

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

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Introduction

In early childhood, perhaps even more than later in life, imitation learning, or modeling, is central to social learning. Children's brains soak up like sponges the images of what people do and say. Sometimes we see children reproduce exact replicas of these images, in their own behavior. More often we see amalgams of many different models, altered by the child's special spin.

This is a book of "modeling plays" to be acted out for/with young children. Through such plays we can model not only behavior patterns, but also patterns of thought and emotion. I've tried to make all three of these "imitation-worthy."

The list of psychological skills this book models is the same "psychological skills axis" I've used in my other books. There are sixty-two skills, divided into sixteen groups. This list is presented in an Appendix to this book. Productivity, joyousness, kindness, honesty, fortitude, good decisions, nonviolence, and respectful talk are the first eight groups. (Friendship-building, self-discipline, loyalty, conservation, self-care, compliance, positive fantasy rehearsal, and courage are the second eight!)

In addition to modeling psychological skills, putting on plays for children with toy people models another extremely useful skill: the art of doing dramatic play itself. Some children take naturally to dramatic play: the first moment they see toy people they begin to construct dialogues and plots. Other children need to be shown how to do this. I have seen children who didn't seem to have a clue about how to do imaginative play with toy characters, who, after seeing models of such dramas, launch into a hobby/occupation that keeps them happy for hundreds of hours.

But dramatic play is not just for amusement and entertainment. It allows children to practice using their minds in several crucial ways.

Specifically:

1. They practice the skill of imagining events that are not physically present. This competence is central to cognitive development.
2. They practice imagining how people think and feel in various situations. This is the skill of empathy, and it is central to ethical development.

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3. They practice having people talk to each other, to think of things to say to each other. The skill of social conversation is crucial to social development.
4. They practice constructing language to communicate the content of their play to others or to themselves. Such practice aids greatly in language development.
5. They practice developing novel plots, inventing interesting turns of events. Such is practice in the development of creativity.
6. If the child learns to have fun with dramatic play with a sibling or with another child, there can be many hours spent in pleasant social activity. Since a positive outcome for the activity depends upon cooperation and joint-decision making between the two individuals, the development of these skills is fostered.
7. If a young child can learn to enjoy dramatic play, and if the content of that play is positive and prosocial (not violent and cruel), the child has internalized the beginnings of the ability to do “positive fantasy rehearsals,” a vehicle for practicing any other psychological skill.

In summary, a child’s learning to do dramatic play in early childhood can be a positive event of major proportions.

The props for these plays are available in nearly any toy store or department store: a toy house, airport, and farm, with the accompanying toy people. Almost all props that are not present in the boxes of these toy units can be made quickly with odds and ends, scrap paper, or with the imagination. For example, suppose that a play calls for one person to help the second turn over a heavy table, but there is no toy table in your batch. To make a table, you can get a piece of scrap paper and fold down two ends; the result looks convincingly like a table. Or you can take a book and say, “Pretend that this is a table.” Or you can simply say, “Pretend that there is a table here.” A wad of paper can be a ball, or a bean bag chair, or a big rock, or a visitor from another planet. Scraps of paper can be snow, garbage, flower petals, or whatever.

You don’t really need the toy characters to look like the characters they are portraying; for example, with the use of some imagination, a stuffed bear can be a farmer and a stuffed dog can be the boy who is helping him. If no toys are handy, the index finger of one hand can be one character, the thumb and four fingers of the other hand can be another, and a thumb

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and index finger can be a third. Each of these finger characters can have a distinctive way of moving when he/she speaks. The older the child and the more accustomed the child is to dramatic play, the fewer props the child needs.

You can use these plays in several ways. The most straightforward way is simply to put on one or more plays for the child or children every day. The children are the audience, and you are the performer. You review the plot of the play, load it into your memory, and without needing to repeat it word for word, you act it out. To designate which character is speaking, you pick up the toy person who is the speaker, and move that character as he or she speaks.

Two features of your delivery will keep your audience interested: *enthusiasm* and a *fast pace*. If you have the characters speak as though they really care deeply about what is going on, your audience will be more captivated by their performance. Model the sorts of positive tones of voice that you want to hear from the children. With many young children it's correct to imagine that the child's attention span will expire any second, and you want to get the characters done with their play before the audience leaves! If you gradually find that the child's attention span is long enough for more elaborated plays, that's good too.

If you put on a play for children, and especially for one child, it's good to establish from the beginning that the role of the audience is just to watch and not to pick up the toy people and speak for them. This will be much easier for the children if the toys and the table or floor surface upon which they act are out of the child's reach. If the child builds up during this time a huge desire to play with the toy people, perhaps he or she can gratify that wish as soon as your play is over. If you are using these as "bedtime plays," you may want to build in fifteen minutes of spontaneous dramatic play after you put on the play.

Doing "jointly created" dramatic play with a child is a much more complex activity than performing the plays in this book. It is a true art. You may wish to read some of my thoughts about how to do this art well, in my book, *The Competence Approach to Parenting* (Psychological Skills Press, 2001). Here are some brief suggestions. First, stay in role: speak for the characters and not from your own persona. For example, don't interrupt the drama to say, "Hey Johnny, I'll bet you know what that thing is that's on top of the airport building. Remember when Uncle Fred showed you about it?" If you really want to talk about it, have a character say to another character, "Excuse me, do you know what that thing is on top of the

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airport?” “No, I don’t,” says the character, “let’s ask [the child’s character] and see if he knows.” Second, cultivate the skill of “tracking and describing”: naming what the child’s characters are doing. For example, the child has the animals hurry into the barn to escape the tornado, and you say, “There they run, into the barn! They don’t want to get caught in the tornado!” It’s even more effective to have a character track and describe what the child’s characters are doing. If the actions are more prosocial, you track and describe with more approval, and if the actions are more antisocial, you track and describe with a disapproving tone – disapproving of the characters’ actions, not the real-life child. If the child has the characters do violent or cruel things, one way of responding is simply to watch, silently, not reinforcing the fantasy rehearsal of these actions by further attention. Throughout the dramatic play, you use any opportunity you can to model positive patterns of thought, feeling, and behavior, without letting such examples intrude upon or interrupt the direction of the plot. (I have used the plays in this book when doing jointly created dramatic play with children. Before the play begins, I have gotten two or three plots in my mind. When a lull in the action occurs, I move the plot in the direction of the modeling play. Sometimes it goes to completion, and sometimes the child joins in and changes the direction. Either is OK, in this context.) In jointly created dramatic play, you aim for an ideal balance between letting the child determine the direction of the plots while you simply respond, and providing direction yourself. Especially if the child tends to be very controlling, or very reticent and shy, you gradually work toward the child’s being able to balance directiveness with responsiveness as well. In this way the child can gain more flexibility and balance in interpersonal style: not stuck in either bossiness or passivity.

A second way to use these plays is to collaborate with the child in producing them. You read the play to the child (or in the case of an early grade schooler) let the child read the play to you. You decide who will play which part. Then you act out the play together. You can use the toy people, or you can let your own bodies portray the characters. As an added twist, you can audiotape or videotape your plays, and watch or listen to them afterwards.

I never intended these plays to be read to children, but I’ve found that play-readings can be done successfully, too. Using different voices for different characters helps a reading of a play to be an entertaining performance.

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As you get more familiar with modeling plays, you may want to add in another technique: reenacting, with the toy people, the child's positive behaviors. Did the child use self-discipline in working on an academic subject? Was the child pleasant and friendly to another child? Was the child honest in admitting something? Did the child comply with a request or command you made? Did the child stay cool when she didn't get what she wanted? If so, at the end of your time with the child (e.g. bedtime, the end of the session, the end of the school day) reenact the child's positive example with the toy people, just as you would put on one of the plays in this book.

I can't resist at this point getting in a few words about protecting children from negative models. Our society produces fictional negative models in massive quantities and distributes them over television, videos, video games, and the Internet. Because outright violence is so abundant, we often don't even notice disrespectful and bratty words, delivered in impudent tones. The massive "downloading" of disrespectful and violent interactions from the scripts of the media to the brains of children has very harmful effects. But if you're enough of a believer in the power of modeling to put on the plays in this book, you probably hardly need convincing on the issue of negative models in the mass media.

This book is written for very unusual and rare people: parents or teachers or caregivers or therapists of young children who have the self-discipline to provide positive models for children, regularly and frequently, through plays. If you perform these plays for your child, day after day, you belong to very select company. Performing is more difficult than reading stories to children. But even for those people who find it difficult, it gets easier over time. The really hard part is just getting around to doing it. There are so many other demands upon the time and energy of everyone. It's so easy to misplace this book, or for it to get hidden under a pile of other stuff. It sometimes feels so impossible to get one-on-one time – even the minute or two that any of these plays requires – with a child when there are siblings or classmates. And if you are a teacher in charge of a group of children, it is difficult to get yourself to take even thirty seconds to read the plot of a play, when your attention is being constantly requested. If you are one of those select few who can overcome these difficulties and put on all or nearly all of these plays for children, you deserve to be lionized. Please email me at joestrayhorn@juno.com so that I can say congratulations. But your best reward will come when you observe the enthusiastic, joyous,

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thoughtful, determined, kind, or otherwise positive patterns you model, reflected in the children's real-life behavior.

Group 1: Productivity

Skill 1. Purposefulness

Not Just Laying Bricks, But Building a House

Props for this play are some blocks, and something flat that can be put on as a roof, and some torn-up paper meant to be snow. Dominos will work well as bricks if there are no blocks around.

First person: Here I go, putting one brick next to the other.

Second person: Wow, that looks boring! All you're doing is putting bricks next to each other and on top of one another.

First person: Yeah, but I have a purpose. I'm not just stacking up bricks and cementing them together. I'm building a house, to let people come into when it's cold so that they won't get too cold. I have in mind what I'm trying to do.

Second person: Hey, that makes it different, doesn't it? It's a house to keep people warm! I'll help you.

First person: Thanks.

They finish the house.

First person: Hey, it's getting cold and starting to snow right now. (shouts) Anybody who's cold, you're welcome to come into my house!

The confetti comes down.

