

# HAPPY FAMILY

*Parenting  
through  
Family Rituals*

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**Premission Group Therapy**

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PEARL DREGO

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To

*Oswald Summerton*

*my friend and colleague*

*who has given healthy permissions*

*to hundreds of clients*

*and who taught us to be permission therapists*

*in the finest therapeutic traditions of*

*Bernian psychotherapy.*

***Happy Family — Parenting through Family Rituals***  
with 16 Family Ritual Cards

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## *Introduction*

Families today are facing such a bombardment from television, videos, music shows, and public entertainment packages, that the usual family get-togethers, family leisure time and prayer time have been reduced to a minimum. This first book of permission rituals with permission cards is meant to help the family spend time together, remain in psychological contact with each other and fulfil the main purpose for which the family exists — providing mutual love and support for each member. Parents who have had unresolved difficulties in childhood can make up for it by asking their children to give them positive messages, without turning the children into their caretakers. The demand to have a long-term relationship of caring for one's parents causes deep damage and denies the child its right to be taken care of. Such a child becomes a caretaker before becoming an adult and is therefore robbed of its childhood. A person's lost childhood knocks on the window of consciousness and demands healing when the person grows up and has children. So this book of permission rituals and cards, is as much for the lost inner child of the parents as for their actual children. Each member has rights and can ask for any of the permission cards to be read to her or him.

The main ritual presented in this book is for each member of the family to read the permission to other



members of the family. The family may chose one permission per month to be read once a week or one permission per week to be read once every day. The ritual begins in a circle. The first card is taken and the youngest member of the family sits in the middle of the family circle, either around a table or on the floor, in any suitable space. Phones need to be put off the hook and visitors kept away. The choice of time and place is important for keeping the core family's boundary. The exercise needs to be done first in the nuclear family, that is mother, father and children, including adopted children. Then, at other times, members living with the family, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and servants should be included.

The permission ritual is a deep emotional experience and needs to be done in an atmosphere similar to that of a puja, a meditation, or a birth process. Laughing, teasing or jibing with any of the permissions will harm the family members and require a process of making amends for the offence. The permissions are all necessary for the growth of a healthy human being. Their absence leads to disharmony and distress, to conflict and division.

Permissions are usually given in healthy families during the course of life while daily events take place and life unfolds for each new addition to the original union. The permissions are the foundation of psychosocial health and have a variety of cultural nuances and variations. However the basic messages are the same for all humans, irrespective of colour, caste, religion or social grouping.

The permissions create the psychological atmosphere or family womb in which the members live, grow, heal and are daily nourished. The ritual of giving permissions is a reminder of what is at the foundation of human life and so daily interactions in the family need to match and

mirror the depth of the permissions. Performing the ritual without meaning it and without living it at other times, will rob it of its beauty and soul.

Permission rituals will not automatically wipe away rivalry, competition, jealousy and misunderstanding from family life. They will minimize family disharmony and create an atmosphere for creative problem solving and open discussion about the tensions being faced by a family.

In case all family members are not interested in attending the permission ritual, this should not stop two or more of the family members from doing the ritual without the others, leaving the others free to attend whenever they are ready. Children below the age of four can be present and join in. Children four and above have found that they can understand and participate.

The rituals are useful for physically and mentally handicapped children. The permission cards help members to feel good about themselves and to deal with social stigmas. You are who you think you are, and the rituals are designed to help you think well of you and your family, no matter what the disasters and deprivations your family has to undergo.

If a member of the family is alcoholic or seriously dysfunctional, the family members may protect themselves by doing the rituals without that person. Children of such a family need permission to have at least two guardians, relatives, grown-up friends, pastors, gurus, counsellors or teachers, with whom they can safely talk over their deepest feelings and family experiences without being exploited.

This book covers fourteen important messages that children need. The messages are supportive of life and growth. They give a child good feelings about self and others, providing guidelines for social interaction. There



are many other permissions required for healthy parenting and each family can search for the special ones needed at different times.

The fourteen important messages covered in this volume are as follows :

<i>Permission to exist</i>	to preserve life.
<i>Permission to be oneself</i>	to be the sex one is.
<i>Permission to be a child</i>	to have joy in life.
<i>Permission to grow</i>	to be the age one is.
<i>Permission to make it</i>	to succeed.
<i>Permission to be important</i>	to have a sense of self-worth.
<i>Permission to be close</i>	to trust.
<i>Permission to belong</i>	to have a place, and a people.
<i>Permission to be well</i>	to be healthy.
<i>Permission to be sane</i>	to be in touch with reality.
<i>Permission to think</i>	to express thoughts.
<i>Permission to feel</i>	to express feelings safely.
<i>Permission to be holy</i>	to be spiritual.
<i>Permission to fight for justice</i>	to take a stand.

**Permission has a special meaning in this book. It refers to an action of empowering and nurturing which is at the core of parenting.** A permission is a freedom that helps a child to grow towards autonomy and self-actualization. It is experienced in the body, the mind and the soul. With permission comes energy to exist, to sustain relationships, to take part in social events, to be successful at work, to love and be loved, as well as to survive calamities and crises. Children with psychological problems usually suffer from the absence of permissions. When a permission is absent the person receives what is



called an injunction, as in the case of an infant who gets the message, "We really wanted you two years later, not now." This is an **operative injunction**, Don't Exist. The **reverse injunction** is the permission taken to extremes. It compels the child to live intensely and challenge death with an exciting life which feels real precisely because of its daring closeness to collapse.

Permissions are the natural outcome of true human loving and so they cannot be forced on children. A parent should not give a permission in order to gain control over a child or force the child to study. Any secret wish of making children perform beyond their capacities through the use of the permission cards will defeat the very purpose of the rituals. Loading a child with expectations of school performance and impeccable behaviour is psychologically harmful to healthy development. Children need firm, loving parenting transactions which do not shame or humiliate them. They need many opportunities to explain their actions and to defend themselves before being criticized. Otherwise they become secretive, hostile, and depressed. Parents who are excessively indulgent and at other times excessively controlling need to get help from a counselor before attempting the rituals. Permissions need to be given with an attitude of love, not an attitude of control or bargaining. Parents who claim to know what their children feel and think, who expect children to have the self-control of adults, who abuse children physically or verbally, who agitate over every mistake their child makes, should first get therapy for themselves before using the permission cards in the family before taking up the permission cards. Parents need to make a spiritual commitment to stop punitive silence, abusive scolding, beating, hitting, screaming, seductive cajoling, threatening, teasing and shaming. Genuine permissions require perseverance, patience, love, kindness, compassion and

protection. Permission language is "can", rather than "have to" or "ought to". Before starting the rituals, parents need to be familiar with the fourteen permissions, help each other identify their own injunctions through the **Drego Injunction Scale**, and have a family meeting in which they get their children's consent to begin the permission card therapy. Sections of chapter two can be read to the children in preparation for the rituals.

The first twelve permissions are well established in the practice of transactional analysts. I have added the last two keeping in mind the current world ethos. There is a new emphasis in psychotherapy on social and spiritual issues which fits our Indian traditions of spirituality and justice. The fourteen family ritual cards presented here correspond to the fourteen main permissions. The accompanying minor permissions on each card are related to items on the injunction scale. They are translations of the Hindi injunctions and permissions used in the Injunction Scale research.



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## *The Fourteen Permissions*

### **Permission Card 1. You Have a Right to Exist**

The permission To Be is related to the fundamental choice for life and living. It encompasses an unconditional acceptance of being versus non-being, life versus death. This is the foundational experience of the human infant, born into relationship, and created in relationship. The infant's capacity to experience existence is directly connected with the parents' capacity to be present to the infant, lovingly, warmly, and consistently, in a way that is physically and emotionally understood by the infant.

A child receives this permission when it is wanted in childhood, welcomed at birth, accepted, nourished, celebrated and protected, that is, when it feels free to exist on the earth in safety. It is communicated through touch, sight, sound, physical bonding, physical handling and holding. Parents' attention and acceptance through the months of pregnancy are vital ingredients of this permission. A child gets this permission when it experiences through word and deed that it is loved, wanted, cared for, and caressed by mother and father. Messages such as, "I am so glad you were born," "We were waiting for you to arrive with so much excitement," "Your dad was so happy that he decided to throw a big party



for you," "You are safe and secure," "We wanted a girl and you came to us," "We love you very much," "We are here for you," "We are so happy to see you," "Your life is precious," "Live with zest," "You can protect yourself and we will protect you too," are ways in which the permission You Exist is communicated.

The **operative injunction** Don't Be, or Don't Exist, comes from the absence of this permission and leads to self-negation and self-destructiveness in ways that are suicidal. It may also lead to a fear that someone else is going to die. A child gets this injunction if the discovery of its existence in the womb is met with anxiety, rejection or anger. Any threat to its life in the womb or threat to mother's life, leads to the **operative injunction**. If the child is abandoned at birth, sent away to a foster home, left for long periods in isolation due to mother's illness or other social calamities, the infant is vulnerable to the operation of this injunction. Being told, "I wish you were not born", "Get away", "Get out", "I don't want to see you again", or being locked up, brutally beaten, abused, not being spoken to for long periods of time, all lead to the operation of the Don't Be injunction. The "seventh" child, the "accidentally conceived" child, also gets this injunction. A child who is told, "When you were born your mother almost died", or "Your birth caused much distress to your parents" or "You are a burden to us" receives the injunction Don't Exist. Parents who give violent threats such as "I'll break your head", "I'll kill you if you do that", "I'll break your bones if you do that again", are handing out the Don't Exist injunction, for a child does not have the rational system to know that this threat will not be carried out.

The denied, or **reverse injunction** leads to a compulsion to 'live it up', to live an exciting life, to pay for one's physical survival by overwork or slavery to a cause. Such



a person may become accident prone and boast about the accidents, or constantly bite nails, have falls and regard these as normal or natural. Dangerous sports, dangerous driving, maintaining friendships with dangerous persons, being blind to potential disaster and an overconfidence about safety are other dimensions of the Don't Exist in reverse.

## **Permission Card 2. You Are OK To Be The Sex You Are**

The permission to Be Oneself is related to self-identity, the acceptance of conditional being, the acceptance of one's womanhood or manhood, the self-congruence that enables a person to say, "I am glad to be who I am." This permission is connected with a person's self-esteem and sense of human dignity and worth. It is given through the words, "I'm glad you're a girl," or "I'm glad you're a boy." The feelings of delight and acceptance that are experienced by parents at the sex, size, colour of their infant and the timing of the birth in their family, communicates this permission to the infant: Be You, or You are OK to Be Who You Are.

