

Unlocking the Power to Choose!

A Play Therapy Approach

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PLAY THERAPY
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Agenda

- 1 Introductions & Mindfulness (5 min)
- 2 Definitions (5 min)

Play Therapy Approach

- 3 Core Principles (5 min)
 - 4 Encouragement (5 min)
 - 5 Returning Responsibility (10 min)
-
- 6 Skills Practice (20 min)
 - 7 Reflections & Commitments (10 min)



1

Introductions

&

Mindfulness



Definitions

Person-centeredness & “developmentally appropriate”

- In theory, these both result in the same results. In practice, they may conflict.
- Each of us may function at a different developmental level, depending on the circumstances.
- How do we support individuals to learn to make choices?
 - *Hint - it is by allowing them to make choices.*
(Dean & Linnenkamp, 2021)
- What developmentally appropriate choices can be offered to meet their needs and preferences?



A Play Therapy Approach

“Child-centered play therapy is a complete therapeutic system, not just the application of a few rapport-building techniques, and is based on a deep and abiding belief in the capacity and resiliency of children to be constructively self-directing . “ (Landreth, 2012)

3

Core Principles

Guidelines to support self-direction.

4

Encouragement

Why and how to encourage instead of praise.

5

Returning Responsibility

Why and how to return responsibility to others.

Core Principles

“Rule of Thumb: Young children learn through experience. If we want children to learn how to respect and value others, then we must provide them with many opportunities to feel respected and valued themselves.”

Kindness & Respect	Positive Statements	Notice & Reflect	Avoid Questions
<p>Instead of lecturing, shouting, threatening, or punishing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-gain attention nonverbally-THEN speak about the behavior in a kind and respectful tone	<p>Paying special attention to positive behaviors builds self-esteem!</p>	<p>Say what they are feeling. Notice the nuances, and reflect actions. Welcome corrections!</p>	<p>“If you know enough to ask a question, you know enough to make a statement.” Questions can trigger defenses, and create cognitive work.</p>

*These core principles of interacting were developed by:
Elisabeth E. Liles-Lourick, Ph.D., NCC, CCMHC, LPCC, RPT-STM.*

Encouragement

Encouragement highlights the process instead of the product. It avoids value statements, and as a result supports an ***internal locus of validation!***

Let's state examples of Praise, then translate them into Encouragement statements:

Praise	Encouragement
1. Great job!	1. _____
2. Nice work!	2. _____
3. You're amazing!	3. _____
4. I can't believe it!	4. _____

Bonus Tip: Avoid undermining your encouragement with comments like “Was that so hard?”, or “It’s about time!”



Returning Responsibility

What is it? Why is it important?