Second person: I'm glad I get to come inside.

Third, fourth person: Did you say we could come in out of the snowstorm? Thanks a lot!

Group 1: Productivity

First person: It's my pleasure to be of service to you!

Narrator: That's the end of the play.

Skill 2. Persistence, Concentration

Taking the Math Test with the Sniffler

First student: Mommy, there's a big math test at school today.

Mommy: Are you ready for it?

First student: Yes! See you later!

Narrator: She went to school and started to take her test.

Teacher: OK children, this is a very important test. Try to do your best!

Second student: Achoo! Sniff, sniff.

First student: Time for me to concentrate. I want to think of nothing but these questions, until I'm done and have checked them all and am sure they're right!

Second student: (Nose blowing sounds. Cough. Cough. Sniff.)

Third student: Gosh, that is so distracting. I can't concentrate with all that noise.

Narrator: Finally the test was over and the students went out on the playground.

Third student, to First: That was terrible trying to take that test with that person sniffing and coughing all the time, wasn't it?

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First student: Was she doing that? Gosh, I didn't even realize it. I must have been focusing on the test so much that I didn't notice.

Third student: Amazing! What good concentration you must have! I wish I could have done that.

First student: You just pointed out something for me to feel glad about. Thanks!

Third student: You're welcome!

Narrator: That's the end of the play.

Listening to the Story

Child: Mommy, would you read me a story, please?

Mother: Sure, let's go in and sit on the couch and read. I'm glad you like to listen to stories. I'm glad you have the patience to listen for a long time.

Narrator: They sat down together on the couch and the mom read the story, and the child heard it to the end!

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Shoveling the Snow

The prop for this one is a piece of white paper torn into pieces to represent snow.

People in the house: Well, it's time for bed. Good night! (They go to bed.)

Narrator: While they're asleep, it snows. (Narrator drops the pieces of paper on the yard, and just outside the garage.)

Person in the house: Well it's time to get up this morning. Good morning!

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Another person: Good morning. Hey, look what happened last night! It snowed!

First person: Wow, look at all that snow! That's pretty, isn't it!

Second person: Yes, but we'll have to shovel some of the snow out of the way if we want to drive the car.

First person: Boy, that will be a lot of work. But it will take half the time if we do it together.

Second person: Want to do it right now?

First person: Sure. I'll get my hat and coat and warm shoes and gloves.

Second person: I'll get us a couple of shovels.

(They go out and get the paper out of the way of the garage.

First person: It's a lot of work, isn't it?

Second person: Yes. I've gotten the urge to quit working several times. But I want to finish this.

First person: At least we're getting lots of exercise, and getting in better shape.... Now we're all done! Let's see if we can get the car out.

(They get the car out.)

Second person: Hooray, we did it! Thanks for helping me!

First person: Thank you, for helping me, partner! We got a lot of work done, didn't we?

Narrator: That's the end of that play.

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Teaching Herself to Read

Girl: Mommy, I want to learn to read. Can you teach me?

Mommy: I have to go to work now. Your older brother is here, and I don't think he can teach you. But there is a video that you can play. It's supposed to show people how to read.

Girl: Good, I'll watch it and see how much I can learn.

Narrator: The girl put the video on. Here's what the person on the video said.

Person on the video: Hello. This is a video for people who want to learn to read. First you'll learn the sounds that the letters make. Then you'll learn to blend those sounds together, to make words.

Girl: I think I understand that. I'm going to keep on listening and watching.

Narrator: The girl watched the video many times. She kept practicing and kept practicing. She did this every day for a long time, while her mother went to work. One day the girl said to her mother:

Girl: Hey mother, I've been working on reading. Want to hear what I've learned?

Mommy: Yes.

Girl: (Reads from book) The jet is up. Jeff is on the jet. Jeff must fix the jet fast. The jet can land. Thanks, Jeff!

Mommy: That's amazing! You taught yourself to do that! You are really an amazing girl! Hardly anybody your age is able to keep on working at something like you have!

Girl: When I learn to read really well, I can teach myself a bunch of other things by reading!

Mommy: This is incredible!

Group 1: Productivity

Narrator: That's the end of the play.

Cleaning Up the Broken Glass

Girl: It's really neat to be babysitting for my younger brother.

Brother: May I help you put away those dishes, sister?

Girl: That's really nice of you, but be careful, they're slippery....

Crash! (Bits of paper go over the floor to represent glass.)

Girl: Uh oh, a broken glass. Wow, it broke into a million pieces. Brother, let me lift you out of the way. I have shoes on, but you don't, and I don't want you to cut your feet.

Brother: I'm sorry I broke the glass, sister.

Girl: Thanks for saying that. I know you didn't do it on purpose. You were trying to help.

Brother: You're a nice big sister.

Girl: Now it's time to clean this up. I have to get every one of these pieces up, so my little brother or sister won't get cut.

Brother: Hey sister, your favorite television show just came on!

Girl: Thanks for telling me, brother! (To herself:) I'm getting the urge to leave this job half finished, and see the show. But I know I have to finish. Otherwise someone will forget and walk on this broken glass.

Girl: Now I'm all finished! There's not one single piece. Hey, I'm glad I kept working until I was done!

Narrator: And that's the end of the play!

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Helping the Farmer Pick up the Cabbages

There are some rows of small paper wads, that represent cabbages.

Farmer: (While picking up the cabbages) There are lots of cabbages here that are ready to be picked. I'm going to try to get a lot of them, and carry them back. (He puts a lot of them in his arms. To represent this, take your first two fingers and put them around the man from behind, palm up, and put the wads of paper in them.)

Farmer: Well, time for me to take them all back. Whoops! (He trips, and falls down, and the cabbages fall all over everywhere.) I tripped! I must not have seen that little log there.

Second person: Hey Mr. Farmer, are you all right?

Farmer: Yes, I'm OK, thank you. All I have to do is to pick these cabbages up and go on inside.

Second person: Here, I'll help you pick them up.

Farmer: Well, that's mighty nice of you. (They pick them up.) Wow, you are a good worker! I expected you to get tired of working and want to quit, but you just keep on!

Second person: Thanks! Hey, I'll open the door to the barn so we can put these cabbages in it. (He does that, and the farmer and he go in and put the cabbages down.)

Farmer: Now the cabbages are all where they should be. Thank you very much for helping me.

Second person: You are welcome.

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Group 1: Productivity

Lending a Raincoat to the Person Feeding the Animals

In this play a flat piece of paper represents a raincoat.

The people are all in the barn.

First person: Boy, it is still raining out there!

Second person: It is, but I've got to go out anyway, to feed our pet cow and pig and chicken and sheep.

First person: Our animals don't mind the rain much. But you'll get wet if you go out there. Do you have an umbrella or a raincoat?

Second person: No, I'll just have to run quickly.

First person: I have a raincoat. Here it is. You can borrow it.

Second person: Thanks! That's nice of you! (Puts the raincoat around him, and goes and feeds all the animals.) Here's some nice food for my pet pig, and my pet chicken.... I'll keep on going, till the job is all done, and not leave it half done. (He comes back.)
I'm still dry, thanks to you.

First person: I'm glad I could help you out.

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Tommy Helps the Farmer Fix the Tractor

Farmer: Hey, I think I'll go out and drive my tractor.

Farmer gets in the tractor.

Farmer: Let's see, here I'll start it up. (There are noises like an engine starting, and the farmer drives, a little. Then there are coughing noises, and sputtering noises, and the tractor stops running.)

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Farmer: Hey, my tractor stopped running. I'm afraid it's broken. Let's see if I can get it running again. (There is nothing but coughing noises). Well good grief. This tractor won't work right! (Farmer is really frustrated).

Tommy: Hey, Mr. Farmer, do you have a problem with your tractor?

Farmer: I sure do. Do you know how to fix broken tractors?

Tommy: Yes, I sure do know how to fix them. Here, let me take a look. Oh, I see what's wrong. We need to take this, and put this over here, and it should start working just right.

Farmer: Wow, look at that Tommy concentrating on what he's doing. And he's doing it for a really long time, too.

Tommy: Now try it.

Farmer: (Starts tractor, and drives it around). It's working! You fixed it! Thanks, Tommy!

Tommy: You're welcome, Mr. Farmer! Glad I could help you!

The Dog Jumps Over the Fence

If you are using the farm, the fence can be one segment of fence that comes with the farm. If you are using the house, you can use as a barrier to jump over one of the beds, stood on its side.

First person, or animal: Hey, Mr. Dog, look what I can do! Watch!

This person or animal runs and jumps over the fence.

Mr. Dog: Hey, that's good! I wonder if I can do it.

Mr. Dog runs and jumps, but knocks the fence over.

Mr. Dog: Oops, I didn't make it that time.

Group 1: Productivity

Mr. Dog sets up the fence again.

Mr. Dog: I'll try again. Maybe I can go higher this time.

He tries, but knocks the fence over again; he does go higher, however.

Mr. Dog: Hey, I got higher that time!

First person or animal: That fence is pretty high, for a dog to jump over.

Mr. Dog: I think I can do it. Let me try again.

He still doesn't make it.

First person or animal: I'll see you later, Mr. Dog.

Narrator: Two months later.

Mr. Dog: I've been working. Want to see what I can do?

First person or animal: Sure.

The dog jumps all the way over!

First person or animal: Congratulations, Mr. Dog! I didn't think you could do it, but you kept trying!

Narrator: That's the end of this play.

Waiting for the Seeds to Come Up

The props for this play are some small wads of paper to represent heads of cabbage that are just starting to grow.

Girl: Hi, Mr. Farmer. What are you doing?

Farmer: I'm planting some cabbage seeds. I'll put the seeds in the ground, and before long some cabbage plants will start growing.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Girl: Gosh, those seeds are so small I can hardly see them. Do you want some help planting them?

Farmer: Sure, thank you. Here are some seeds. You drop them about this far apart, like this, right in this row that I've made.

Girl: Like this?

Farmer: That's it. You've got it.

Girl: OK, we've planted them. So why aren't they coming up already?

Farmer: Already? You have to wait for a few days before they come up.