This permission is given to a child through respect for being a girl or boy. Children who receive this permission are unfettered by stereotypes of masculinity or femininity. They feel free to pursue wholeness of self. They can make choices of work and life-style without guilt or embarrassment. Family and religious influences can confuse parents regarding what is adaptation to gender roles and what comes from a person's own special qualities. Girls can deny their autonomy and boys their affective selves because of gender expectations.

The absence of this permission is seen in the **operative injunction** Don't Be You and leads to disgust and dislike



for one's maleness or femaleness, a desire to be like certain others and a sense of, "I don't like who I am or who I am supposed to be". Women in this mode will bend over backwards to be sacrificing and self-effacing while men will tend to be the centre of attention. If at the time of birth or during childhood parents say to their daughter, "I really wanted a boy", "We would have been happy if you had been a boy", or communicate to their son, "We really wanted a girl", or "Without a son we would have been unfulfilled", they give the children the **operative injunction** Don't Be You. Messages such as "How dirty you are", or "You have to become an engineer", "You must get married", "Why can't you be like your sister?" "Why can't you be like me?" are other examples of the communication of the injunction Don't Be You. "Girls never laugh loudly or disobey", "Girls are always sweet, homely and smiling", "Girls are first meant to be wives and mothers", "Girls are not intellectual", are messages by which the Don't Be You is given to the girl child. The boy child gets the same injunction when he is told, "Men are tough and never give in", "Boys who aren't the best are useless", "Boys are basically mechanical and logical", "Only a man can be the head of the family". The Don't Be You injunction leads to a denial of his true humanity and a compulsion to play the socially expected role of the dominant male.

The denied or **reverse injunction** leads to an exaggerated 'macho' mentality for men and an excessive femininity for women, with a pressure to prove their identity and selfhood. Men in reverse mode of the Don't Be You will give a lot of lip service to gender equality and yet feel threatened when it is implemented. Women may similarly champion gender equality, while at the same time mock men who are changing and undercut women who are free.



### Permission Card 3. You Are OK To Be A Child

The permission to Be A Child is permission to be dependent in a healthy way, to be interdependent, to be able to have fun, to receive, to relax like a child, and to accept being looked after.

It is communicated when a child is free to make mistakes without being severely punished, and without being pushed to act beyond its capacities. This permission allows a child to be selfish in a healthy way. It supports a "being for oneself" in an enlightened and self-respecting manner. Children who are told "Have fun", "You can enjoy your food", "Go and have a good time with your friends", "Come I'll take care of you for a while", "Come I'll give you a massage", "Do you want a hug?" "Of course you can sleep late; today is a holiday", get the permission to Be a Child. Modelling respect for healthy pleasure and entertainment, including physical pleasures such as swimming, eating, sleeping, climbing, etc., communicates this permission. Giving children information on sexuality and letting them feel good about their bodies is part of this permission. Without this permission to Be a Child, a girl becomes a "little mother" and a boy becomes "just like father". Under the influence of the injunction a person will have great difficulty to say "No," to refuse and to rebel. Persons with a lost childhood spent in looking after the other children or after an abandoned, suffering, hysterical, childlike parent are victims of this injunction. It can continue from generation to generation with each new entry having to look after the grown-up parent because he or she was not a child in childhood.

Without this freedom to Be a Child the **operative injunction** Don't Be A Child leads a person to have an excessive unselfishness and a strong desire to look after others; such a person does not feel the right to enjoy life,



to be unique, to have pleasure, to be 'selfish' in a healthy way or ask for outside help. The person will have a craving to be needed. Another characteristic of this injunction is impatience with children. A child who is told, "Stop acting like a baby", "Grow up fast", "Why do you always need me", and who has to do things on its own before it is ready to, gets the injunction Don't Be A Child. A child who is not allowed to be messy, to be childish, to make mistakes and be awkward but instead is expected to know what is right and wrong, how to behave in the presence of visitors, how to dress on its own, operates under the influence of this injunction and will have difficulty relaxing. Such a child will be under pressure to conform socially and be secretive about child needs and fantasies. It will grow up having to be a giver rather than a receiver. Severe humiliation, shaming and physical beating also communicate the Don't Be A Child injunction.

In the denied or **reverse injunction** the person dwells in a state of "perpetual childhood", with an extended dependency on and symbiotic need for others. In reverse mode the person may have an overwhelming love for children and get satisfaction only from relationships with them. The person may be a giver but resent giving, expecting everyone else to be a caretaker. In reverse mode the person likes to be controlled and overpowered by others.

### **Permission Card 4. You Can Grow Up**

The permission to Grow Up is permission to be independent, to be responsible for others, to exercise autonomy, and to be the age one is. A person with this permission takes charge of social situations, is responsive to others' needs, keeps appointments and commitments



and is OK to be accountable for personal and group decisions.

The permission is given when a child is allowed to have its own personal space, to explore, to move out from unwanted dependencies, to develop a 'being for others' and to exercise leadership. Messages such as "We are proud that you can do it on your own", or "I can rely on you", lead to this permission. Being left alone to complete a task rather than being told, "Look, let me help you", enables a child to get this permission to Grow Up and be self-contained. To be told, "You're too small to do it", "You'll always need me", "Be my little darling", or the threat of being unloved if one become self-generative and independent, conveys the injunction Don't Grow Up.

The absence of this freedom leads to the **operative injunction** of Don't Grow Up, an inability to cope on one's own, make independent decisions, look after others competently or be part of public life. A person with this injunction will give up responsibilities halfway and have problems being a parent or caretaker, have an insatiable desire to break free of relationships and will also fear collapse on becoming independent.

The **reverse injunction**, leads to a compulsion to "go it alone" without interference from others, to be in control of others, to feel over responsible for other's responsibilities. Such a person will always want to be in a controlling position for fear that being on the receiving end will expose their vulnerability and put them back into a one-down position.

### **Permission Card 5. You Can Succeed**

The permission to Succeed is the sense of achievement in fulfilling goals and feeling satisfied about what one has accomplished.



It is communicated when authority figures show that they are satisfied with the performance of a child and do not impose expectations that are impossible to fulfill. When a child knows that parents are satisfied with its school reports and other achievements, the child becomes assertive, attempts new tasks with confidence, is willing to move into unknown territory, to take calculated risks and become a happy achiever. Messages such as, "You will make it", "I have confidence in you", "I am satisfied with you", "You've done well", "We are proud of you", "You can make money", "You can be famous", "Cut your losses and move on", "Learn from your mistakes", "Stop criticizing yourself", "Keep at it", "You can enjoy working", communicate the permission to Succeed. Appreciation for what a child has done rather than focusing on what a child has not done develops creative and successful adults. Comparisons are degrading and give the opposite message to what is usually intended.

The absence of this permission is seen in the **operative injunction** of Don't Succeed or Don't Make It, and leads to a dissatisfaction with achievements, an underestimation of capacities, refusal to remain committed to goals, and messing up a job just before or just after it is completed. Being told "I can do it better than you can", or "Let me do it for you", "Why didn't you do it this way?" "Why don't you do it more often?" "Try harder next time", "So what, it's your duty to get a first class anyway", "There's only fun in the struggle, not in the success", "If you succeed, no one will love you", can thrust this injunction on children. Those operating under this injunction may sabotage their own goals, almost reach the top and then have a setback, compulsively go from one achievement to another and feel terrible about the slightest mistake that they make. Perfectionism and over detailing are part of this **operative injunction**. The person labouring under



this injunction can go from job to job, or leave a prosperous job at the peak of success. She or he will have fear of failure or fear of not doing exceptionally well, while in reverse the person has a fear of succeeding.

In the **reverse injunction**, a person has a compulsion to succeed, a blanking out of limitations, mistakes and failures, a desire to accomplish the most difficult tasks. A person in this mode remains worried about unfinished tasks, does not like anything incomplete and only respects very high levels of success and accomplishment. Such persons yearn to associate with those whom society designates as successful. Those who compulsively make more and more money and want more and more power have the injunction in reverse.

### **Permission Card 6. You Are Important**

The permission to Be Important brings an inner sense of worth and self-esteem.

Importance is communicated when a child feels that it is special in the eyes of parents, when its needs are given priority, when it is not placed under obligations and is allowed to assert its rights. Messages such as "You are important to me", "You are special to me", "Your needs are important in this family", "We will stop having visitors during your exams", "You can choose how you will spend your holidays", give a child a sense of self-importance. A child with this permission has no problems performing in public, posing before a camera, meeting strangers, accepting important roles, or being of help behind the scenes. A girl with this permission can challenge gender oppression in society and demand her rights as a person without feeling guilt or diffidence, without being overly aggressive and hostile. A boy with this permission has an inner dignity that prevents him



from feeling like a slave when doing household tasks such as cooking, sweeping, cleaning, dishwashing and serving guests. His sense of inner importance helps him to challenge the false social stigmas attached to household chores. He will do them not as a favour to his mother, sister, wife, or daughter, but as part of a human being's important living tasks. Those who enjoy permission to Be Important can do the ordinary commonplace work to keep a family or organization going without complaints or resentment, and without looking for public approval.

In the absence of this freedom, the **operative injunction** Don't Be Important is conveyed, by which a person develops a low image of self, a desire to withdraw from attention, and a discomfort when importance is given freely. A child gets this injunction when he or she is left aside, forgotten at important moments of family history, or gets lost in the business of family problems; also when parents constantly put their own needs first and do not even apologize if a child has been neglected or slighted. If family life does not revolve around the children they do not feel recognized and acknowledged. A child who is told, "Don't think too much of yourself", "Who the hell do you think you are?" or "You're a nobody", "You come from an unimportant family", "You come from the slums", "You should be ashamed of your parents", "Keep quiet", "You are a bad influence on the others," gets the Don't Be Important injunction.

In denial, the **reverse injunction** leads to a domineering attitude, and to an emphasis on external factors like age, status, caste, income, dominance. In order to maintain self-importance, the person in reverse mode shifts loyalties to whoever seems to be the locus of organizational or social power and feels important through an emphasis on roles, national identities, and institutional affiliations. The person takes offense at imagined grievances and is



easily hurt, yet refuses to acknowledge his or her own offending actions.