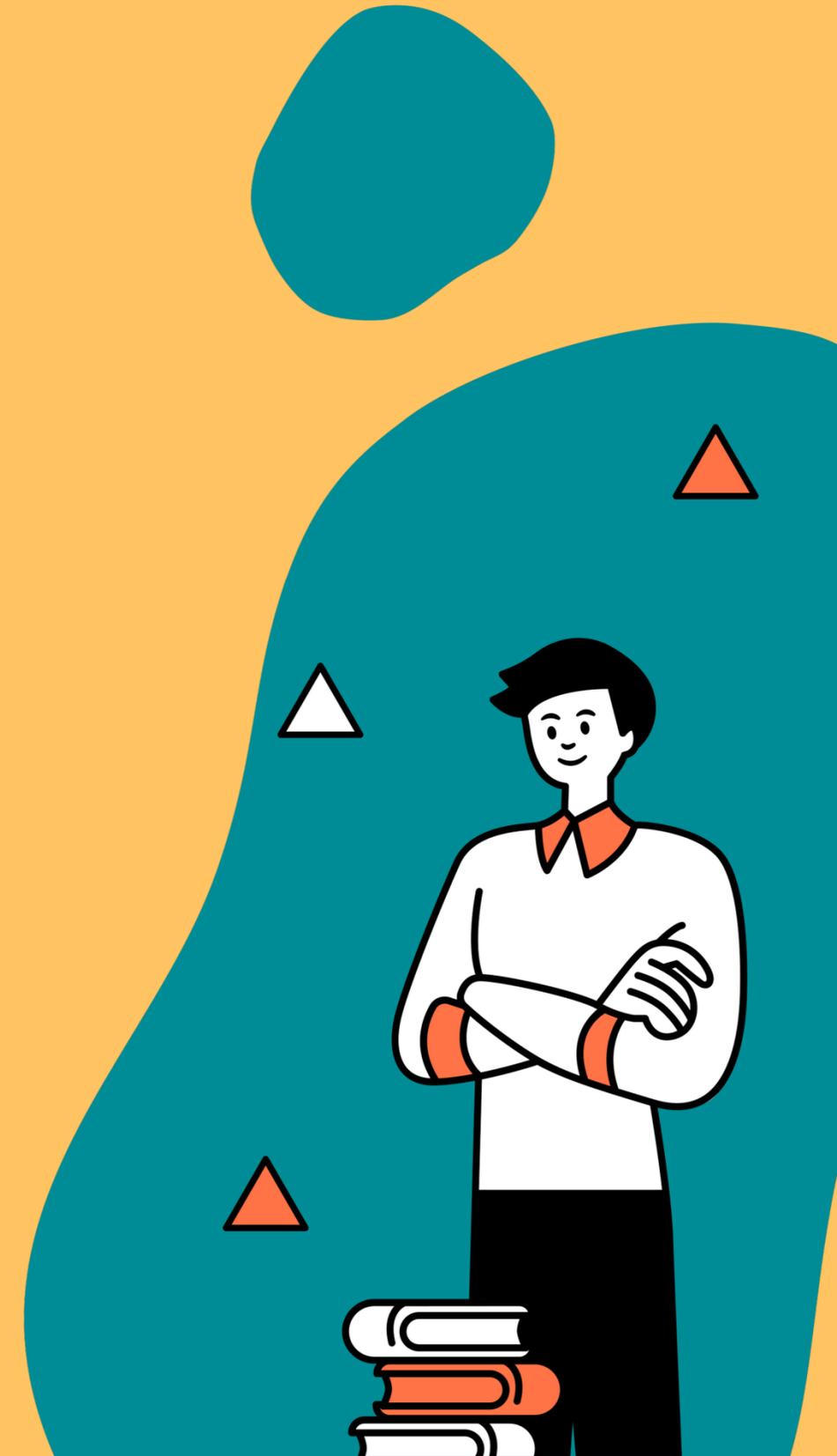
Choices, Cookies & Kids: A Creative Approach to Discipline
by Dr. Garry Landreth

<https://youtu.be/sq7nauUPqts?si=Jlabu2Oje7sg7yuZ&t=36>



Ways to Return Responsibility

- 1 When playing, let them lead.
- 2 Encourage them to make decisions on their own.
- 3 Don't do things for them they can try for themselves.
- 4 Build self-esteem by giving credit to them!
- 5 THERAPEUTIC LIMIT SETTING!!



Therapeutic Limit Setting

“Set therapeutic limits using the following (ACT) guidelines:

- **A – Acknowledge the child’s feelings and desire.**
 - “I know you’d like to”
 - Ex. “I know you are mad and you’d like to kick that....”
- **C – Communicate the limit.**
 - “but _____ is not for ...”
 - ” Ex. “...but that is not for kicking.”
- **T – Target acceptable alternatives.**
 - “You can choose to _____, or you can choose to _____.”
 - Ex. “You can choose to kick the Bobo or you can choose to tell me how mad you are.”

** Remember... Limits are never qualified. They are always absolute! **



Instructions:

- In groups of three:
 - **Person A** - creates a drawing for 5 minutes
 - **Person B** - offers encouragement and makes observational statements about the activity in a kind and respectful tone
 - **Person C** - observes the interaction, gives feedback during discussion

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5 minutes observation, then 5 minutes group discussion.