Girl: OK. I'll come back. See you later.

Girl leaves.

Girl comes back.

Girl: Hi, Mr. Farmer. It's been one whole day now. Have the cabbage seeds come up?

Farmer: No, not yet.

Girl: OK, I'll come back later. (She leaves, and then comes back.)

Girl: Now it's been three days. Have the seeds come up yet?

Farmer: No, not yet.

Girl leaves.

Narrator: Then the seeds came up, and made little plants. (The narrator puts little wads of paper where they had planted the seeds.)

Girl comes back.

Group 1: Productivity

Girl: Hi, Mr. Farmer. It's been a whole week now. Hey! Look what I see!
There are little bitty plants growing!

Farmer: That's right! These are the cabbage plants that you planted. You kept waiting, and they finally came up. After we wait a long time more, and these plants grow a lot, we'll be able to pick them and eat them!

Girl: Hooray!

Narrator: And that's the end of this play.

Helping to Get the Airplane Door Open

First person: Well, it's time for everyone to get on the plane. I'll open the door. Hey, it seems to be stuck. I can't get it open!

Second person: Do you need some help?

First person: Yes, I can't get this door open.

Second person: I'll help you try to figure it out. ...

Narrator: They worked it a long time.

First person: I'm about ready to give up.

Second person: Let's go read the instruction manual.

Narrator: They spend a long time reading the manual that tells how to work everything.

Second person: This manual isn't much fun to read, but we're keeping at it. Hey, look at this! It says, "To open the door, pull on the handle while pushing down." Let's try that. (The door opens.)

First person: Hey, it works! Thank you! You really helped me!

Second person: I'm glad I could help.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Figuring Out Why the Helicopter Won't Start Up

First person has a little piece of paper, that represents the instructions on how to start the helicopter.

First person: Let's see. Let me read these instructions. "How to start the helicopter." You first put the helicopter on the top of the terminal building, and then you turn the crank on the other side of the terminal building..."

First person puts the helicopter on the top of the terminal building, but without the peg on the bottom of the helicopter connected to the little socket that turns when you turn the crank on the other side. In other words, he puts it so that the wings don't turn when you turn the crank.

First person: Now, when I turn the crank on this side, the helicopter should start up, and the wings should start turning. Hey, it doesn't do it. I wonder what's wrong?

Second person: Hi, how're you doing?

First person: Well, I can't get the helicopter to start up.

Second person: Would you like me to help you?

First person: Sure, please.

Second person: Are these the instructions?

First person: Yes.

Second person: Let's read them very carefully. Hummh. They're pretty long, aren't they? But let's read all of them.

First person: Boy, you sure can pay attention to those for a long time.

Group 1: Productivity

Second person: Hey, look here! It says, "Make sure that the peg on the bottom of the helicopter is resting inside the socket on the top of the terminal building." That means that this little peg should go into this little socket, like this. Now try it.

(While saying this, the second person has put the peg into the socket.)

First person: OK, I'll try it again. (He turns the crank.) Hey, it works now! You figured it out for me! Thank you!

Second person: You're welcome! I'm glad I could help you!

First person gets in the helicopter and flies away, and says: Good-bye!

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Skill 3. Competence-development

Fixing the Roof

First and second person are sitting on the top floor of the house.

First person: Hey, a drop of water hit me in the face! The roof must be leaking!

Second person: I've been studying and learning how to fix roofs. I'll fix it.

First person: I'll help you if you show me what to do.

(They go onto the roof.) They sing: Working, working, all day long, working, working, singing a song.

Second person: It's all fixed.

First person: Let's go inside the house and check it out. No more water is dripping in! Thanks a lot!

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Second person: You're welcome!

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Helping Tie the Shoes

Older person (to himself) His shoes are untied, and I don't think he knows how to tie them. I'm glad I worked hard on learning to tie my shoes. I can help him out. (To the child): Hey, I'll help you tie your shoes. (Ties the shoes.)

Child: Thanks for doing this for me!

Older person: It was my pleasure!

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Fixing the Doorbell

First person: Humh, it looks like the doorbell won't ring! (Tries to ring it, but there is no sound.) This needs to be fixed!

Second person: I've studied and learned how to fix doorbells. Watch this. (Fiddles around with it, inside and outside, then says) Now try it.

First person: (Rings the bell.) It works! Thank you!

Second person: It was my pleasure.

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Learning Swimming

The people are around the piece of plastic or paper that represents the lake or swimming pool.

Group 1: Productivity

People are in the water, swimming. Someone is on the side, not swimming.

People in the water: Hey, come on in!

Person on the side: No, I can't right now.

Another person on the side: Hey, I'm going in, come with me.

First person on the side: No, I can't go in the water now. (Other person goes in, saying "Whee.") First person on the side: I wish I could swim. They look like they're having a good time, and I wish I could too. Sigh. (He sounds sad.)

Second person: Hi, you look sad. What's the trouble?

First person: Well, I don't know how to swim, so I can't go in.

Second person: You're smart not to go in, if you don't know how to swim. (Pause.) Hey, I've got an idea! What if I taught you how to swim?

First person: Wow, could you do that? That would really be nice of you.

Second person: Sure! Come on! (They go to the water's edge.) We start out before we even get into the water. Watch what I'm doing with my arms, and see if you can do just the same thing. It looks kind of like a bird flapping its wings.

First person: Like this?

Second person: Right! That's it! You push a lot of water down with your hands, and then you turn your hands to slice through the water when you draw them back. Just like you're doing!

First person: OK!

Second person: Now watch me do it in the water. I'm sticking as little of my face and head out of the water as I can, because the more of me is out of the water, the more I tend to sink. I just relax back, and stick my face a little

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

out, and do the same flapping motion with my arms. I don't even do anything with my legs.

First person: Wow, that looks easy. Shall I give it a try?

Second person: Sure. (First person tries it.) You're learning so fast! You're doing it!

First person: Hooray, I'm learning how to swim! This is the first time I've ever held myself in the water without standing on the bottom! Thanks for teaching me so far!

Second person: You're welcome!

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Learning to Put the Harness On

First person: Hi, Mr. Horse. Would you please pull the cart for me, while I move some things from here to over there?

Horse: Sure. You just put that harness on me, and then you can hitch the cart up, and I'll pull it.

First person: Now let's see, here's the harness. How do I get this on the horse? Hummh, it doesn't seem to go on right.

Second person: Hi, do you need some help with that?

First person: Yes, please. I can't seem to get the harness to go on right.

Second person: What you do is to put it like this, right in the middle of the horse's back, like this, and then push down on it. There!

First person: Hey, thank you! I'll try it myself, so I won't forget how to do it. (Takes harness off, and while putting it back on, he says:) Let's see, you put it like this, right on the middle of the horse's back, and push down. It works! Thanks for teaching me!

Group 1: Productivity

Second person: You're welcome!

First person puts cart on the harness, and says: OK, Mr. Horse, we're ready.

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Teaching the Person How to Use the Tractor

First person: Let's see now. I want to drive this tractor, but I'm not sure that I know how to do it right. Well, here goes. Whoops! (The tractor makes a funny noise, and it falls over in one direction, and the person falls over in the other direction.)

Second person: Hey, are you OK?

First person: Yes, I'm OK, I'm not hurt, but I don't know how to get this tractor to drive right without jerking all over the place and falling over. Do you know how to run it?

Second person: Yes. Would you like for me to show you?

First person: I sure would, if you'd be willing to.

(They get the tractor upright again.)

Second person: Well, the first thing you do is to push this clutch pedal in. If you haven't been pushing it in, that can cause big problems. Then you turn the key, and turn the tractor on, like this.

First person: I see, OK.

Second person: Then you let the clutch out very slowly, and the tractor goes forward nice and easy.

First person: Thank you! You've told me just what I need to know. May I try it now?

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Second person: Sure.

First person: OK, so I push this pedal in, and then turn the tractor on, and then let the pedal out nice and slowly, and the tractor moves forward nice and easy! Hey, it works!

Second person: You learned very quickly! You're doing a good job!

First person: You were a good teacher! Thank you!

Second person: You're welcome!

Narrator: And that's the end of the play!

The Cow Learns How to Fly

(There is a piece of paper about one inch square on the floor, that is folded in half; this is to be the book in this play.)

The cow is walking along, looking around not far from the book.

Cow: Hey, this is a nice day to be outside. Hey, look at that thing on the ground over there! (Cow sees the book). I wonder what that is?

The cow goes over and opens the book.

Cow: Hey, it's a book. And look what it says: it says "How Cows Can Learn to Fly"! This book is going to teach me how to fly! Golly, this is really something! Humm, this looks good. I think I'll try it!

Pig: Hey Ms. Cow, what're you doing?

Cow: I've just read about how to fly, and now I'm going to try it out.

Pig: Oh, come on. Cows can't fly.

Group 1: Productivity

Cow: Well, let's see. Here I go! (The cow goes up into the air and comes back down. While in the air, the cow yells the following:) Yahoo! Wow, this is fun!

Pig: Wow! You really did it! I wouldn't have believed it, if I hadn't seen it!

Cow: Would you like a ride on my back, Mr. Pig?

Pig: Sure! That would be really nice of you!

(The pig climbs on the cow's back, and they go up into the air. The pig yells down to the other people, the following) Hey! Yahoo! The cow learned how to fly!

The other people: Wow, look at that!

The cow and the pig land.

Pig: Thanks for taking me flying, Ms. Cow!

Cow: You're welcome, Mr. Pig!

Fixing the Blown-Out Tire

Person in the baggage-car: Here I go, taking the baggage out to the airplane.

Pow!

Person in baggage-car: What was that loud noise? And why is my car giving me such a bumpy ride now? Oh, I know what happened. My tire blew out.

Second person: What was that big noise, did your tire blow out?

First person (the one who was in the baggage-car, and who is now looking at the tire): Yes. And I don't know how to fix it.

Second person: I know how. Would you like for me to show you?

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

First person: Would you do that? I'd really appreciate it.

Second person: First you get the spare tire out of the trunk, and put the jack under the car. Then you loosen the screws on the tire. Then you jack the car up, so that the tires come off the ground. (The person puts one tire on a bag or a block so that two tires are off the ground.)