### **Permission Card 7. You Can Be Close**

The permission to Be Close gives the ability to experience unconditional trust in appropriate relationships, to have the capacity to be affectionate, loving and intimate in healthy ways. A person with this permission can be separate from loved ones without pain and can enjoy the freedom of being alone. She or he can be close to God and nature, as well as close to children who are not related by blood ties.

Closeness is a freedom that has to be modelled and encouraged by parents. Closeness develops when a family has a hugging culture, gives lots of appreciation to children, and spends festival times celebrating together. Parental bonding in infancy is crucial to the development of healthy closeness where a child is unashamed of needing love and knows how to ask for and receive love. Messages like, "I know you will remain faithful to me", "I trust you", "I'm with you even when I am busy with something else", "I will never run away from you", "You can have close friends", "You can break a one-sided relationship and feel OK", "You can let go of friends who no longer behave like friends", are ways in which the Be Close permission is communicated. A person with this permission can keep boundaries and say, "This far and no further," without being obliged to another person. Healthy intimacy helps a child to explore friendships outside the family, to learn about different kinds of people and different levels of closeness, to learn to trust feelings of discomfort with certain persons and to disengage when closeness has the slightest whiff of being predatory. If parents separate or are divorced, indicate



that closeness is undignified and dangerous, or remain married as a façade but do not heal the marriage relationship, then children pick up the message that closeness is difficult, and that it brings hurt, pain, exploitation and distress.

Without this permission children receive the **operative injunction** of Don't Be Close. Persons with this injunction will break primary ties on the one hand, and will trust people who betray them on the other. Those under the operation of this injunction are more loving when far away than when close. Messages like, "Don't come near me", "You're so repulsive", "Who would want you as a friend?" "I can never trust you", "You will betray me some day", "You are an ungrateful child", are vehicles for the Don't Be Close. Children who are constantly beaten, scolded or cuttingly criticized develop a way of getting close to people by attracting criticism, by playing games of Kick Me or Reject Me. They will keep bonds with others through owing money and books or through unfulfilled promises. Without this permission a person will hang on for months and even years to relationships that have broken, in the hope that the original paradise will come again. Persons with this injunction have their own inner codes by which they conclude that someone else does or does not love them. Separation is a problem for these persons, who labour under the fear that someday soon the person they love will leave them. Yet when the person they love is present or available, the person in a Don't Be Close does not have time for the loved one.

In denial, in the **reverse injunction**, a person may be uncommitted though at the same time intense in a relationship, experiencing intimacy as "nothing much". Persons in this mode would be inordinately jealous of those who are popular and who appear to be the target of lots of love and affection. Persons in this mode could



get attached to motherly or fatherly figures with the ostensible purpose of being helpful. Men who need to be useful and protective towards women in order to love them, would be examples of the reverse Don't Be Close. Sometimes, a person in reverse mode will feel obliged to enter into bodily closeness at the slightest feelings of attraction for another person, or feel obliged to get sexually close in order to get permissions for being and importance. Some even get married at the onset of infatuation when in the reverse Don't Be Close.

### **Permission Card 8. You Belong With Us**

The permission to Belong is the sense of rootedness and security in a group, be it a partnership, a family, a school or a nation.

It is found in the affective belongingness that comes from 'being owned' by parents and authority figures, from being accepted as a 'person in community'. Belongingness is connected with a person's affiliation needs and social identity. The words "You are a part of us", "You belong to us", give a child the capacity to Belong. Children who know that they were born from their mothers' bodies, who know that they are born out of the love of their parents for each other, who feel included in family decisions and affairs, get a strong feeling of belongingness.

Without this experience, they get the **operative injunction** of Don't Belong, an unfreedom that makes a child feel uprooted and an outsider. If a child is told that he or she is different in colour, size, height, cleverness, good performance, etc., the child is made to feel excluded, or the odd one out. Threats of being sent away and actually being sent away to live with relatives or in hostels, lead to the **operative injunction** Don't Belong. "Get out of this house", "I will send you to your



grandmother's house", "We can do without you in the family", "You are the cause of all our troubles", "We don't want you with us", "Go away", "You're the only stupid one in this family", are harsh messages which communicate the Don't Belong injunction.

Denial or the **reverse injunction** leads to a compulsion to be the centre of a group, a desire to get rid of others, an attitude of "I'll belong no matter how I am treated", wanting to join exclusive clubs and networks, and adapting to the expectations of others in order to belong. Such a person in reverse mode is likely to refuse new members joining the group, create cliques and yet give the appearance of not caring about what the group means to him or her. At times they may threaten to leave the group to get others to own them.

### **Permission Card 9. You Can Be Healthy**

The permission to Be Well supports the experience of physical well-being together with a sense of strength in the body to handle physical changes and climatic extremes. It helps a child to heal quickly, to recover from strain, and to feel physically sound. Those with a Be Well permission take care of the body, take action when there is pain or discomfort, and are OK with daily routines of washing, cleaning and eating. They have the strength to refuse unhealthy food and practices. The permission to Be Well enables a person to get help in time, for example, by going to a doctor, and have the freedom to make decisions about the body rather than have others decide what is good and fitting.

The permission Be Well is given by parental figures modelling good health, vitality and a routine that generates a sense of being well-fed, well-rested and full of energy. It is given when children who are healthy get



more attention than children who are sick. Messages such as, "You look good", "You are well", "You bounce back to health", "Eat well", "You are OK to feel tired", give permission to Be Well.

The absence of this permission, the **operative injunction** Don't Be Well, leads to a feeling of having something wrong with oneself, to chronic aches and pains, vulnerability to disease, fear of the evil eye causing illness, and long delay in physical cures. A person without the freedom to Be Well will think it necessary to be sick in order to get attention, to escape from heavy duties, get free time, earn rest, or avoid work. The right to say "no" is replaced by "I would say yes, but I'm too sick to do it". When parents are over-attentive to children who are sickly or handicapped the other children get this injunction. Some children only get reassurance that they are loved when they are sick. That is the time some parents stop all pressures and expectations, criticisms and tasks, in order to focus on the child's getting well. Children who are given a lot of presents during illness, lots of anxiety over the slightest symptom of disease, get the injunction. Under the operation of the Don't Be Well a person will only rest when sick or in pain.

Denial of this, the **reverse injunction** leads to health addicts and health fads, cure fetishes and fixation on certain remedies as the only way to cure. A person may also deny the experience of pain or illness and refuse medical help and healing. In reverse mode, any pain or physical distress is regarded as a sign of disease.

### **Permission Card 10. You Can Be Sane**

The permission to Be Sane is the experience of mental and emotional integration, stability and flexibility. It is the source of sanity, of coherence in thought and action.



It provides an ability to respond to reality in an objective way that is fulfilling and satisfying to the inner core of a human person.

The permission requires consistent and supportive parenting, the giving of information at various ages and stages of a child's life, an absence of heavy discounting, an acceptance that life has problems which can be solved, and a sense of optimism about problems being solved. It is given through parenting that avoids extremes and finds a balance between firmness and flexibility. "You can solve your problems", "You can heal no matter how deeply you have been hurt", "Do not collude with persecutors", "Keep your boundaries", "You can ask for protection from teasing and put-downs", "If you don't like to be touched you can say 'no'", "are ways that the permission to Be Sane is communicated. Children who are told, "You're crazy", "Nobody likes you", "Someone will catch you if you go in the dark", "You'll end up in the madhouse", or who one day are told to study and the next day are told to go to sleep on time, get the Don't Be Sane injunction. Brutal beatings, violent mood swings of a parent, throwing a child into a panic, destroying a precious toy, starving as a form of punishment, denying the child a promise after building up the expectation of that promise, having an exaggerated interpretation of a child's simple failings, accusing a child of lying, are other ways that this injunction is thrust on the growing offspring.

In the absence of the permission, the **operative injunction** of Don't Be Sane leads to irrational deviations in the process of life, inconsistent and unpredictable behaviour, a deep insecurity about one's sanity, fear of others being vindictive, a sense of being out of control and of being vulnerable to the emotional environment. The person will also tend to be unaware of reality



situations and uncomfortable with intellectual qualities in others.

The denial of the injunction, the **reverse injunction**, leads to rigidity in outlook, defences against recognizing problems and identifying options for change, a refusal to solve problems, rigid discipline, an excessive desire to be in positions of control in relationships, and a fear of creativity and wildness. A person in this mode may be attracted to people who have mental problems and create situations to escalate those problems. The Connection in the alcoholic game who provides money or information to the alcoholic, is likely to be in this mode; so also the person in a group who 'forgets' to do something, is aggressively passive, or holds on to information in a way that leads the group into serious conflicts.

### **Permission Card 11. You Can Think**

The permission to Think is the ability to trust one's thoughts, to process information in a healthy way, to communicate, discriminate and make assessments.

It is given when parents respect the thinking, the questions and the ideas of their children; when children are allowed to form their own opinions, to challenge what they are told, to explore new information, and to have their thoughts and judgments respected. Children who are given appreciation for the subjects they are good at, who are allowed to enter discussions with grownups, who are encouraged to write and recite, get permission to think. Messages such as "You are clever", "What a good idea", "You have an amazing head", "I'm proud of your answers", "That's brilliant", give a child confidence about its thinking.

In the absence of this permission, the **operative injunction** is Don't Think, by which a person feels

disjointed, has contradictory thought processes, overemphasizes one part of information and blanks out others, misrepresents or distorts facts and draws irrational conclusions. The person may also tend to be confused and unable to think, especially when under any form of pressure. Messages such as "What an idiot you are", "Your head is filled with rubbish", "You have no brains at all", "What a stupid thing to do", "Don't you have any memory", are vehicles of this injunction. If a child comes to a rational conclusion that is true but the parent is embarrassed at the child's ability to think, and discredits the child's conclusion, the Don't Think is in operation in the parent.

The denial in the **reverse injunction** leads to overthinking, to a grandiose perception of one's thinking abilities, a flow of new ideas without system in them, a distrust of other people's ideas, and a tendency to explain in detail as though others are slow in thinking.

### **Permission Card 12. You Can Have Feelings**

The permission to Feel is the ability to feel one's feelings and sensations, to express one's feelings and have control over the expression. Feelings have bodily and behavioural components and need to be taught and validated.

This freedom is given when parents respect the feelings of their children letting them feel what they feel, and allow the expression of these in safe ways; for example, by allowing them to cry and stop crying, to be angry without hurting self or others, to express joy rather than hide it, to feel scared without teasing them, and without expecting them to be brave beyond their age. Children need to be introduced to the names of feelings. "You are OK to be angry. Express it safely such as by



beating on these cushions or going onto the terrace to shout it out", "You can tell me when you are scared", "You can cry; it is human to cry; I cry too when I feel sad", are ways by which children can feel good about feelings rather than be ashamed or confused about them.