- Afterwards, switch roles!
- Is there anyone who would like to only be a Person C?

6 Skills Practice

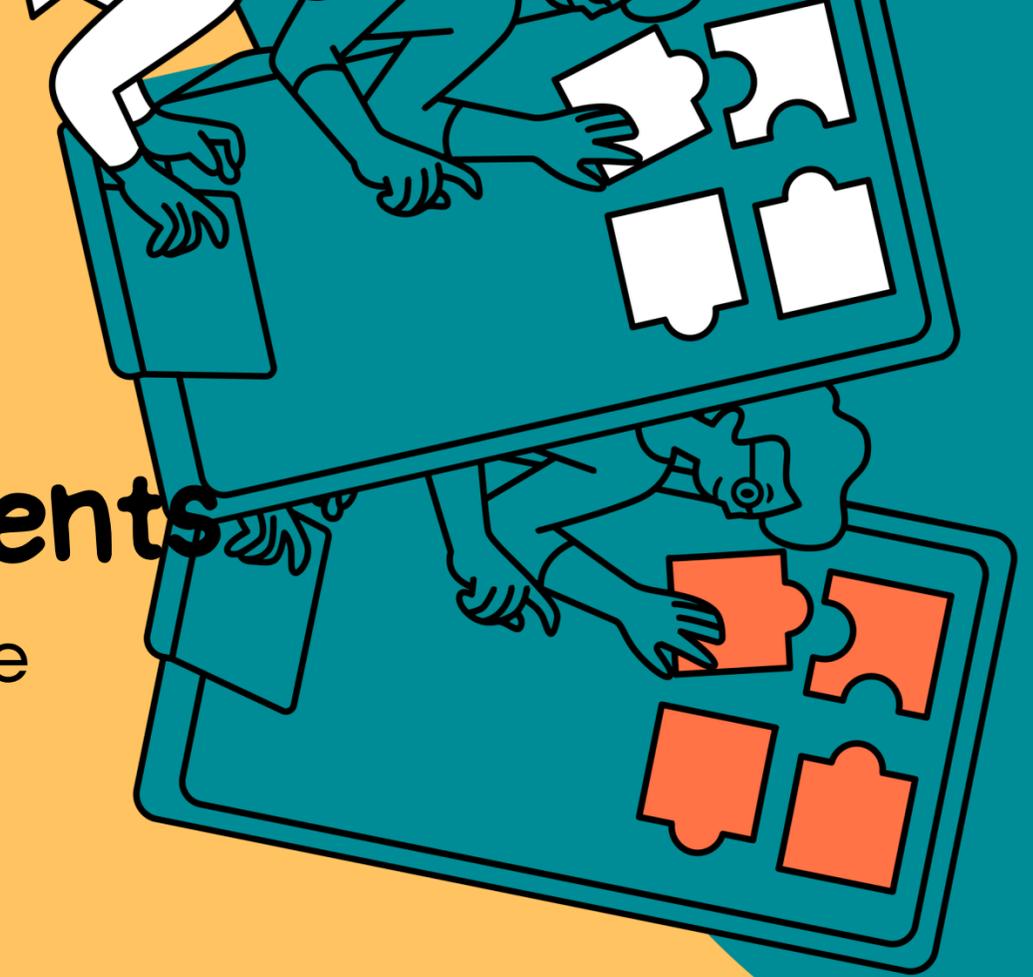


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Reflections & Commitments

What is one reflection you have from this workshop?

What is one therapeutic limit you will set for yourself moving forward?



References

Dean, E., Linnenkamp, B. (2021). Deciding my future: Experiences of adults with IDD and family members using supported decision making. *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 75(2). DOI: 10.5014/ajot.2021.75S2-RP201

Landreth, G. L. (2012). *Play therapy: The art of the relationship, theory and application of child-centered play therapy* (3rd.). Routledge.