Second person (continuing): Then you take the old tire off, put the new tire on.

First person: May I try doing that, so I'll learn how?

Second person: Sure.

First person: OK, I take the old tire off, and put the new tire on.

Second person: Good, you did it just right. Now you put the screws back on, and let the jack down, and then tighten the screws again. And it's all done.

First person: Hey, now I know how to do it next time! Thank you for teaching me!

Second person: You're welcome! It was my pleasure!

Narrator: That's the end of that play.

Skill 4. Organization

The Store Owner Gets Organized

Props for this are a few of pieces of paper. Some are left white, and some are colored red or blue (or any other colors). You can use colored paper, or just color the paper with a crayon or pen.

Customer: I'd like three pieces of blue paper, please.

Group 1: Productivity

Store Owner: Why sure, I'm so glad to be able to sell you some blue paper. Just give me a few minutes, to find it.

(Store owner goes to a totally random pile containing other pieces of random junk, plus various pieces of paper, of random colors.)

Store owner: Let's see, three pieces of blue paper. Hummh. Here's a piece of red paper. Here's a piece of blue paper. I'll put that here. Let's see. Now where's another one. Humh. (Throws stuff around.) Now I can't even tell where I put the first one.

Customer: I'm sorry. I can't wait any longer. I'm going to go buy it at another store.

Customer exits.

Store owner: Why does this always happen to me?

Friend of store owner: Why does what always happen to you?

Store owner: Hi, friend. What always happens is that it takes me so long to find something, that my customers go away. See, here is all my stuff. It takes a long time to find anything.

Friend: Would you like a suggestion?

Store owner: Yes, please.

Friend: I think you should organize your things. That means that you put the things that are the same, in a pile together.

Store owner: Hey, that's a good idea.

Friend: I'll help you do it. First let's separate out the paper from the other stuff.

Store owner: Good idea! Let's see, this is paper, this isn't. This is paper, this isn't.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

(They separate the things.)

Friend: Now, we can put the paper that's the same color, in piles together.

Store owner: Good idea! This is white, this is red, this is blue, this goes in the blue pile, these two go in the white pile...

(They sort the paper.)

Store owner: Hey, here's another customer!

Customer: I'd like three pieces of white paper, please.

Store owner: OK, let's go to the pile of white paper, one, two three. Here you are.

Customer: Thanks! Here's your money!

Customer exits.

Store owner: Hooray! I finally sold something! And it's because you helped me get things sorted out and organized!

Friend: It's my pleasure to be helpful to you, friend.

Narrator: That's the end of that play.

Group 2. Joyousness

Skill 5. Enjoying aloneness

Waiting to Tell the Mother About the Magnet

Boy: (Riding Bus) I can't wait to tell my mother about this interesting thing that happened at school today!

(Boy gets off bus and runs into house.) Mommy, guess what happened today!

Mommy: (Is talking on the telephone. Speaks to the person on the phone.) Excuse me for just a second, please. (Speaks to son.) Hi son! Welcome home! I'm going to be on the phone for a while. I'll look forward to hearing and talking with you later.

Boy: OK. I can handle that.

Boy: (To himself.) I really wanted to chat with her. And there's nobody else here for me to chat with, either, and I can't use the phone. I know! I'll write a little letter to my mother, while she's on the phone, and show it to her afterwards.

(Boy gets paper and pencil. He writes, and speaks as he writes.)

Dear Mommy,

Today something really interesting happened at school. The teacher showed us some magnets. I got to use one of them. It was shaped like this. (Draws a horseshoe shape.) I held the magnet over a paper clip, and the paper clip jumped right up through the air a little ways, and stuck onto the magnet. The magnet would stick to all sorts of metal things. But it wouldn't stick to wood. I found that out by trying many things.

Love,

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Your son

Mommy: Well, I'm off the phone now. I sure do appreciate your being so patient while I was talking. How did you do such a good job of waiting?

Boy: I did some writing while I was waiting. I wrote you a letter. Do you want to read it?

Mommy: I sure do. I can't wait to read what you've written.

(She reads the letter out loud.)

Mommy: What a nice letter! That really makes me feel good to get that!

Boy: It makes me feel good, to do something that makes you feel good.

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Letting the Parents Do Their Work

Father: We have a lot of work to do tonight. We have to figure out our taxes, and send this in by tomorrow. (He is looking at a piece of paper, and there is a pencil nearby.)

Mother: You're right. Let's ask our children to let us work without asking us to do anything else.

Mother: (To one of the children) Hi, Tina.

Tina: Hi, Mom.

Mother: Tina, I have a favor to ask you. Your father and I have lots of work to do tonight. Could you and your brother do some things by yourselves, and leave us alone, so that we can get this important stuff finished?

Group 2: Joyousness

Tina: Sure, I'll try to help you out in that way. Maybe my brother and I can do some things together.

Mother: Thanks, Tina.

Mother and father go back to work. Brother enters, near sister.

Brother: Hey, Tina. Where are Mom and Dad?

Tina: They're in their room, doing some important work tonight. They want us to leave them alone so that they can do it.

Brother: Aw, I had something I wanted to do with them. But, I guess I can handle it. I'll just wait until later.

Tina: Do you want to play a game with me?

Brother: Sure! Want to play chess? We haven't done that in a long time.

Tina: That sounds like fun! Come on; let's find our chess men and our chess board.

Mom goes out and peeks at them, and they are playing with each other.

Mom: I sure am proud of you two, playing with each other so nicely.

Brother: Thanks Mom! Hope you and Dad are coming along OK on your work.

Mom: We are, thanks to you two helping us out.

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Skill 6. Pleasure from approval

Feeling Good About the Compliments to the Art Work

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

First person, drawing: This is fun drawing pictures. I could do this all day.
(To second person) Do you want to take a look?

Second person: Wow, look at that picture. That's really good. I wish I could draw like that. Maybe you can teach me some day.

First person: Thanks, I really appreciate that.

Second person: Do you mind if I get other people to look at it? Hey, come here. Look at this picture. You don't mind, do you?

First person: Not at all.

Third and fourth person: You are really talented. I wish I could draw that well.

First person: That makes me feel really good to hear you say that.

Second, third, and fourth person exit.

First person: I like to draw, even if nobody notices it, but it sure does feel good when people pay me compliments like that. Let's see, where was I? Oh, yes....

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Skill 7. Pleasure from accomplishments

Congratulating Oneself While Writing

First person: Hi, what are you doing?

First person: I'm learning how to write. I'm working on making the letter a right now. Here I go, around, and down. That's it! I got it! ... Tell me. You're a good writer. Do you have any advice for me on how to write?

Second person: Yes, I do. It's to keep on doing what you did just then.

Group 2: Joyousness

First person: What did I do?

Second person: You made an accomplishment, you wrote something, you did something better than you did it before, and then you seemed to feel good about it, and celebrate, and reward yourself, when you said, "That's it! I got it!" Do you remember that?

First person: I sure do. It felt good.

Second person: Well, just keep remembering to feel good every time you learn something about writing, or write something you like, and you'll be a really good writer.

First person: Thanks for that advice. I'll remember that.

Narrator: For a long time, our hero worked on his writing. Here's what it sounded like when he thought to himself.

First person: Good, I'm getting going on my writing again! ... Hey, I wrote something pretty good then! ... I'm keeping on going! It'll need some revising, but I'm making progress!

Narrator: After a long time, the first person came back to visit our hero.

Second person: Hi, how are you doing.

First person: I'm fine! I remember your advice about writing from a long time ago! Remember when you told me to remember to feel good and celebrate in my mind whenever I accomplish anything at all in my writing?

Second person: I sure do. If you took that advice, I'll bet you wrote a lot of good stuff.

First person: Do you want to see my latest book?

Second person: Sure!

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

First person drags onto the stage a very large and thick book, one that is a good bit larger, of course, than the first person himself. It's something like the complete works of Shakespeare or an erudite math book.

Second person: Wow! Very nice! Congratulations on writing this book!

First person: Thanks! And it was fun to write, because I congratulated myself, every step of the way.

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Skill 8. Pleasure from your own kindness

Moving Day

All the furniture is in one side of the house. A couple of people are in the house. They are sleeping.

First person: Boy, we've got a big job today, don't we?

Second person: That's right! Today is the day we move. We have to move all this stuff that's in our house, over to the place we're moving to. Well, let's get going.

They start moving furniture from one side of the house to the other side.

Third person: (Rings the doorbell.)

First person: Who's there?

Third person: It's me! I knew you were moving today, and I thought I'd come over and help you move!

First person: That really is nice of you! Come on in!

They move the things over, saying things like: Do you need some help with this bed? I'll get this end, and you get the other, OK? There we go. Now we've got it.

Group 2: Joyousness

They finish moving everything over.

Second person: We're all done! You were so nice to come and help us move!

Third person: It was my pleasure! I really feel good that I was able to help!

Narrator: And that's the end of the show!

The People Dry Their Socks

Someone is in the house, and two people are outside the house.

People outside the house: Boy, it sure is rainy and wet out here today. (They ring the doorbell.)

Person inside the house: Who's there?

People outside the house: It's Jimmy and Betty.

Person inside the house opens door. : Come in! I'm glad you can come in here and get out of the rain! Did you get very wet?

Jimmy and Betty come in.

Jimmy: Well, my feet got pretty wet.

Betty: Mine too.

Person inside the house: Why don't you take off those wet socks and we'll dry them out by the fireplace. That'll feel a lot better.

Jimmy and Betty: That sounds like a good idea. It feels good just to get them off and to stand by this warm fire.

Person inside the house: I'll bet they'll dry out fairly quickly.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Person inside the house: Well, let's see if they're dry now! Yep! They feel that way!

Jimmy and Betty: Boy, that feels good to put on these nice dry socks! Thanks a lot! You really helped us out!

Person inside the house: You're welcome! It makes me feel good, myself, to know that you've got dry socks now instead of having to stand around in wet ones!

Narrator: And that's the end of the show!