The absence of this freedom, the **operative injunction** Don't Feel, leads to conversion of feelings into bodily symptoms, blanking out of true feelings, covering up anger with anxiety or sadness, covering up fear with anger, discomfort if others are expressing feelings, and an ulterior relief when others have emotional outbursts. Children who are told, "You're not angry, you're tired", "Anger is a sin", "What a cry-baby", "Feelings don't exist", "Smile when you're sad", "Stop sulking and be happy", "If you laugh you will cry", begin to suppress their feelings. Parents who keep a poker face when feelings are called for, model this injunction of suppressing the experience or the expression of feelings.

The denial of this permission is the **reverse injunction** of Don't Feel which leads to explosive expression of emotions, escalation of feelings, a sense of not being able to control one's feelings, and of feeling other people's feelings with intensity. In reverse mode the person may express the feelings with exaggerated volume and at inappropriate moments; or may deny having feelings, yet enjoy theatrical performance where they are expressed in stylized forms. They prefer to act out their feelings on stage rather than trust themselves to do so in real life.

### **Permission Card 13. You Are Holy**

The permission to Be Holy relates to children's ability to acknowledge the spiritual depth of their existence and their spiritual interconnectedness with nature and other human beings.



The source of this permission lies in the child's experience of parents' respect for what is mystical and of the heart. Children participate in their parents' holiness. They learn to be unashamed of their own grasp of beauty in nature and vastness in space if grownups listen attentively to their questions, doubts, and feelings of wonder about the sacred sphere of life.

This permission is received when the child realizes that its goodness is beyond their parents' control. It gives them a dignity and self-esteem that is experienced at the core of their being, a dignity that cannot be overcome by shame or rejection. Such respect for inner and outer sacred experience encourages respect for the different spiritual traditions of other families. "You are created by God", "You are God's gift to us", "I have faith that God is guiding you", "I am praying for you", "God loves you", "There are different paths to the truth", "Miracles do happen", "No one has power over your soul", are some of the messages through which the permission to be holy is communicated.

The absence of this freedom brings the **operative injunction**, Don't Be Holy, which makes children believe that they are inherently bad, unlovable, unholy and deformed. This injunction leads a person to feel deep shame, isolation, futility and meaninglessness in life. Under this injunction one can do a lot of good to others without feeling centered at the core of one's being.

The denial of this permission, the **reverse injunction** leads to fundamentalist attitudes, rigidity in religious beliefs, intolerance and competitiveness, as well as a compulsion to turn others around to a specific world view. The compulsion to save others by forcing them to worship God, and a preoccupation with sin and punishment, is another outcome of the denial of this permission.



## Permission Card 14. You Can Fight For Justice

The permission to Fight for Justice is the conviction that one cannot remain an idle witness of another's suffering. It empowers a child to take active part in the creation of a new social order.

This permission is present in the family's finding solutions for social problems that may not affect the family directly, but do affect others. Signing a memorandum, having a healthy opinion about the political situation, or about caste, race, ethnic issues, becomes possible when the family environment is such that a person can voice a social judgement and be heard. This includes the permission to criticize and to suggest alternatives when appropriate. Messages such as, "I agree with you that this is unfair", "I want you to stand up for yourself", "Don't take that lying down", "You can stand up for your friends", "I will protect you", "You can change things", give this permission.

The absence of this permission leads to the **operative injunction** Don't Change the World which means that we should leave things as they are and get on with our own lives irrespective of what is happening in the neighbourhood, the country or the world. In this scenario, those who are harming the earth or its peoples get away with what they are doing and are not held accountable for their action. Children who present challenges or resist injustice are told that they are interfering in what is not their business. Don't Get Involved, Don't Pay Attention to Others' Needs are messages derived from this injunction.

The **reverse injunction** leads to a messiah complex in which personal needs and rights are denied in face of an absolute common good. For example, the so-called good of the family, the family name and reputation, the

religious or national pride, are used to bring about changes that maintain the status quo. A person in this mode is constantly critical, demanding change at every turn and is unwilling to acknowledge when change has occurred when a new process or event has been set in motion.

### **Special Note**

Permissions do not come in separate compartments. They are often interconnected with each other and also with some injunctions. It is possible for a person to have a partial permission to Be, a partial injunction Don't Be, and partial reverse of the same injunction. The interplay and sequence of different permissions creates the colourful fabric of a cultural script. At times, one injunction may be covered up by another. For example, the injunction Don't Succeed may be complied with through the Don't Be Well when a girl does not do her final exams because of a sudden fever. When she gets married and 'belongs to the in-laws' through being needed by them, she may be denying the Don't Belong, and fitting into the expectations of Don't Be A Child. The interplay of injunctions is an intensive study made by family counsellors and therapists.

The next chapter presents a series of preparatory rituals after which the family cards are used to give the fourteen permissions to each family member.



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## *Family Rituals*

The family ritual cards can be used in a group setting or privately. If you do not have a family you can start a Friends Circle of like-minded persons and experience the rituals. They are also useful for those living in hostels and boarding schools.

Whenever a ritual takes place in a group, have a "Main Cushion" which indicates the seat of the person who is being spoken to during the ritual. Each person gets a chance to be in the "Main Cushion" or chair. Some may want a second or third reading of the permission card. Once a family gets into the rituals on a regular basis, they will create their own funny and serious rituals, but never at the expense of any person—no teasing. The permission rituals can end with a prayer time together, or with a family massage time, (finger or foot massages, or back rubs) in order to increase the depth of bonding within the family. You can choose to do one or all the rituals, or to read the cards first. After the cards are used within a family or group they can be used personally to reinforce the integration of the permission into daily life.

It is important for parents not to use the family ritual to take an opportunity to make speeches on what others should do, how children should study, or how they expect the children to do as they are told, etc. This would do grave harm to the ritual and especially to healthy

parenting of the children. Grown-ups need to place trust and confidence in children and model an integrated wholeness and loving attitude by their own lives. No smoking during the family rituals.

The main purpose of the rituals is to bring a family together and give the members what is their psychological right. Choose a date and time when your family will be together and not be disturbed by visitors or telephone calls. Your family has a right to privacy and to keeping its boundaries. If you are a child, invite your family members to a special family ritual and tell them that you want them to attend because you need help. If you are a parent, invite your family to attend a special ceremony in which they will get loving gifts.

When your family has got into the mood of the ritual over several sessions, you can invite them to make up their own permissions and create posters and cards that are part of their own personal or family experience. Later you can invite other families related to you or connected with you to enter the ritual. And if your family refuses to attend the first ritual, or refuses to do it at all, don't give up. Have fun, learn, and grow. By keeping a diary of your experiences in the use of family ritual you can train yourself to help other families in need.

### **Permission Card 1 : You Have A Right To Exist**

This card makes a good birthday ritual. All rituals take place in the family circle, each one being comfortably seated.

1. Bring a photograph of the person when she or he was a baby and spend five minutes describing what was special about that baby's arrival, what happened at the time of the birth, and how special that birth was; who prepared the baby clothes, where did the birth take



place, who was present, what was happening in the country or in the world at that time, how the baby's name was chosen and what kind of celebrations were held. Additional photos are a help for this ritual. The baby clothes can be displayed. The birthday person and others ask questions about the birth.

2. After this sharing parents take the birthday person's hand into their own, one parent at a time, and looking into the person's eyes says, "I am glad you were born from me. I gave birth to you and I want you to preserve your life."
3. Each person takes the card and reads the permissions to the birthday person. Other rituals can be added.

If this ritual is not used for a birthday, then each member can tell what they know about their birth and ask questions about their birth.

1. Each one is given information about the time when he or she was a baby.
2. Discuss together what protections each member needs and what protections the family or group as a whole needs to preserve its existence, and maintain its integrity and smooth functioning.
3. Get a family member to compose a poem or song about LIFE for the next time the family does the ritual of Card 1.

### **Permission Card 2 : You Are OK To Be The Sex You Are**

1. What is my idea of being a girl/boy?
2. What does society expect of a man or a woman?
3. What is fair or unfair about these expectations?

Write out the questions on a chart or blackboard. The family members take 5 minutes in silence to think about their answers and then each one shares in turn. It is important not to get into a family argument. Each person gets a chance to tell their viewpoint and to be heard.

4. Each member sits in the Main Cushion in turn and the other members tell them which clothes, old and new they think the person looks good in, what is specially appealing and attractive in the person's looks and physical qualities.
5. Each one reads the permission card to the person in the Main Cushion; Card 2G for girls and Card 2B for boys.

The whole family may take one permission which everyone one repeats in turn, or take the whole card and read the entire card in turn. The first is useful as the same sentence is repeated over and over by different persons. Some may like to do it twice or thrice around.

### **Permission Card 3 : You're OK To Be A Child**

1. Family members take five minutes to think about some secret that they have not shared with the family and which they don't mind sharing at the moment. If a member does not think of some secret to share she or he can share a recent or past dream.
2. Each family member puts on a funny act or dance or pantomimes a nursery rhyme.
3. Parents tell their children what kind of fun they had in their childhood and one funny story from their childhood memories.

Card 3 is then read out to each member who sits on the Main Cushion to hear the message. For this card it is



best that the person sit or lie on the floor, sofa, or bed in an infant position.

### **Permission Card 4 : You Can Grow Up**

1. Each family member thinks for 5 minutes about some activity which she or he has done independently. Each member shares this memory and boasts about taking responsibility.
2. Each one boasts about a personal decision taken recently and how it has been implemented or talks about a difficult decision that needs to be taken.
3. Each one tells the others about areas in their lives where they feel they don't have a choice, and in which they feel that they are forced to act, feel, receive, comply without participation and respect for their personal responsibility.
4. Plan a house-cleaning day in the coming week in which each one is allotted a task.
5. Elders tell the children about ownership of property, house taxes, water and electricity taxes, etc., as well as about the monthly budget. Children respond by appreciating and thanking parents for what they are doing and asking how they can help. During the week children commit themselves to asking parent figures, once a day, "What can I do to help you today?" Spouses commit themselves to ask of each other, "How can I support you today?"
6. This is also the card which assists the family to make rules, contracts and agreements with each other, as well as ways in which amends will be made if the rules are not kept.

