

INTEGRITY AND THE GAMES OF LIFE

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1. Life consists of games.
2. The anatomy of a game is a barrier to be overcome, with the outcome unpredictable.
3. If the outcome is predictable, it is not a game.
4. Games provide the challenges that test and strengthen our purpose and give us a sense of accomplishment.
5. We all need games—everyone plays them.
6. The anatomy of a problem is similar to the anatomy of a game. The difference is that a problem includes some denial of responsibility. That's what makes it a problem.
7. Responsibility is the ability to appropriately and constructively respond (versus react) to what is.
8. If we think playing the game (or having the problem) is up to someone else, we are playing the role of victim.
9. There are no victims, only volunteers.
10. When we are lacking in games, we will create problems in their stead (if we are being irresponsible and blaming) and act like a victim.
11. No one can solve anyone else's problem.
12. If we try to solve someone else's problem, the person will resist our solution and resent us.
13. There are all kinds and sizes of games (and problems).
14. Growth is about shifting from old games to bigger and more productive games.
15. Each game has its own rules.
16. If we want to play a game, we need to learn (or create) the rules of that game.
17. Wanting the benefits of the game without a willingness to play by its rules is arrogant, alienating, frustrating to all parties, and always unproductive.
18. If we don't like the rules or the game, we need to responsibly change them, or find or create another game.
19. We and no one else chooses whether we play.

20. Not making a choice is a choice.
21. Control is the ability to start, change or continue, and stop or complete the game (or problem) under one's own determination.
22. Power is both the ability and the willingness to act.
23. We can't be truly powerful without being responsible.
24. Integrity is the spontaneous assumption of responsibility.
25. Without integrity, we have neither control nor power and, as compensation, will attempt to have "control over" and "power over" others, overtly or covertly, or be "the victim" of someone else's games.
26. Games lacking integrity are always destructive—there are no exceptions.
27. Integrity trumps contemporary social mores and political considerations.
28. Sometimes, acts of integrity are interpreted as a threat to current values and vested interests. Consequently, they may be subject to rejection or attack.
29. An integral part of integrity is courage—the willingness to face one's fears and still act responsibly.
30. At any moment, we have integrity or we do not. There is no middle ground.
31. The measure of our integrity is the measure of who and what we are.
32. With integrity, we are whole. Without integrity, we are significantly less than we can be.
33. There is nothing more important than our integrity.

Thus, we may want to consider:

- What games are we playing?
- How are they really contributing beyond ego gratification?
- Are they hurting anyone?
- How do we rationalize that hurt?
- What games do we truly want to play?
- What games don't we want to play?
- What games are we willing to start, change, continue or stop and do so with integrity, courage and intention?

Tomorrow is always tomorrow. To put power back into our lives, we need to start now!

When the one great scorer comes to write your name, he marks not that you won or lost, but how you played the game. —Grantland Rice