The Rug Fire is Put Out

First Person: Look at that nice fire in the fireplace. Uh oh! What's that I see! The rug is burning! What should I do? I could call the fire department, or get everyone out of the house. But the fire is so small, I think I can put it out with water. I think I'll try that.

First person runs quickly, gets some water, and pours it on the rug.

First person: Here goes the water! (Sound effects: Pssh.)

First person: Hey, it worked! The rug's not on fire any more! I got it all out!

Second person: What's going on here? I smell smoke.

First person: The rug caught on fire, but I saw it and I put it out with water.

Second person: My gracious! I'm glad you were here! The whole house could have burned down if you hadn't put it out! Thank you for putting it out!

First person: You're welcome! I'm glad I was here, too! I feel good that I could be helpful!

Narrator: That's the end of the show!

Group 2: Joyousness

Out the Window from the Burning House

The prop in this play is a pipe cleaner that is used as a rope. A piece of string can also be used.

People in the house: (They are yelling out the window) Help! Help! The house is on fire and we can't get out! The fire is closing in on us!

Person on the ground outside: Hey, I'll get you a rope, so that you can slide down it and get out through the window!

People in the house: Please do it quickly! The fire is getting closer and closer to us!

Person on the ground outside runs, to the tune of the William Tell Overture, to where there is a piece of string or a pipe cleaner. He gets it and runs back.

Person on the ground: Here, I'll throw you the end of the rope.
(He throws it to them.)

People: We caught it! We'll tie it up here, and slide down!

First person sliding down: Here I come! Swooop! I made it! I'm safe!

Person on the ground: Hooray! I'm so happy you got out! Come on! The rest of you can come too!

The next person: Here I come! Swooop! I made it!

The next person slides down. The other people: Hooray, I'm glad you made it too! That's all of us! Thank goodness we're all safe!

(They turn to the original person on the ground.) Thank you! You saved our lives by getting that rope for us!

Original person on the ground: I'm so happy that I could help you out. Now shall we go somewhere and call the fire department?

Narrator: And that's the end of this show.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Here is a variation on this play, for children with a little longer attention span. The play goes as before, only at what used to be the end, the dog appears in the window, barking.

Someone on the ground: Our dog is trapped in the burning house!

Another person: What shall we do?

First person: I'm going to climb up and get him!

Another person: Be careful!

First person climbs up the rope. First person: OK, fellow, it's all right, I'll get you out of here. Just don't wiggle too much.

First person and dog come down the rope.

The other people: Hooray! The dog is safe!

Dog: Woof! Woof!

Narrator: And that's the end of the show!

Overflowing Sink

Parent: Well, I guess it's time for me to wash the dishes. I'll just turn on the water and let the sink get full of water. (Sound effects: Fooshhhhh, of water coming into the sink.)

Doorbell rings. First person: I wonder who that could be? (Answers door.) Well my goodness, I haven't seen you in so long, how are you! (The visitor comes in.) Have a seat!

Little boy goes into the room where the sink is. Little boy: Hmmh, what is this? Looks to me like water is starting to come out of the sink. I'd better tell my mother. (or father, as the case may be.)

Group 2: Joyousness

Parent (to visitor) : Is that right! Gracious sakes!

Little boy: Daddy, the water is coming out of the sink. I'd turn it off, but I can't reach it.

Parent: Good gosh, I forgot to turn the water off! (He runs and turns it off. The little boy follows him into the room.) Thanks, son. I forgot all about that, and if it hadn't been for you, water would have gotten all over everywhere.

Little boy: You're welcome, Daddy. I'm glad I could help.

Little boy walks away, and says to himself: Wow, I feel good that I was able to help out like that!

Narrator: That's the end of that play.

Watering the Plants

First person: I'm going away on a trip. I'll see you in a couple of weeks. Good-bye!

Second person: Good-bye! Have a nice trip!

The first person gets into the car and goes a long way away, and stays there.

Second person: (meanwhile, back at the house) Hey, look at all these plants. He always watered these plants. If no one waters them, they'll die. I think I'll water them for him.

(Second person waters the plants.

First person: Well, this is nice; I've been away for two weeks. It's about time to go back. Oh no, I just remembered my plants! I forgot to ask anybody to water them! They'll all be dead when I go back. I feel sad about that.

First person drives back.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Second person: Hi! Welcome home!

First person: Hi! I had a good time. But I forgot all about my plants. I'll bet they're all dead now.

Second person: No, they're doing fine. I watered them for you.

First person: Oh, hooray! They're not dead. (He runs around and looks at them.) Thank you! You saved my plants.

Second person: (to himself) I feel good that I made him so happy!

Skill 9. Pleasure from discovery

The Cure for the Sneezing

Person 1: Hi!

Person 2: Hi, how're you?

Person 1: Pretty good, thanks. I feel like I'm going to sneeze. Ha... Ha...
HaCHOO!

Person 2: Bless you.

Person 1:A...ACHOO! ACHOO!

Person 2: Bless you! Why are you sneezing so much? Do you have a cold?

Person 1: No, I don't have a cold ACHOO! I just started sneezing just then.

Person 2: Maybe you're allergic to something in this place. That means that when you're around it you sneeze.

Person 1: Well if that's true how can we find out what it is that's making me sneeze?

Group 2: Joyousness

Person 2: I'll help you find out. Let's take first one thing out of here, and then another. (Takes an item of furniture, e.g. the television, out of the room.) Let's see if it's the television.

Person 1: Achoo!

Person 2: No, it must not be the television. Let's see what happens when we take this old moldy table out. (Takes table out.)

Person 1: (after a pause) Hey, I don't feel like sneezing any more. Do you think that it was the table that was making me sneeze?

Person 2: I guess it must have been.

Person 1: Let's see if it really was the table. I'll go back and stand by the table again. (Goes and stands.) ACHOO!

Person 2: Yep, it was the old moldy table, all right.

Person 1: So all I've got to do is to stay away from that table and I won't sneeze! Thank you! You really helped me out!

Person 2: You're welcome! I'm glad we figured it out!

Reading the Book in the Waiting Room

Mr. Smith: Here I come into the waiting room. I'm afraid this will be boring. Nothing to do. No television to watch. Just a bunch of books.

Mr. Jones: Here I come into the waiting room. Wow, what's that book? *The Book of Interesting Facts About People and the World*. I'll check it out. (Reads. Oh wow. This is really amazing! Hey, this is interesting too! I'm finding out all sorts of things!")

Nurse: Mr. Smith, you can come back now.

Mr. Smith: Boy, I'm glad I don't have to wait any more. I was so bored.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Mr. Jones: Bored? Gosh, I'm not bored at all, with this interesting book here, and all these others, too! I hope they don't call me back for a while, because I'm having fun!

Narrator: That's the end of the play!

Skill 10. Pleasure from others' kindness

The Gratitude Elf Does His Magic

The prop for this play is an extremely outlandish puppet or stuffed animal or other toy, who plays the part of the "gratitude elf." The other prop is confetti from torn-up paper.

Person: Whoa! Who, or what, are you! I've never seen anything that looks like you before!

Gratitude elf: I'm just a gratitude elf. I'm just going to visit some sleeping person, and work my magic.

Person: Magic! What sort of magic do you work?

Gratitude elf: I sprinkle magic gratitude confetti over someone, and then when they wake up, they're in a gratitude spell. They feel extremely grateful and thankful and very good over anything nice that anyone has ever done for them.

Person: Wow! Amazing!

Gratitude elf: Here's someone sleeping, right here! OK, here I go, with the magic gratitude confetti, and the magic words: uoy knaht! Uoy knaht! Now I run away, and view the results of my deed from a long way off, with my magic telescope. It's about time for him to wake up. Ho ho ho!

Gratitude elf exits.

Protagonist: Who's that laughing? ... Wow! What a nice bed to wake up in! I never thought of this before!

Group 2: Joyousness

Protagonist runs downstairs, where parents are.

Protagonist: Mommy! Daddy! What a nice bed you gave me to wake up in! I'm so happy that I don't have to sleep out on the street, and it's all because of you!

Mommy and Daddy: Huh? The bed? Well, that's nice of you to say that. You're welcome.

Big (brother or) sister walks into the room.

Protagonist: My big sister! The one that used to read me all those stories, before I could read them to myself! You were so nice to do that for me! Thank you!

Big sister: Huh? Well, that was a good while ago, but you're very welcome. In fact it makes me feel really good that you said that.

Protagonist: And I even get to eat breakfast here, and not go hungry! I want you to know I appreciate that! And I even have some clothes to wear, to take me to school! Oh, how wonderful you people are to me! Well, it's time to catch the bus.

Mother and father: What's gotten into him?

Big sister: I hear the gratitude elf has gotten on the prowl lately. Do you think that could be it?

Mother or father: I don't know, but come to think of it, I do feel kind of good that we got him that bed and those clothes. Some other people blow their money on booze or cigarettes.

Narrator: Meanwhile...

Protagonist: Bus driver! Thanks for being so careful, and not having a wreck, and delivering me safe at school! By stopping at all those lights, and putting on the brakes when you were supposed to, you protected my life, and I want you to know I am really grateful!

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Bus driver: Now what's he trying to get out of me? Humh, there he goes, and he didn't even ask me for anything. Maybe he really means it!

Protagonist: Good morning to my teacher! I just want to tell you something. I know how hard you work to keep all us children in line, and to teach us something, and how sometimes we don't cooperate, but you keep right on anyway! And we learn things from you! I just want to say thank you!

Teacher: What do you know? Someone actually appreciates me.

Second Gratitude Elf, to First Gratitude Elf: Well, Mr. First Gratitude Elf, has it happened yet?

First Gratitude Elf: Yes, Mr. Second Gratitude Elf! It's been happening, like it usually does. The people that this boy is thanking are thanking other people. Wait! Wait! I think that I see another one coming, just now, from the teacher!

Teacher: (To a different child) You know something? I really appreciate the way you do your homework each night and turn it in every day. It makes my life lots easier.

Child: Wow, I feel good that you said that!

First Gratitude Elf: You see, it spread again! I love it when it does that!

Second Gratitude Elf: Too bad those people can't see you or know what you're doing. But I feel grateful to you, because you're making people happier!