Card 4 is read out to each person who sits on the Main Cushion to hear the permissions.

### **Permission Card 5 : You Can Succeed**

Each family member answers the following questions on a sheet of paper. Write the questions up on a chart or blackboard.

1. What is your main life goal at present?
2. Name a sporting event or game in your life in which you succeeded.
3. When did you last help someone successfully?
4. What are you really good at doing?
5. Which subject in school did you do very well in, and why?

The answers are then read out in turn. Take the questions one at a time. Members respond to each other's sharing. This should not turn into an advice giving response.

6. Someone tells a story of how a person can sabotage their own goals through lack of information or awareness.

Card 5 is then read out to each one who sits on the Main Cushion to hear the permissions.

### **Permission Card 6 : You Are Important**

Each family member answers the following:

1. Who gives you importance and how ?
2. Boast about two qualities that you believe are special to you.



3. Tell an event in which you took a leadership role in any group or social event.
4. Write out a bill of rights for yourself.

The answers are shared, one question at a time. Members respond to each others sharing. Card 6 is then read out to each person who sits on the Main Cushion to hear the permissions.

### **Permission Card 7 : You Can Be Close**

Each family member answers the following and shares:

1. Which was the happiest family celebration that you recall?
2. All sing an agreed-upon song. Then all members stand in silence together in a circle, hold hands, and close eyes for five minutes, feeling the warmth and closeness of each other. Then they move closer together, shoulder to shoulder and link arms around the waist repeating the song.
3. Each one sits in turn on the Main Cushion and the others all give appreciation starting with the words, "What I appreciate about you is..." or "What I like most about you is..." This particular exercise can be done once a week at the dinner table. This ritual can continue spontaneously with lots of hugs and handshakes. Little children can be carried and cuddled.

Card 7 is then read out to each person who sits on the Main Cushion to hear the permissions. For this permission, the person reading the permissions stands in front of the person on the Main Cushion and places both hand on the shoulders of the other in order to emphasize closeness. Alternatively, everyone can say

the permissions together with the person in the middle of the circle and all hands on the person's head and shoulders.

### **Permission Card 8 : You Belong With Us**

1. The oldest member of the family tells the story of the family, giving dates, main events, how the family came to live where it does, any previous shifting, high moments and low moments, and how the family has maintained its finances.
2. Members tell each other the names of different groups, clubs, friends' circles they belong to and what these involvements mean to them.
3. Members discuss the local language, religion or ethnic group they identify with and what this means to them.
4. Family members make a commitment to remain faithful to each other, saying in turn, "I will be faithful to us, and I learn to forgive."
5. Each one takes the other by hand and says, "I may not always agree with you, but I accept you as you are."
6. A bedcover is laid on the floor and each member in turn sits in it, curled up, while the other members hold the end of the bedcover and gently swing it briefly. A suitable song will add to the flavour of this exercise.

Card 8 is read to the person by each member before getting out of the bedcover.

### **Permission Card 9 : You Can Be Healthy**

1. Each member brings an article from a newspaper or magazine about diet, exercise or health. Each one



briefly shares the main points of this exercise. Advertisements for food or drink items, toothpaste or medicines, can also be shared with comments on their effect on health.

2. Family members recall other related members, friends or acquaintances who are healthy and discuss why they are healthy.
3. Family members agree on an physical or yogic exercise they will do together for 5 minutes.
4. Family members close their eyes in silence for 5 minutes and thank different parts of their bodies for the service they give regularly.

Card 9 is then read to each one in turn on the Main Cushion.

### **Permission Card 10 : You Can Be Sane**

1. Each member wears a fancy dress and puts on an act of someone who cannot solve their problems.
2. Each family member says what support they have got from the family as a whole, and from each member in particular, and what support they want in the future from each member.
3. Family members recall in silence for 5 minutes the slogans by which their family lives and if there are any contradictory slogans. Share and discuss without getting into arguments. Differences are easier to handle when out in the open than when suppressed.
4. Buy a large jigsaw puzzle and put it together as a family.

Card 10 is then read to each one in turn on the Main Cushion.

### **Permission Card 11 : You Can Think**

1. One member puts a variety of big and small objects on a table, for example, ribbons, screws, nail cutter, spoons, bags, tissues, pillowcases, pens, etc. These are covered with a table cloth. Other family members do not know what is under the cloth. The cover is removed for 30 seconds, replaced, and each member then writes down what she or he can remember having seen. The one with the most number of items gets a prize.
2. Family members brainstorm: Take up a family problem or decision to be made and everyone comes up with various ways of solving it.
3. Each members says a short poem without looking at the text.

Card 11 is then read to each one in turn on the Main Cushion.

### **Permission Card 12 : You Can Feel Your Feelings**

The youngest member reads one question at a time and invites the others to answer and also gives her/his own answer.

1. When was the last time you felt scare ?
2. What kind of events lead you to feel sadness ?
3. What kind of events lead you to feel anger ?
4. Family members recite the following together with gestures: My feelings are my feelings, your feelings are your feelings, our feelings are our feelings. My feelings are not your feelings, your feelings are not my feelings, my feelings are not our feelings, your feelings are not



our feelings. We all have different feelings because we are all made differently. I respect that you have your feelings even when I do not understand why you have those feelings. I am not responsible for your feelings. I am responsible for my feelings. I am not ashamed of my feelings, I am not ashamed of your feelings. I can do good things with all my feelings because feelings are energies for the future.

5. Play soft music and invite each one to choose a feeling and then put body movements or dance steps to the feeling, in harmony with the music.

Card 12 is then read to each one in turn on the Main Cushion.

### **Permission Card 13 : You Are Holy**

1. Choose a passage from your holy scriptures that shows how the human person is a reflection of the divinity. Read it out and sit in silence for 5 minutes. Answer the question: How do I feel God's presence in my life? in my family? Share and discuss.
2. Family members sing their favourite spiritual songs. One member can be assigned the task of collecting such songs during the previous week.
3. Each members gives three spiritual values to which they are committed.
4. Members make a *mantra* for themselves, for example, "Truly you have formed my inmost being", or "Sat, chit, ananda", and repeat this mantra together for a few minutes.
5. Family members ask God in silence for forgiveness if they have hurt any other member.

Card 13 is then read to each one in turn on the Main Cushion.

## **Permission Card 14 : You Can Fight For Justice**

1. Read the following texts and discuss their meaning:

"If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has his foot on the tail of a mouse, and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality," (Desmond Tutu).

"Let our first act every morning be this resolve: I shall not fear anyone on earth. I shall fear only God. I shall not bear ill-will towards anyone. I shall not submit to injustice from anyone. I shall conquer untruth by truth, and in resisting untruth, I shall put up with all suffering." (Mahatma Gandhi)

2. Find an article with pictures of tribal or indigenous people in your state. Discuss their problems in your family.
3. Sing a peace song, a freedom song or a justice song in your local language, for example, equivalents of "We shall overcome", "Hum Honge Kamyab"

Card 14 is then read to each one in turn on the Main Cushion.

## **Concluding Rituals**

1. Each member does a finger painting (dip fingers into water and poster colour) to express personal feelings regarding one of the permissions.
2. Prepare two sheets of poster paper by pasting them together to make a large sheet. The backs of calendars will do. The family makes a joint finger painting on them, regarding what they feel about the family. Each member adds her or his own part to the whole.



3. Using cut-outs from newspapers and magazines, make a joint collage on poster paper of how family members visualise the family in the future, five years from now.
4. Members read out poems, songs or exhibit dances, paintings, art work that they have done as a result of the (FREE) family ritual experience.
5. Songs used during the rituals are sung, hugs are exchanged.
6. The family all put their right hands together in the middle of their circle and make a pact to do the rituals again, one month, six months later.

“We solemnly pledge to do our family rituals again from ..... “

## **Followup Ritual**

One month later:

1. Family members share in turn the effect of the permissions on their daily life.
2. Each member chooses a card and requests the family to read out the permissions in turn.
3. Family members make their own permission cards.
4. A family picnic or party is planned.

The next chapter presents the injunction theory of Eric Berne and discusses the impact of family injunctions on children.

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## *Injunction Theory*

Many answers have been given to the classical questions of how it is that criminals become criminals, that good parents have bad children, that madness rears its head even in a peaceful family, and that even successful professionals are suicidal. The theory of injunctions focuses on the unconscious seduction by parents and grandparents, as they lure the child into precisely those behaviours that they themselves reject. In spite of moral guidance by parents, children seem to behave in anti-social ways.

Parents and teachers may tell a child over and over: "Don't tell lies", "Don't steal", "Don't be lazy", "Don't be stupid", and at the same time, they may give models of behaviour to illustrate what they mean by honest, intelligent, industrious, etc. However, these messages can be undercut by another level of unconscious and half-conscious communications from parents and teachers. The angry moments when the parents shout, "You crazy girl", "What an idiot", "I'll smash your head if you speak like that", "I'd rather be dead than see you fail", make a more lasting imprint on the child's personality and behaviour than the moral platitudes mentioned above. The messages may come through covert smiles accompanying, "What a naughty little son I have", "He's trying to walk and he's always falling, poor one", "You'll



always be my little baby", etc., by which the child picks up what it is that makes mother or father excited. Then in this way parents may unknowingly be encouraging their children to adopt the very behaviour that is unwanted.

The unconscious messages usually contain more emotional power as they contain the secret wishes of the parents themselves. The child becomes the victim of the parents' secret ambitions and fears as well as of their unfinished dreams. The child is obeying its parents in becoming what they fear he or she may become or unconsciously expect they will become. In fact, the more insistent and critical parents are about social values, the more likely it is that children will give a semblance of trying to obey them, and in actual fact rebel and do the opposite. It is within these polarities of obeying in order to get approval, and rebelling in order to grasp at autonomy, that the child's personality will be programmed for healthy living or compulsive failure.

An injunction is a prohibition against life, growth, health and love. There are glimmers of this concept in Berne, Perls, Freud, Adler, Jung, Laing and others. The theory of injunctions states that the child is deeply influenced by particular family scenes, by bodily cues given by the parents, by parental messages spoken or unspoken and by parental behaviour. It is reinforced by cultural myths, legends and expectations.

The injunction is a strong parental prohibition against being, growing, feeling or doing; it is a prohibition which, if followed, brings the person deeper into unfreedom and further away from autonomy. Under the influence of the injunctions the child lives its life as a puppet rather than as a human being with freedom of choice. Berne defines an injunction as "an unfair negative command from a parent which functions as a stopper." It is likely to be a



command that has been passed down from generation to generation which is then indicative of the family culture.

