

## **The Talking, Feeling, and Doing Game For ages 5–16 An Instrument for Engaging the Resistant Child in Meaningful Psychotherapeutic Endeavors**

- HIGHLIGHTS** · Predictably engages resistant and inhibited children
- Excellent complement to The Storytelling Card Game
  - Serves as point of departure for psychotherapeutic interchanges

In a procedure based on standard board game play, the child and adult place their playing pieces at START, each in turn throws the dice, and moves a pawn along a path of squares. Depending upon the color of the square on which the piece lands, the player selects a TALKING CARD, FEELING CARD, or DOING CARD.

The questions and directions in each set of cards range from the least anxiety provoking (“How old are you?”) to the moderately anxiety provoking (“Everyone in the class was laughing at a child. What had happened?”).

If the child responds they receive a token reward chip. The winner is the player who has accumulated the most chips after the players have reached FINISH.

The child’s responses are generally revealing of those psychological issues that are most important at that time. The information so gained serves as a point of departure for meaningful psychotherapeutic interchanges with the child and guides the therapist in providing responses to his (her) own cards that would be most pertinent to the patient.

The engaging game format utilizing token reinforcement enhances the child’s interest and elicits spontaneous revelations. The information gained provides diagnostically meaningful insights into the child’s psychodynamics and is of therapeutic value because each response can serve as a catalyst for therapeutic interchanges. The game is of value in group psychotherapy (with up to 4-5 players), in the treatment of children with learning disabilities (because many of the cards are particularly applicable to these children’s problems), and with children who can reveal themselves more freely but who may also need a respite from more anxiety-provoking therapeutic endeavors.

The Talking, Feeling, & Doing Game, by Richard A. Gardner, has been utilized as an effective play therapy tool since 1973. Young children do not have the emotional nor verbal capacity to express their feelings in a traditional therapy setting. Play therapy games, such as the Talking, Feeling & Doing Game, facilitate the exchange of important psychological information from child to therapist. (October 12, 2012 Gary Yorke)