First Gratitude Elf: Wow, how nice of you to say that!

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

The Farmer Gets Medicine for the Horse

Group 2: Joyousness

All the props for the farm are set up. There is a man set up apart from everything else, who is to be the doctor in this story.

Horse: Oh my, I don't feel so good. I feel sick. (Horse moans a little). (He is by himself while saying this). (He lies down on the ground).

Farmer: Hi, Ms. Cow, how're you feeling today?

Cow: I'm feeling just great, Mr. Farmer.

Farmer: Hi, Mr. Horse, how're you feeling today?

Horse: Unnh. I feel really sick. (Horse moans some more).

Farmer: Gosh, he really sick. Come on; let's take him into the barn.

Cow: I'll help you, Mr. Farmer. (They drag the horse into the barn).

Horse: Thank you for taking me inside.

Farmer: Ms. Cow, you watch him, and I'll go to the doctor to get some help.

Farmer gets in the tractor and drives over to the doctor.

Farmer: Doctor, please come quickly! My horse is sick!

Doctor: OK!

They ride back to the tune of the William Tell Overture.

Horse: (Moans).

Farmer: Here he is, doctor.

Doctor examines the horse.

Doctor: I know what's wrong with him. Take this medicine, and you'll be well soon. I'll put it in here, and you can drink it.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Doctor puts the medicine in the trough. Cow and farmer help horse to stand up and drink it.

Farmer: Thanks, doctor. I'll take you back.

They ride back in the tractor.

Farmer: Thanks again for helping my horse.

Doctor: You're welcome.

Horse: Hey, I'm starting to feel better already!

Farmer arrives back.

Horse: Hey! I feel better! Thank you, farmer, for getting the doctor for me!

Farmer: You're welcome! I'm glad you're better!

Helping Find the Bag

Before this play begins, take a toy suitcase and put it in some place out of plain sight.

First person: Let's see. What did I do with my brown bag? Where could I have put it? I don't see it anywhere.

Second person: What's the matter? Do you need some help?

First person: I can't seem to find my bag.

Second person: I'll help you look for it. What does it look like?

First person: It's brown, and it's about this big. (Shows with his fingers how big it is.)

Second person: And where have you been with it?

Group 2: Joyousness

First person: I came in that way, and I left it right there. Somebody must have moved it, to get it out of the way. I hope nobody stole it! (First person sounds somewhat distressed.)

Second person: Well, let's see. Is it here? No I don't see it here. How about here? Nope.

The two of them look in various places for it.

Second person: Hey, here's a brown bag, about this big! I'll bet this is it! Hey, I think I found it!

First person runs over. First person: You found it! Hooray, it's not stolen, after all! Thank you for looking with me! I'm really grateful!

Second person: It's my pleasure! I feel good that I was able to help you.

Skill 11. Pleasure from blessings

The Wizard's Potion Helps the People Celebrate Their Blessings

Man, to storekeeper: Here's your money for the orange juice I'm buying, Mr. storekeeper.

Storekeeper: Funny, that's a strange looking carton. I didn't remember that we sold that brand. Oh, well. Whatever. Thanks for your purchase.

Man: Thank you, Mr. Storekeeper. (Exits.)

Wizard (or some outlandish or magic looking character enters.) Mr. Storekeeper. I left a magic potion here. It was in an orange juice carton. I happened to put it down near your orange juice containers.

Storekeeper: Oh, somebody just bought it. What is the magic potion supposed to do?

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Wizard: It makes people feel incredibly happy over anything good that has happened to them, or even anything bad that hasn't happened to them! It's a very unusual effect.

Storekeeper: It doesn't hurt anybody, then, huh?

Wizard: Oh, no. It's a very good potion. One hundred per cent safe, unlike most nonmagic things. Oh, well, I guess I can go back and make some more. And it will only help the person who bought it.

Storekeeper: Well, I hope you're right.

Narrator: Meanwhile, back at the man's home....

Scene 2: At home.

Man walks into house.

Man's wife: Oh, good, thanks for getting the orange juice. I had this craving for it.

Child: Oh, good, I wanted orange juice too!

Man: Me too! Let's all have some.

Man, Woman, and Child: Let's all sit down and drink the milk together.
OK!

(They sit down and drink!)

Man: Wow, am I happy that I get to drink this, instead of dying of thirst right now. Hooray!

Wife: And I'm so happy that the ceiling didn't cave in on us just then! Those wonderful people who built this house did such a good job, and we're so lucky!

Group 2: Joyousness

Child: Wow, I'm so lucky that you two don't do awful things to me, and that you're nice to me! I'm so lucky that I'm big enough not to slide down the bathroom drain when I take a bath!

Wife: Yes! Me too! I never thought of it until you mentioned it!

Man: We're all so lucky and blessed that the sun didn't explode and burn us all up! Hooray!

Wife: Hooray for all these wonderful things!

Child: Hooray, hooray! Let's have a parade, up and down the street!

Man: Great idea! I'll get my trombone!

Wife: Yes! I'll beat on a little pot, and use it for a drum.

Child: And I'll sing with joy!

(The three of them go out marching, and the child sings. They march past the store, where the storekeeper and the wizard are.)

Child: Look at these wonderful things for sale in this store! All this wonderful food to eat! And we have the money to buy some of it! It's so wonderful!

Wife: Isn't it though! (She and her husband sing:) It's wonderful that there's broccoli, it's wonderful that there are carrots! It's wonderful that there is bread! Let's celebrate those things in the next part of our parade!

(They exit.)

Storekeeper: I guess you know who bought the orange juice that had your potion in it, Mr. Wizard.

Wizard: Yep. That's what it does, all right. But you know something, all those things that they thought were wonderful, really are wonderful. So the magic potion just opens their eyes to the truth. It was a good magic potion, wasn't it!

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Skill 12. Pleasure from affection

The Dog Enjoys Getting Petted

Dog: What a rough day! I was very patient when the little baby kept pulling my hair! I sniffed all over the place! I kept from growling at the cat, even when the cat was acting really mean to me! Lots to be proud of, but I'm tired. I sure could use some nice petting from that girl when she comes home. Hey! Here she comes now!

Girl: Hey, how's my dog been? Nice fella.

Girl pets dog.

Dog: Oh, boy, does that feel good. Umh, that feels great, right under my arm where I can't scratch, yes, oh boy, do I like that! Ruf ruf rrrr.

Girl: I think he really likes this.

Dog: Oh, that feels so good. This makes it all worthwhile.

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Skill 13. Favorable attractions

The Television Dating Game

Television Announcer: Hello folks, and welcome to our television show! On this show we have a young woman, and she gets to choose which of three young men she would like to get together with and get to know better. Our studio audience here will also clap and cheer if they like the woman's choice. Our young woman for today is Ms. Jane Smith. Come on out here, Jane!

Group 2: Joyousness

Jane walks out. Audience claps and cheers.

Announcer: OK, Jane, let's meet our first young man.

First man walks out.

Announcer: Jane, this young man, whose name is Samson Violent, is able to win almost any fight he gets into, and he sure does get into a lot of them. He likes to practice fighting, and he also likes to practice shooting guns and throwing knives. He wishes he could be like an action and adventure hero in a movie.

Samson Violent: That's right, I am really tough, and nobody gives me any trouble, not if they know what's good for them.

Announcer: What do you think, Jane?

Jane: Well, he's not my pick. I'm not into fighting. I am interested in men who work for peace and try to make the world more loving. Besides, if he gets into fights so much he might get into a fight with me. No thank you.

Samson Violent: What? You don't want to pick me? How could you do such a thing!

Announcer: Could someone please call the security guards to take Samson Violent off the premises, please?

Samson exits, escorted by two big guys.

Crowd: Yay! Good choice! Hooray!

Announcer: Let's meet our second young man. This young man is Smoothie Handsome. As you can see, he's very good looking. And he plays and sings for a very good rock band. But he lies whenever he feels like it, and he gets drunk really often.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Smoothie Handsome: Hey Jane baby, you're the only one for me, I've never met anybody like you before. Let's go out and get drunk together and really have a good time.

Jane: Well, he's not my pick either. I think it's very important to be able to trust that people aren't lying to me. And I don't drink alcohol, so naturally I don't want to get drunk with him.

Smoothie exits.

Crowd: Yay for Jane!

Announcer: Here's our third and final contestant, Ralph Jones. He works very hard at his job and does it very well. And he likes to laugh and have fun, and he is known for being very kind to people and having lots of friends. Plus he likes to read and learn about new things.

Ralph Jones: That's right, I like to learn things, and I'm interested in people. I think it would be fun to have a chat with Jane Smith and learn about her, and find out what's fun for her.

Jane Smith: That sounds good to me. Ralph Jones is my pick.

Crowd: Hooray for Jane! We like Jane!

Announcer: OK, Jane, you and Ralph get to chat with each other and get to know each other better, and I hope you have a good time! And that's the end of our show for today! Tune in for the next episode!

Crowd: Hooray!

Narrator: And that's the end of this play, too.

Skill 14. Gleefulness

Hide and Seek

Group 2: Joyousness

First person: Hey, do you want to play hide and seek?

Other people: Yes, let's play hide and seek! Who'll be "it?"

One person: I'll be it. I'll hide my eyes and count, and you all hide.

This person puts his face down on the floor and counts to ten. The other people hide, for example under beds, behind tables, behind the house, in the garage.

The person who's it: Eight, nine, ten. Ready or not, here I come! Let's see, whom can I find. Comes across first person: I found you! Comes across second person: I found you! Where could that third person be? Not here. Not here. There you are!
You get to be it the next time.

Narrator: That's the end of that play.

Skill 15. Humor

Fantasies Around the Breakfast Table

Father: Would you like some syrup on your pancakes?

Mother: No thank you.

Brother (to sister): Would you like some syrup in your orange juice?

Sister: Not right now, thank you. Would you like some milk on your head?

Brother: Ummh, well, I guess not. But thanks for offering. (To Father)
Would you like some newspaper hung on your ears?

Father: Yes, please. Just a little piece though, and please make it from the advertising section.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Brother does it.