When the transmission of precepts, patterns and controls regarding behaviour is universally passed down within a given society, we have cultural injunctions or prohibitions. A paradigm for this is given in Berne's example of the hereditary medicine man of a small village in the South Seas. Through five generations over a hundred years, parents transmitted the expectation for their sons to be the medicine man. Each set of parents gave messages that encouraged a particular choice of profession and a way to succeed or fail in it. This transmission of a family culture is the pattern of transmission of a village or caste culture in which men can be programmed to be artisans or brigands. Berne suggested that marriage between these two professions might then produce a rogue art dealer!

The injunction is not merely a limitation or restriction in terms of profession. In its depths, the injunction is a defective formula for the sense of being, the self-image, the sense of identity, personality and ability of the individual. Injunctions account for the "determination" of human behaviour and continuation of dysfunctions in social groups even when the same group sees that they are destructive to the individual and to the group itself. Berne points out that even though the decision to commit suicide is a so-called "personal" one, the rate of suicide remains relatively the same. "The only ways to make (Darwinian) sense of this is to consider human destiny to be the result of parental programming, and not of individual 'autonomous' decisions."

Injunctions center on issues that keep a cultural group trapped in its own complex of traditions, long after these traditions have proved useless or destructive to the group. They have a momentum that is so deep within the



family that even modernization and industrialization can have only a surface impact on these subterranean, powerful forces. The negative parental message is incorporated into the child at an early age and continues to influence the person for their whole life, unless the person makes a decision to change. Yet the psychosocial dynamics of injunctions are more flexible and amenable to change than the genetic apparatus, and so there is hope that those locked in the inner prison of limited possibilities and hemmed in by their cultural prohibitions can be influenced to change their own destiny with autonomy and daring.

Berne says that the "injunction... has the same effect and the same origin as the superego of psychoanalysis." It can be symbolized in fantasy and in fairy tales as the witch or ogre. Berne extends Francis Thompson's "each child has a fairy godmother in its soul," to the incorporation of other kinds of shady, demonic characters. He treats them as "electrode like" introjects that have a live circuit in the human personality similar to that described by Melanie Klein's "introjected objects" and the elaborations of her concepts by Fairbairn. Fritz Perls talks about ways in which parents and teachers intrude on the natural, authentic development of people: "They work with tools to falsify our existence. One tool is the stick which then is encountered in therapy as the catastrophic expectation. The catastrophic expectation sounds like this, 'If I take the risk, I will not be loved any more. I will be lonely. I'll die'."

Berne recognized that his concept of injunction is comparable to Laing's idea of parental programming. Laing writes cogently about the power of attributions made by parental figures and also uses the term injunction to denote the same. Such attributions form the person's sense of being, including motives and identity.



There are global attributions such as, "You are worthless", "You are good", as well as disjunctive attributions that do not fit the perception of self. He gives examples of attributions that are similar to Berne's examples of injunctions.

Laing tells of a young girl Joan, whose mother gave her a birthday present when she turned twenty. Joan received an expensive blouse which was plain and two sizes too big for her. Her response to the gift was shame, guilt, despair and confusion, because the message she heard from her mother was, "You are an unattractive young woman." Laing added that this attribution implied an injunction, "Be Unattractive." In transactional analytic terms this is a Don't Be Beautiful, or Don't Be Yourself injunction as well as a Don't Be Important injunction.

There are many similarities between Laing's examples of attributions and the injunctions of transactional analysis. Laing tells of a professional painter who had internalized her mother's disapproval of abstracts in a way that cramped her style. Her mother's attribution was, "No, that's not you." Transactional analysts would interpret this as a Don't Succeed injunction. Laing's example of a father saying to a son who is being bullied at school, "I know you don't really want to leave, because no son of mine is a coward", is an illustration of the transactional analytic injunctions Don't Be You, Don't Be a Child, Don't Feel. Laing's example of Jill who was never allowed to have her own way and was told that she could never do anything others did not want, is similar to the transactional analytic injunction, "Don't Do What You Want, Do What Others Want", or, "Don't Even Want What Others Don't Want You To Want", in other words, Don't Be A Child and Don't Grow Up.

Laing's attribution of "You are just saying that. I know you don't mean it", is similar to the transactional analytic



injunction Don't Think, while the example, "You may think you feel like that, but you don't really", is the transactional analytic injunction Don't Feel; "You are breaking my heart", is the injunction Don't Be You; "You are driving me crazy", is the injunction, Don't Be Sane; "You are my little Maggie", is the injunction Don't Grow Up; "If you don't stop behaving like this, we'll send you away", is the injunction Don't Belong; "If you don't kiss me, it does not matter all that much to me", is the injunction Don't Be Important; "You are a bit of a fool", is the Don't Think injunction.

Laing also gives an example of complex, undermining attributions that fit into the transactional analytic injunction Don't Be Sane, namely, the confusing and devastating parental message "Do not do what you are told." The child receiving this message is ordered to be spontaneous yet finds herself in a confused position. "Jill tries to comply by doing what is expected of her. But she is accused of dishonesty for not doing what she really wants. If she says what she really wants, she is told she is warped or twisted or that she does not know her own mind." Both Laing and Berne focused attention on the development of the inner psychological prison as created by social interactions within the family.

A child who is told "You are an idiot" receives a Don't Think injunction. Showing non-verbal disapproval of a child's thinking processes, also gives a Don't Think message. Laing believes that "the key medium for such communication is probably not verbal language." The subtle way by which the child gets the injunction is not so much a "Do what I tell you to do", but a "You are what I indicate you are doing", and "You see what I tell you to see", and, "You are what I indicate you are". Laing vividly compares the giving of attributions to the hypnotic process : "So, if I hypnotize you, I do not say, 'I order you



to feel cold', I indicate that it is cold. You immediately feel cold. I think that many children begin in a state like this." A final attribution which sums up the manipulation is, "But don't believe me because I say so, look in the mirror and see for yourself."

In Laing's opinion, we receive some of our earliest and most lasting instructions in the form of attributions : "One may tell someone to feel something and not to remember he has been told. Simply tell him he feels it... How much of what we feel is what we have been hypnotized to feel? How much of who we are, is what we have been hypnotized to be? A relationship of one to another may be of such power that you become what I take you to be, at my glance, at my touch, at my cough. I do not need to say anything. An attribution, as I am using the term, may be kinetic, tactile, olfactory, visual. A few parents have described this technique to me as a deliberate stratagem. More often parents are themselves confused because a child does what it hears them commanding, and obeys when they tell him to be in a certain way and state that it is as they say. 'I'm always trying to get him to make more friends, but he is so self-conscious. Isn't that right dear?' 'I keep telling him to be more careful, but he's so careless, aren't you?'"

A recognition of the power of such communications can help families to radically alter their ways of speaking. Spouses who have had such attributions and injunctions in childhood can get the permissions from each other, opening in front of the children so as to build a new system with healthy safeguards and warm nourishment.

Berne sees the injunction theory as having "great value in clinical work, as well as in development, sociological and anthropological studies." It is important for the study of human destiny, the transmission of behaviour from one generation to the next and the possibility of family



transformation. "What is your Parental Prohibition?" is therefore the most important single question according to Berne for understanding a person's problems and for solving them: **"Since his symptoms are a substitute for the prohibited act, and also a protest against it, as demonstrated by Freud, freedom from the prohibition will also tend to cure his symptoms."** This will also be true of cultural pathology where the most significant dysfunctions can be seen as the result of socially reinforced prohibitions and the journey to social transformation will require a release from the prohibitions as well as their religious and mythical underpinnings.

Denebery and Whimby used rats in laboratory experiments to show how the experiences of the mother rat have an influence on their children. One rat named Victor was born of a mother who had been handled and caressed as a baby. Another rat, Arthur was born of a mother who had been left in her cage without touching when she was an infant. When Victor and Arthur grew up they were found to be different from each other, Victor being more peaceable and weighing more, and Arthur being more exploratory and agitated.

Claude Steiner defines the injunction as 'the curse' which is a prohibition, or an inhibition of the free behaviour of the child. It is always the negation of an activity according to him. The injunction reflects the fears, wishes, anger, and desires of the parents. Injunctions vary in range, intensity, area of restriction, and malignancy. Some injunctions affect a very small range of behaviour, such as "Don't sing", or "Don't laugh loudly", or "Don't eat too many sweets". Others are extremely comprehensive in range, such as "Don't be happy", "Don't think", or, "Don't do anything". Many parental messages are helpful in that they prevent the child from falling into danger. Examples are, "Don't bend over the railing", "Don't put



your hand into the fire". However they become inhibiting if they mean, "Don't be curious", or, "Don't touch". A way to teach a child safety is to say, "I want you to be safe and in order to be safe hold onto the railing."

Berne distinguishes three levels of injunctions which produce in turn, winners, non-winners, and losers. The first level concerns messages such as "Don't be too ambitious". This is not designed to produce a winner but still it is possible for the child to be a winner inspite of it. The second level is an insidious type that is handed out with subtle smiles, ambiguous directives, threats, frowns and indifferent shrugs. With these body signs go messages like, "Don't be you, (a girl)", "Don't be close", "Don't ask for what you want". This is an effective way to pass on a script of being a non-winner. The third level is accompanied by screams, vicious threats, beatings, facial distortions and involves life destructive and goal destructive messages such as "Don't exist", "Don't succeed", and "Don't finish what you have begun".

Berne relates this theory of injunctions to the work of Erik Erikson, to the 'destiny compulsion' of Freud and to Adler's 'life-style' concept. Erikson reiterates his conception of how early parental training cramps the child's development within the cultural confines of her society when he says: "Modern anthropology, often following suggestions derived from psychiatry, is studying the ways in which societies 'intuitively' develop child-training systems designed not only to keep the small individual alive and well, but also to ensure, through him and in him, a continuation of tradition and a preservation of his society's uniqueness. The contribution of man's extended childhood to the development of his technical capabilities and to his capacity for sympathy and faith is well known, but often too exclusively known. For it is becoming equally clear that the polarity, adult-child, is



the first in the inventory of existential oppositions, (male-female, being the second), which makes man exploitable and induces him to exploit. The child's inborn proclivity for feeling powerless, deserted, ashamed, and guilty in relation to those on whom he depends is systematically utilized for his training, often to the point of exploitation. The result is that even rational man remains irrationally preoccupied with anxieties and suspicions which center on such questions as who is bigger or better and who can do what to whom. It is therefore necessary to acquire deeper insight into the earliest consequences of the psychological exploitation of childhood."

