fit for an emperor!

Players cannot see their own cards-but you can see others' cards

Good for group communication, collaboration, and discussion

COOPERATIVE GAMES

Non-Verbal:

The Mind

Card game

Players cannot verbally communicate-AT ALL

Have a hand of cards with numbers ranging from 1-100

Must empty their hands by playing their cards in order, without speaking

Body language, impulse control, cooperation

PARAPHRASING, REFLECTING, AND ACTIVE LISTENING

Active listening

Games in which the rules or winning conditions change

• Like our old friend Blank

Paraphrasing and Reflecting

Games that include discussion topics

PARAPHRASING, REFLECTING, AND ACTIVE LISTENING

Fluxx

Card game

Rules of the game and win conditions change CONSTANTLY

Paying attention, listening, coping with thwarted goals, etc

PARAPHRASING, REFLECTING, AND ACTIVE LISTENING

How Do You See the World?

Open-ended questions ranging from surface level to deep.

Use for group or family therapy

Clients listen to the other participants' answers and use paraphrasing and reflecting skills to respond.

- How can someone make you feel special?
- How does your past influence your future?

Can also be used for rapport building

PARAPHRASING, REFLECTING, AND ACTIVE LISTENING

Describe Cards

Players draw an adjective and answer questions associated with the adjective

Clients listen to the other participants' answers and use paraphrasing and reflecting skills to respond.

- Helpful:
 - In what ways can a person be helpful?
 - Tell about a time that you were helpful
 - Describe how you feel when others are helpful to you

Rules have ideas for other activities as well

GAMES IN FAMILY THERAPY

WHAT GAMES HAVE YOU USED IN FAMILY THERAPY?

GAMES IN FAMILY THERAPY

Display understanding of counseling intervention to parents

Teach parents to model counseling intervention

- Maybe pick up on some learned behaviors

Encourage positive social interaction with parents

GAMES IN FAMILY THERAPY

Use as homework:

- Rewarding children with game time
- Giving opportunities for parents to reinforce coping strategies
- Model pro-social behaviors
- Positive attention from parents

GAMES IN FAMILY THERAPY

Ice Cool

Dexterity game

Flick little penguins across the board to meet their goals

Awesome because kids often have better dexterity than parents.

• Really get to see what behaviors parents are modeling for their kids

GAMES FOR FAMILY HOMEWORK

Child appropriate board games

Ticket to Ride: First Journey

Playtime is 15-30 minutes

Ages 6+

Turn based game

Collect cards to build routes

Practice: taking turns, using coping strategies when play is thwarted, winning/losing graciously, positive attention

GAMES FOR FAMILY HOMEWORK

Cobra Paw

10-15 minute play time

Ages 6+

Players look for matching dominos to grab before their opponents

Practice: taking turns, using coping strategies when desired piece is taken, winning/losing graciously, positive attention

GAMES FOR FAMILY HOMEWORK

Games can be expensive.

Day passes to board game shops

Local libraries

Online versions of board games through [Tabletopia](#) or [Board Game Arena](#)

WHAT ARE OTHER GAMES THAT MAY BE GOOD HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS?

MORE GAMES FOR THE SHELF

MORE GAMES FOR THE SHELF

Number 9

Simultaneous play

Everyone has the same numbers to play at the same time

Stack the numbers to get the most points

Dexterity, problem solving

MORE GAMES FOR THE SHELF

3 Laws of Robotics

Card game

Everyone knows your alliance-you don't know your own

Group or family game

Communication, collaboration, kind words

MORE GAMES FOR THE SHELF

Back to Back Drawing

Individual or Group Activity

One person gives instructions for the other participant(s) to draw

Can use worksheets on therapistaid.com or make up your own

Communication, listening, paying attention, following and giving directions

CONCLUSION

Board games may be helpful in [developing rapport](#).

Utilizing board games [may be helpful in increasing motivation](#) to engage in learning.

Facilitating learning through games may [improve attention control and improve knowledge retention](#).

Think of the intervention first; then consider how board games may help.

As with any intervention, find a way to collect data so you know if the intervention is helpful or not.

I KNOW I'VE MISSED SOMETHING.
WHAT ARE SOME OTHER GAMES YOU HAVE USED IN
THERAPY?

QUESTIONS?

THANKS FOR NERDING OUT WITH ME

www.edmondcounseling.com
www.malthausgames.com