Sister: To father: Would you like a chair on your head to wear to work with your newspaper?

Father: Yes, please. (Puts on head.) Well, I'll see you all later. I'll say hi to the people at work for you.

Brother: Stop! You can't go to work like that! You'll get fired! And then we can't buy as much food to have for breakfast!

Father: Good point! I guess I'd better leave the chair by the table, and take off the newspaper from my ears. Oh, well. It was a nice outfit, anyway.
Bye.

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Group 3: Kindness

Skill 16. Kindness

Helping Turn the Table Over

The table is upside down. The first person tries to turn the table over.

Second person: Can I help you turn that table over?

First person: Yes, please.

They turn it over, together.

First person: Thanks!

Second person: My pleasure.

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Letting the Person Come in Out of the Rain

First person: Oh, my. It's raining really hard, and I don't have an umbrella.

Second person: Come into my house until it quits raining.

First person: Thank you. You're very kind. (He goes into the house.)

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Feeding the Dog

Son: I've got the dog food right here, and I'm going to feed my dog. Here, dog!

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Dog comes up and eats food.

Son: Nice doggie.

Mother: I sure do like the way you remember to feed your dog.

Son: Thanks!

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Opening the Garage Door

First person: I need to get this garage door open. Unh! I can't get it open!

Second person: Do you need some help!

First person: Yes, please. I could use some. If we both lift I think it will be easy.

Second person and first person together lift the door up.

First person: Thank you! You really helped me!

Second person: It was my pleasure!

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Helping Move the Bed

First person: I've got to move this big bed over there. Boy! This is heavy.

Second person: Do you need some help?

First person: I sure do. If you could get the other end of this bed, we could move it over there together.

Second person: OK, I'll get this end, and let you get the other end.

Group 3: Kindness

They get on either end of the bed, and pick it up and carry it to where it is supposed to go.

First person: This is where it's supposed to go! Thank you for helping me!

Second person: It was my pleasure!

Narrator: And that's the end of this play.

Lending a Cold Person a Blanket

The prop for this play is a piece of paper about three inches by five inches.

First person: (in house) It's cold out there! I'm going to wear a heavy coat. I think I'll fold up this blanket and take it along with me, too. (When he or she talks about the blanket, he gets the piece of paper and folds it up and walks out of the house with it.)

Second person, who is outside, some distance away: Brrr! I'm cold! I wish I could get warm somehow!

First person (coming up to the second person): Hi! You look cold!

Second person: I sure am cold! I'm about to freeze!

First person: Would you like to borrow my blanket, and put it around you?

Second person: Yes! Thank you! That's really nice of you.

(They put the blanket around the second person.)

Second person: Now I'm not cold any more! You really helped me!

First person: You're welcome! (to himself): I'm really glad I could help him out!

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Getting Some Food at the Store

Mother: I'm going to do some cooking. Huh, what do you know, I don't have any flour left. I need some at the store.

Father, or some other person: Hi, what're you doing?

Mother: Well, I was just getting ready to do some cooking, but I need some flour and I don't have any. (She sounds a little distressed.)

Other person: Would you like me to go to the store and get you some?

Mother: Would you do that for me please? I'd really appreciate it.

Other person gets the car, gets in it, goes away from the house where there is a grocery store clerk waiting.

Other person: Let's see: where's the flour: here it is. Unbleached, organic, whole wheat. Really healthy. (To clerk): How are you today?

Clerk: I'm fine! Will this flour be all you're getting?

Person: Yep, that's it.

Clerk: That's a dollar thirteen.

Person: Here's your money.

Clerk: Here's your change. Thanks a lot, have a good day.

Person: You too.

Person drives home.

Person: Here's our flour!

Group 3: Kindness

Mother: Thank you for getting that for me! Now I can do the cooking I wanted to do!

Person: You're welcome!

Narrator: That's the end of this play.

Finding the Ball

The only prop for this play, other than the house, is a wadded up piece of paper that is meant to be a ball. The play can be done with any two characters, and it really can be done in any setting other than the house, with minor changes.

As the play starts out, the house is open, and the ball is placed behind the house or under a bed or somewhere else out of plain view.

First person: Now, where did I put that? Hummh, I don't see it here. Where is it? (The person is sounding frustrated.)

Second person: Hi, how're you doing today?

First person: I'm doing OK, but I'm having some trouble finding my ball. I can't remember where I put it.

Second person: That's too bad. I'll help you look for it.

First person: Well, that's nice of you. (They look in various places.)

Second person: Hey, what's this? Is this your ball?

First person: It sure is! There it is! It was under the bed. Thank you for finding it!

Second person: You're welcome!

First person: Do you want to play with it with me?

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Second person: Sure!

They throw or kick it back and forth to each other.

Narrator: That's the end of the show!

Sharing the Umbrella

The prop in this play is an umbrella, which may be made from a piece of paper that is rolled into the shape of a cone.

First person: Hmmh, it looks like rain today. I think I'll take my umbrella.
(Gets umbrella, in the form of a rolled up piece of paper.)

First person goes walking.

Second person: Hi, friend! How're you today?

First person: I'm fine! Do you think it'll rain?

Second person: It looks like it will start raining right now! Hey, there it goes, I felt a drop just then! And I don't have an umbrella! I'm going to get wet! I hope I don't ruin my clothes!

First person: You don't need to get wet! I have an umbrella. It's big enough to keep the rain off both of us! (He unrolls the paper and makes it into a cone.) Here, get under the umbrella with me.

Second person: Wow, this is really nice of you! It's raining hard, but I'm dry, because you're so nice! Thanks!

First person: It's my pleasure!

Narrator: That's the end of that play.

Group 3: Kindness

Helping Clean Up the Trash

The prop for this one can be some torn up pieces of paper that represent trash, or if you prefer it can be some wads of actual trash, such as wadded up potato-chip bags, crunched up soft-drink cans, etc.

First Person: Yawn. Well, it's about time to go to bed. (Goes to bed.)

A person in a car drives by, and throws the trash out so as to land in the first person's yard.

First person: Yawn. Well, it's morning already. I guess it's time to get up. Hey! What's that I see in my yard!

(He goes out into the yard.) Aw, look at that! Look what somebody did! That's disgusting! Somebody threw trash right into my yard. Oh, well, it doesn't do any good to fret about it; I'll just pick it up.

Second person: Hi! Good morning!

First person: Good morning to you!

Second person: Would you like some help cleaning up this trash?

First person: That sure is nice of you! Yes! I'm putting it right over here, where the garbage truck can pick it up. I'm putting the recyclable stuff in this bag, and the other stuff here.

Second person: OK, I'll carry this, and this. (Helps carry the trash.)

First person: Now we're all done! You really helped me out! Thanks a lot!

Second person: You're welcome!

Narrator: That's the end of this play.

Helping To Find the Cart

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

First person: (Pulling the cart behind him) Let's see, where should I leave this cart? Here's a good place. (Leaves cart in back of barn, and leaves.)

Second person: Well, it's time for me to take the pig to the doctor to get a check-up. I'll drive the tractor, and he'll go in the cart. Come on, Mr. Pig.

Pig: OK. I like the doctor that I go to. I'm looking forward to our trip.

Second person: Here's the tractor. Now where is that cart? Last time I saw it, it was right here, but I don't see it here any more. Hummh. Where can it be? (He looks around.)

Pig: I'll help you look. We can find it quicker probably if we both look. (Mr. Pig looks behind the barn, and finds it.)

Pig: Here it is, I found it!

Second person: You sure did! There it is! Thank you for finding it for us. Now we're ready to go.

The second person hooks the cart to the tractor, and the pig gets in the cart, and off they go.

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

The Horse Scratches the Cow's Back

Cow: Boy, my back itches. I can't scratch, it, though! I can't get my leg up there (tries, but can't) and I can't get my tail to go back there in the right place (tries, but can't). Boy, I wish I could scratch that itch!

Horse: Ms. Cow, did I hear you say that your back itches?

Cow: It sure does.

Horse: Tell me where, and I'll scratch it. (He begins to scratch, with his mouth or with his hoof, whichever you prefer.)

Group 3: Kindness

Cow: Oh, good. Just a little bit farther forward. And just a little bit farther down. Right, just right there! Thank you! Oh, that feels so good!

Horse: Well, I'm glad to have been of service to you, Ms. Cow.

Cow: You sure are nice, Mr. Horse. If I can ever do the same for you some day, please let me know.

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Helping to Carry the Bag

Person on the plane: Attention everybody. This is an announcement. The plane is about to take off. If you want to get on this plane, you have to get here within one minute.

Person on the ground: Oh my. I don't know if I can make it onto the plane, carrying these two heavy bags. (The person is trying to carry both the bags that go with this set. The person sounds distressed.)

Second person on the ground: Are you having trouble carrying those? Could you use some help?

First person: Yes, please. That would be really nice of you. If you can carry this one, I can carry my other bag.

Second person: Sure, that's no problem. I'm getting on the plane too, but I don't have any bags to carry. So I can carry one of yours.

Person on the plane: All aboard, please.

First person and second person get the bags onto the plane and get onto the plane themselves.

First person: We made it! Thank you for your help!

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Second person: It was my pleasure!

The door closes, and the plane takes off.

Narrator: That's the end of that play!

Putting Gas in the Car

First person is driving the car. The car stalls.

First person: Hey, what happened to the car? It's not working any more! Oh, I see the problem. It ran out of gas. Now how am I going to get some gas? I'll have to walk to somewhere, and see if I can get some gas for the car.

First person walks along, and then comes across the gas truck that goes with the jetport.

Second person: Hi! You look tired of walking on this hot day. Do you need any help?

First person: Yes! I need some gas in my car. Is that a gas truck you've got there?

Second person: It sure is. Where's your car? I'll ride out with you and we'll put some gas in your car.

First person: Would you really do that for me? That's great.

They ride in gas truck out to where the car is.

Second person: OK, I'll put the gas in right now. (Puts the nozzle in the hole for gas. There is a sound effect: ffssshhh, as the gas goes into the tank.) That should about do it!

First person: Thanks! Here's some money, for the gas!