According to Berne, the family scenario influences each child to formulate a life drama which determines the main events, the comedies and tragedies, ups and downs of adult life. He called this life drama in capsule, the individual life script. Injunctions form the central core of the life script. Those who become conscious of their injunctions can stop the exploitation of children and free themselves from the negative outcomes of the life script.

The next chapter presents the theory of antiscript, a phenomenon that looks like autonomy but is in fact another form of unfreedom.

When a family is willing to discover the injunctions that underlie their interactions with one another a whole new horizon opens up and the power of the permissions is allowed to bring love, harmony, well-being and ethical conduct to the individual members and to the family as a whole.

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## *The Antiscript*

The shadow side of the family injunction is the family antiscript which thrives on the **reverse injunction**. A child may comply with the family injunction or rebel against it. This rebellion may be overt or hidden. The child may both adapt and rebel at different times. In fact the word 'injunction' is used by Berne because, "the child treats such restrictions as a lawyer would, looking for the cop-out." It is this search for the 'cop-out' or crooked way of escaping that leads the child to disobey the injunction, and create an antiscript which seems at first sight to be an outlet for breaking away from the injunction, but is in actual fact an example of pseudo-freedom. The child denies the existence of the injunction and does the opposite instead with great vehemence. The antiscript is opposed to the injunction yet drags the person back into unfreedom. Berne gives the example of a computer card turned around. The aggressive breaking of restrictions is not the road to freedom.

Berne sees the antiscript as closely resembling Erik Erikson's concept of 'identity diffusion'. Where mother says "Don't drink", Jeder drinks, where she says "Don't think", he thinks, and where she says "Study hard", he drops out. In short, Jeder is meticulously defiant. But since he has to consult his programming to know precisely how and where to be defiant, he is just as surely



programmed by disobeying each instruction as he would be if he obeyed them all. Thus, where 'freedom' is really defiance, it is only an illusion.

Berne sometimes calls the antiscript a spell breaker or an offer of release from the curse of the injunction as for example, when a girl who is prohibited from being sexual is allowed to be so on condition that she marries an important person. He says that through an antiscript a child may succeed in reversing the whole intent of the injunctions without basically disobeying them. He also uses the term antiscript to indicate parental prescriptions like "Work Hard", that is a cover for the injunction, showing how a person can live out the injunction, e.g., "Even though you work hard you won't make it", "Even though you look after other people's needs you will never really belong." Here the person may be compelled to deny the Don't Succeed or the Don't Belong injunction by working hard in the first case, and by serving others in the second. An understanding of antiscript leads to a concept of freedom that is deep and genuine for family life.

Fritz Perls makes an interesting comment on denial that throws light on Berne's concept of antiscript. He speaks of resistance as a feeling of disgust; and then he treats resistance of resistance as a repression of this feeling. He states: "An additional resistance, a resistance against resistance, is of special importance: the repression of disgust. For example, a child who thoroughly dislikes certain food, might feel disgusted and vomit it up. The child is punished, for it is supposed to eat everything, and is forced, again and again, to eat food it dislikes. So, looking for a way out of the conflict it gulps down the food quickly (in order to avoid the disgusting taste), and tries, mostly successfully after a time, not to taste anything at all."



Laing says that denial is the simplest to define: "This is the case," is changed to, "This is not the case." For example, "I feel jealous," is changed to, "I do not feel jealous." He describes denial in connection with the process of repression that requires four stages: forgetting X; forgetting X and being unaware of the X that is forgotten: being unaware of the forgetting process; and finally, being "unaware that we have forgotten that we have forgotten X." Relevant to the current study of cultural oppression is what Laing describes as a "...transpersonal system of collusion whereby we comply with the others and they comply with us. For instance, one requires collusion to play 'Happy Families.' Individually, I am unhappy: I deny I am to myself ; I deny I am denying anything to myself and to the others. They must do the same. I must collude with their denial and collusion, and they must collude with mine."

It is such denials, and denial of denials, combined with collective collusion that can account for cultural scripts and for injunctions held in common or injunctions denied in common by a particular group. Laing further admits that idealizations go hand in hand with denials. The values of what one ought to be are clung to with even greater fervour as a cover up for the denial. The Bernian concept of antiscript integrates the processes described as denials with those of idealization. It exposes an unreal glorification that camouflages inner pain, anxiety, insecurity, and deprivation.

Forman and Ramsburg come even closer to describing the antiscript phenomenon of denial when giving a psychoanalytic picture of patient Robert who was told by his father, "You'll never really make it," and who responded to this with a wish to "show him" and to prove to his father that he could make it. In transactional analytic terms, Robert rebelled against the Don't Make It



injunction and came under a compulsion, a "See How Successful I Am" antiscript. This is not real freedom because the fuel motivating Robert is the resistance to the injunction to not succeed. This is a **reverse injunction** which leads him to deny his limitations and mistakes, his failures and set-backs in such a way as to propel him towards final disaster. In psychoanalytic terms, his "intolerance for disorder (reaction formation) reflects the denial of deep-seated, unconscious impulses towards messiness. The intense demand for tidiness, neatness, and orderliness are overly compensatory habit patterns which assist in the maintenance of denial." The "flight into health" described by the same authors is also similar to the Antiscript of the Don't Be Well injunction. Such a dynamic explains how it is possible for women with high ideals to have deep psychological problems they are unwilling to face and why men of a particular cultural group may collude to present a picture of bravado when underneath they are denying panic; why they follow the social matrix while underneath they deny their resentment towards it; why they say they have no problems while underneath they repress the tides of craziness. For example, the more a woman sacrifices the more she may deny her hatred for the demands made on her.

Freedom involves the ability to choose, and not just the ability to oppose what is seen as unfreedom with fire, power and noise. Women who proclaim gender equality with vigour may be tied to inner compulsions as much as those who passively obey traditional stereotypes. Rebelling against unfreedom is as unfree as complying with unfreedom. A person may fill his or her life with high ideals and yet in the inner depths of experience, being trapped and insecure. This is emphasized through the concept of **reverse injunction** in the Injunction Scale which focuses on the analysis of low scores. For example,



while a score of 8, 9, indicates compliance with the injunction, a score of 1, 2, indicates rebellion against, or denial of the injunction.

Some individuals seem to have an anaesthetized injunction and admit it only in rare moments of despair or when depressed. For example, Sheela is told that she is a burden to her family, and so decides to work extra hard and make up for not being thrown out of the house. She does her uttermost not to be a burden and to cover up any evidence that she is a burden. Any feelings of pain or anxiety about her possible rejection are also canceled. Like the counterphobic person who becomes a swimming champion against her phobia of drowning, Sheela makes sure she becomes the darling of all even if she sacrifices her own needs. At the social level she is praised for her self-giving but she recognizes this self-giving as an aspect of her self-rejection—an antiscrit that was a cover for her injunction Don't Exist. In this way, the injunctions Don't Be A Child, or Don't Be Important, are obeyed with absolute zest because Sheela's survival depends on her canceling her own needs and making herself unimportant. Her antiscrit gives her the justification to Exist. Therefore any invitation to be selfassertive and demand her own needs can appear to be a challenge to her survival and existence, a threat to her being flooded with the panic of rejection and extinction. If she is isolated from the role of serving others, she is, in her own mind, condemned to extinction. This is why it is so important for her to believe that her services are indispensable and that others are totally dependent on her.

A mother may accept the slavery of serving the family because it is the vehicle for her permission to exist. She remains at the beck and call of husband and children whose constant demands on her are precisely the answer to her need to be needed, which in turn is her passport



to life. The 'all-nourishing mother' antiscript, as well as the 'self-giving wife' and 'devoted sister', may be a woman's unconscious safeguard against her Don't Exist injunction.

A healthy family can deal with these issues and find new supportive ways of teamwork to build a family system that is genuine and harmonious without making use of any one member. When each member can receive the permission to exist, together with the other permissions, life opens up to the fullest for the individual and the group, voluntary service becomes free of compulsion, and love grows out of choice and autonomy.

The next chapter presents the Dreger Injunction Scale which was developed in 1981. The Hindi version was standardized in 1983. It has been translated into six languages. The scale is useful for helping family members discover the permission card that they need the most. There are separate scales for women and men to allow for differences in the Don't Be You injunction.

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## *The Drego Injunction Scale*

The Drego Injunction Scale is a tool to identify those prohibitions that are currently operative in a person's life or currently denied. The scale needs to be done intuitively and without analytic reasoning. A person scores each item on a 9-point scale, scoring 9 if the statement is always true, and 1 if the statement is never true, 8 if the statement is very often true, 7 if it is often, 6 if it is etc., as described in the foreword to each Scale. Once the scoring has been completed, the scores are entered into the boxes provided and then totaled columnwise. Where statistical calculators are not available, the 2 highest scores may be taken as **operative injunctions** and the 2 lowest may be taken as **reverse injunctions**. Where the calculator is available, the scores that are equal to or greater than the mean plus one standard deviation are **operative injunctions**, and those that are equal to or less than the mean minus one standard deviation are **reverse injunctions**.

After identifying the injunctions, the person answers the following questions:

1. Do these injunction fit your experience of yourself? If so, how? If not, why not? In practice, the **reverse injunction** is difficult to identify because it is usually outside your awareness, and you will find yourself resisting the application of that injunction to your life.



2. For those injunctions that seem relevant, remember how you may have received those messages in childhood.
3. On identifying these early memories, choose someone with whom to share these memories as a way of setting them at rest.
4. Choose one of the permission cards through which you will now live out the permissions rather than the injunctions that apply to you.
5. Do you sometimes use one **operative injunction** to emphasize another **operative injunction** in your life?
6. Do you combine your **operative injunctions** together in behavioural patterns that are hurtful to you? If so, plan to make changes in your life by using the relevant permission cards.
7. If in the process of using the scale and analyzing its results, you become aware of other permissions that you need, design a special permission card that fits for you.
8. The Injunction Scale can also be used within a family by adding together all the family scores for each injunction, and then finding the mean and standard deviation. The scores that are one standard deviation above the mean score will indicate the **operative injunction** for the whole family, and any score that is one standard deviation below the mean will indicate the **reverse injunction** that is being suppressed in the family. This group application of the Injunction Scale can also be done for a team, an institution, or an organization in order to identify the cultural injunction of the group or organization.

## DREGO INJUNCTION SCALE FOR WOMEN

After you read through each sentence, ask yourself how it is true for you, and write a number on the line to the left of the statement to signify your answer, according to the following scheme:

For always	write	9
For almost always	write	8
For very often	write	7
For often	write	6
For sometimes	write	5
For occasionally	write	4
For seldom	write	3
For almost never	write	2
For never	write	1

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I feel I am a burden to others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I wish I had not been born a woman.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Having fun like a child is beneath my dignity.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I prefer that others decide for me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I make mistakes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I am less important than others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Deep down I long to be loved.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I feel as though I am an outsider.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I feel sick.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I'm scared that my problems will drive me crazy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. I get confused.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. I'm uncomfortable when others express feelings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. I wish I had not been born.



- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. If I were male life would be easier.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. I look after others even at cost to myself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. I feel a need for approval.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. I can't achieve what I want to.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. I don't like being a leader.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. I don't trust others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. I feel others don't accept me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. I rest only when I am sick.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. I feel that people are against me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. I'm slow in learning.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. It is weak to be emotional.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 25. I don't take care of myself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 26. Expectations on me as a woman are heavy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 27. I don't ask for what I want.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 28. I don't like taking responsibility.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 29. I put in a lot of effort and get little reward.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 30. I don't disturb others when I need help.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 31. Those whom I love go far away.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 32. My family members don't think of me as part of them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 33. I spend time talking about illness.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 34. I think life doesn't make sense.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 35. I feel unintelligent.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 36. I feel bad about being angry.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 37. I get into accidents or crises.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 38. I wish I was somebody else.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 39. If I take something from others, I feel obliged.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 40. I am treated as if I were a child.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 41. I find it difficult to finish what I begin.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 42. I prefer to stay silent than to speak up.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 43. I hold back from expressing love and affection.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 44. I am different from my family members.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 45. I get worried about being ill.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 46. I fear I might go crazy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 47. I am forgetful.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 48. I hide my feelings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 49. Others will realize my worth only when I'm dead.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 50. As a woman I feel incomplete.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 51. I don't like childishness in myself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 52. I can't do without protection from others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 53. Even after being successful, I feel dissatisfied.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 54. I let others get their needs met first.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 55. I'm uncomfortable touching, or being touched.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 56. I prefer to observe a group rather than to take part.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 57. When new things happen I feel ill.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 58. If things get bad, I may fall apart.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 59. Thinking is a burden for me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 60. I don't have feelings.

When you have completed this task of giving scores to each statement, then write each score in the boxes given in the key: write the score for statement 1 in the box numbered 1, and so on. Add up the columns to get the totals for each of the 12 injunctions covered by this Scale. Then make a graph of your totals.

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## DREGO INJUNCTION SCALE FOR MEN

After you read through each sentence, ask yourself how it is true for you, and write a number on the line to the left of the statement to signify your answer, according to the following scheme:

For always	write	9
For almost always	write	8
For very often	write	7
For often	write	6
For sometimes	write	5
For occasionally	write	4
For seldom	write	3
For almost never	write	2
For never	write	1

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I feel I am a burden to others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I am unhappy to be born a man.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Having fun like a child is beneath my dignity.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I prefer that others decide for me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I make mistakes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I am less important than others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Deep down I long to be loved.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I feel as though I am an outsider.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I feel sick.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I'm scared that my problems will drive me crazy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. I get confused.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. I'm uncomfortable when others express feelings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. I wish I had not been born.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. If I were female life would be easier.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. I look after others even at cost to myself.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. I feel a need for approval.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. I can't achieve what I want to.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. I don't like being a leader.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. I don't trust others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. I feel that others don't accept me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. I rest only when I am sick.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. I feel that people are against me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. I'm slow in learning.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. It is weak to be emotional.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 25. I don't take care of myself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 26. Expectations on me as a man are heavy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 27. I don't ask for what I want.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 28. I don't like taking responsibility.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 29. I put in a lot of effort and get little reward.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 30. I don't disturb others when I need help.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 31. Those whom I love go far away.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 32. My family members don't think of me as part of them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 33. I spend time talking about illness.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 34. I think life doesn't make sense.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 35. I feel unintelligent.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 36. I feel bad about being angry.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 37. I get into accidents or crises.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 38. I wish I was somebody else.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 39. If I take something from others, I feel obliged.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 40. I am treated as if I were a child.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 41. I find it difficult to finish what I begin.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 42. I prefer to stay silent than to speak up.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 43. I hold back from expressing love and affection.



- \_\_\_\_\_ 44. I am different from my family members.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 45. I get worried about being ill.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 46. I fear I might go crazy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 47. I am forgetful.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 48. I hide my feelings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 49. Others will realize my worth only when I'm dead.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 50. As a man I feel superior.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 51. I don't like childishness in myself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 52. I can't do without protection from others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 53. Even after being successful, I feel dissatisfied.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 54. I let others get their needs met first.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 55. I'm uncomfortable touching, or being touched.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 56. I prefer to observe a group rather than to take part.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 57. When new things happen I feel ill.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 58. If things get bad, I may fall apart.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 59. Thinking is a burden for me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 60. I don't have feelings.

When you have completed this task of giving scores to each statement, then write each score in the boxes given in the key: write the score for statement 1 in the box numbered 1, and so on. Then add up the columns to get the totals for each of the 12 injunctions covered by this Scale. Then make a graph of your totals.

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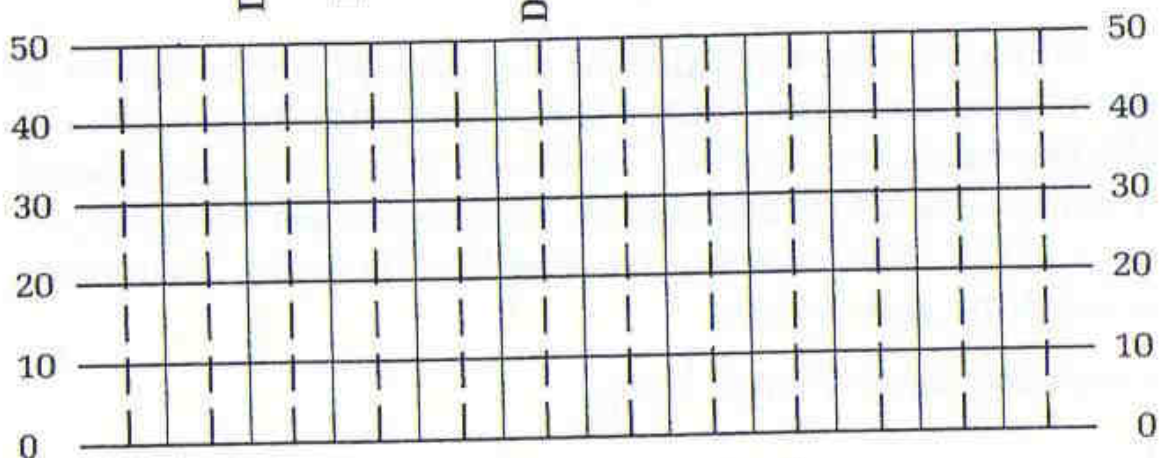
## DREGO INJUNCTION SCALE KEY For Women and Men

Name ..... Sex ..... Date .....

Age ..... Position in Family ..... Profession .....

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48
49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
Totals										Totals	

Don't Exist  
 Don't Be You  
 Don't Be A Child  
 Don't Grow Up  
 Don't Succeed  
 Don't Be Important  
 Don't Be Close  
 Don't Belong  
 Don't Be Well  
 Don't Be Sane  
 Don't Think  
 Don't Feel



Grand Total \_\_\_\_\_ Injunctions more than \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mean \_\_\_\_\_ 1 S.D. from Mean \_\_\_\_\_  
 Std. Dev. \_\_\_\_\_ Injunctions less than \_\_\_\_\_  
 1 S.D. from Mean \_\_\_\_\_



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## ***Mother's Song***

*A basketful of roses  
For mother's coming home  
She went to give a lecture  
My mother likes to roam.*

*She helps the poor and needy  
And those who suffer pain  
She goes to nearby villages  
In sunshine or in rain.*

*I'm proud of such a mother  
Though there are times I feel  
I wish she'd stay at home for me  
And cook the evening meal.*

*Sometimes the neighbours wonder  
And they ask, "Your ma's not home?"  
But I turn around and tell them  
"No, my ma is out on loan."*

*There are others needing mothers  
There are people shedding tears  
So my daddy's shared the burden  
Of our housework all these years.*

*Yet we know that when we need her  
If things are going wrong  
She'll listen very carefully  
And burst into this song.*

*"It's you must make your choices  
Don't care what others say  
It's your own goals that matter  
Only you can choose your way.*



*Remember I'm behind you  
That I back you to the hilt  
I know that you will have success  
That you will bloom, not wilt.*

*So follow your desire  
To become just who you are  
Take up your own career  
I know you'll be a star.*

*Do not submit to insult  
Protest if you get hurt  
Remember you are someone  
Of immeasurable worth.*

*Remember I am with you  
Though you travel far away  
If you need a mother's comfort  
Come home without delay.*

*You are a precious person  
God's gift to humankind  
Your family is with you  
And I am just behind.*

*Your mother shows she loves you  
Your father shows his care  
Young children rise with courage  
To speak and do and dare.*

*Go save endangered species  
And rivers that run dry  
Build up the green environment  
Protect the earth and sky.*

*You cannot say you cannot  
You cannot stay at home  
Your mother is a model  
To launch out on your own.*

*To stop the forest cutting  
To bring new trees to birth  
To help the poor to organize  
Save animals from hurt.*

*The earth is our great mother  
With creatures big and small  
Listen my dear children  
To the birds' and fishes' call.*

*In love there is no boundary  
One may fly or jump or crawl  
Each one has the right to life  
Protection is for all.*

*Bring everyone to safety  
Give everyone a share  
In the family of humans  
There is space enough to spare.*

*Each family is founded  
To birth the human race  
But a family with outreach  
Is a providential grace.*

*The family is sacred  
The family gives hope  
When you have a problem  
Our love will help you cope."*

*If you are a father  
Or mother listening now  
Embrace your lifelong partner  
Renew your marriage vow.*

*Your children are your treasure  
More precious than your gold  
Let them grow in freedom  
Don't put them in a mould.*

*We started with the roses  
For mother's coming home  
Do you understand the reason  
Why my mother likes to roam?*

*— Pearl Drego*