Second person: Thank you! Do you want to see if your car works now?

Group 3: Kindness

First person: Yes. (Starts car.) It works! Thanks again.

Second person: It was my pleasure.

Narrator: That's the end of that play.

The Magic Man and the Boy Save the Plane

Boy: Ummh, this sandwich I just bought smells good.

Man: Hello, boy.

Boy: Hello, man. Uh, sir, you look hungry to me. Are you?

Man: Yes, I am, to tell the truth. I haven't had anything to eat in a long time.

Boy: Why don't you take this sandwich? You can use it more than I can.

Man: Thank you, boy.

Boy: You're welcome.

Man: Oh, boy, there's something you should know. I'm a magic man. I have some power to grant people wishes. I let people who are nice to me have one wish, and you were nice to me, so you get to have whatever you wish.

Boy: Gosh! That's hard to believe. Oh well, I'll make a wish anyway. Let's see, what shall I wish for?

At that moment, the plane comes overhead.

Person on the plane: Oh, no! There's something wrong with our plane!
We're about to crash!

Boy: That plane is about to crash. I wish that I could be like superman, and fly up and save that plane!

Man: You've got it. (Narrator puts man in his pocket.)

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Boy flies up through the air.

Boy: Wow, I can fly! Let's see, I'll get the plane and take it down to the ground very gently, so that no one will be hurt. (He gets under plane, and lowers it to the ground.) Now, you people are safe.

People: We're safe! The plane didn't crash after all! Who saved us? It was that boy over there! He actually flew up and brought us down! How did you ever do that?

Boy: Well, there was a little magic man that let me do it. Where did he go? I don't see him.

People: This boy is our hero! You saved us! Thank you!

Boy: You're welcome, people.

Skill 17. Empathy

Sensing When the Friend Has Had Enough

First boy: Friend, I'm so glad you could come over and play with me. Do you want to play a game?

Second boy: Yes. How about that one? It looks really interesting.

First boy: OK! Let's do it.

Narrator: So they played that game for a while.

First boy: Are you thinking you're about ready to do something else?

Second boy: How did you know that! I was just thinking that, right at that moment! Can you read my mind? Tell me, how did you know?

First boy: Well, looking at your face, you weren't smiling as much as when we started. And listening to your voice, you didn't sound as excited. And

Group 3: Kindness

watching you move, you didn't move fast when it was your turn. I didn't know, but I just guessed from these things.

Second boy: Well, isn't that something. Thanks for being tuned in to figuring out what I wanted to do. Want to go outside for a while?

First boy: Sure. (They exit.)

Narrator: That's the end of that play.

Taking Off the Mask When the Sister Is Scared

The prop is a scary face drawn on a piece of paper. This represents a mask.

Boy: It's fun making this mask. Let me look at it now. Wow, it's kind of scary. I wonder if my younger sister will like it. (Puts on mask. Goes to other room, where sister is sitting.)

Boy: (In a ghost-like voice) Hello there!

Sister: (Jumps up.) Oh! (Spoken in a voice of genuine fear.) Help!

Boy: (Takes off mask.) I'm sorry, sister. I didn't mean to scare you. It's only me, your older brother. Remember I was going to make a mask?

Sister: Oh! Thank you for taking that mask off and telling me. I was so scared!

Boy: I could tell. You sounded scared. When I heard your voice, I knew it wasn't time to play around any longer. I didn't want you to be scared in a way that didn't feel good.

Sister: Thanks, brother.

Boy walks out.

Parent: Son, I heard what went on. I'm glad you could tell how your sister was feeling, and I'm glad you didn't want to make her feel bad.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Boy: Thanks for noticing, and mentioning it to me.

Narrator: That's the end of that play.

Making the Toddler Happy

A young toddler is with her mom at the park. Two older girls are nearby.

First girl: It's nice being at the park today.... See that little kid over there, the one that still wobbles when he walks?

Second girl: Yes.

First girl: Well, I think the kid is not enjoying being at the park. I'm going to try to make her happy.

Second girl: How can you tell she isn't enjoying the park? And how will you be able to tell if you've made her happy?

First girl: Just look at her face. See how she looks scared of the older kids? Let's see if I can make her face change.

First girl: (Goes a little closer to the young girl, but not too close. Covers her face with her hands. Takes her hands away from her face and looks at the little girl.) Hi! (Covers her face again.)

Little girl: Oh! Gir-gir peek!

Mother: Yes, the girl is peeking at you!

First girl: (Uncovers face.) Peekaboo! (Covers face again.)

Little girl: Ha ha! Peek boo peek boo! Gir-gir peek boo!

Mother: How about that? You have someone to play peekaboo with!

Group 3: Kindness

Little girl walks up to the first girl, points to the dog.

Little girl: Doggy!

First girl: Oh, yes! There's a doggy! Have you heard it go ruff ruff, howl, yowl (other doggy noises).

Little girl: Ha ha! (Points to first girl, looks at her mommy.) Mommy! Doggy ruff ruff.

Mommy: Yes, she sounds like the doggy when she goes ruff ruff, doesn't she?

Narrator: Both older girls played with the little girl for a good while after that.

Mommy: I'm sorry that we have to leave now. She is having a great time with you girls. Thanks so much for playing with her. She had been feeling a little scared of the older kids. One of them wasn't nice to her not long ago.

Older girls: It was our pleasure to play with her. Bye! Have a nice day!

Little girl: Bye-bye gir-gir!

Mom and little girl exit.

Second girl: What do you know, you were right, she was scared at first. But then when you started being nice to her, she cheered right up! You really could figure out how she was feeling, couldn't you?

First girl: She tells you with her face. Thanks for playing with her with me, friend.

Second girl: It was my pleasure.

Narrator: That's the end of that play.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Checking Before Cutting the Grass

The prop for this is a pipe cleaner fashioned into the shape of a scythe or a grass-cutting blade.

Boy: This blade really works well to cut the grass down with. Whack! Whack! It cuts down this tall grass just fine. But I'm all through cutting this grass at my house. Hey, there's some at the neighbor's house.

(Boy walks over to the neighbor's house.)

Boy: I don't have anything to do now; maybe I'll just chop down this grass. I'm sure my neighbor would appreciate it.

(Boy raises blade, but then stops.)

Boy: Well, wait a minute. Am I really sure the neighbor would like it if I were to cut his grass down? Let me ask him first. That way I can really make sure how he would feel about it.

(Boy walks up to house, rings the bell.)

Boy: Howdy. My name's Fred. I live across the street from you.

Neighbor: Well, hello, Fred. Nice of you to stop by. What can I do for you?

Boy: Well, I was wondering if you would like for me to chop down that tall grass out in your yard, with my blade here. That way you won't have to cut it.

Neighbor: Tall grass? What tall grass? You mean this stuff out here?

(They walk outside to where the grass was.)

Neighbor: This isn't grass. This is a garden. These are oats we've got growing here. When they grow up a little bit, you'll be able to see the oats growing on the end of them. We'll make soup out of them. And these plants

Group 3: Kindness

here will grow corn on them before too long. And these plants here are spinach. We like to eat spinach in salads.

Boy: (To himself) Wow, they've been growing this stuff on purpose for a long time! Am I glad I didn't cut it down without asking them! I would have felt really bad if I'd cut down their whole garden!

Neighbor: These little weeds in between the corn plants need to be pulled up, though. Would you like to help me do that?

Boy: Sure!

(They pull the weeds.)

Neighbor: Thanks for helping me. And also thanks for asking first. I sure am glad you didn't cut first before asking.

Boy: I'm glad too!

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Skill 18. Conscience

Having a Conscience About the Excluded Child

First child: This sure is a nice day to be walking along. I think I'll lean up against this wall and just rest a little bit.

(The second child and his mother come walking from a different direction. They stop and lean up against a different wall, just around the corner, so that they can't see the first child.)

Second child: I can't understand why no one in my class ever invites me to anything. I don't do anything mean and nasty to anybody. I try to be nice to people.

Second child's mother: That really hurts you, doesn't it? I'm so sorry that things are like that. It might be because we can't afford to get the same type

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

of shoes and other clothes that all the other kids wear, and you look a little bit different from them. People these days seem to think that sort of thing is awfully important.

Second child: I just wish I would get invited to a birthday party, or to someone's house, just one time. Everybody else gets invited all the time, and I haven't been invited to anybody's house the whole year.

Second child's mother: It's tough, I know. But as long as you know you're a good person, that's what really counts.

(They walk away.)

First child: That was somebody I know, really well.

First child walks home.

First child's mother: Hi, son, how are you?

First child: I'm fine, but I think I'm feeling guilty. I think my conscience is bothering me.

First child's mother: Why's that, son?

First child: Because I just heard this kid I know talking about feeling bad that he never gets invited to anything. And sure enough, when I had my birthday party, I didn't invite him either. And I did a lot of talking about the party with my friends who did come, right around him, and I'm sure I made him feel bad that he was left out.

First child's mother: Is there any reason you don't like him?

First child: No, I do like him. For some reason he's just the type of person that people don't invite. But I feel bad about it.

First child's mother: I'm glad you do have a conscience. That means that you can do something about it when you think you've hurt someone's feelings.

Group 3: Kindness

First child: I'm glad, too. May I invite him to come over here this next Saturday?

First child's mother: Sure. I think that would be really nice.

Narrator: Here's what happened the next Saturday.

First child: I'm really glad that you could come over and visit me. I want to show you a really fun game that I've been learning to play. Do you want to see it?

Second child: Sure!

Narrator: And they had a good time playing with each other. And that's the end of the play.

Group 4: Honesty

Skill 19. Honesty

Confessing the Broken Dish

Child: Wow, look at all these dirty dishes in the sink! Maybe I can help out my mother by washing them for her. I think I will. I'll get a dishrag, and put some soap on it, and get some nice hot water going, and pretty soon I'll have these dishes all washed. Here I go, to turn on the water: (Sound effects: foosh.)

Child: Well, I'm getting these dishes washed! Oops, it slipped out of my hand: (Sound effects: Crash.) Oh no, I broke a plate! Well, what should I do now? It's broken into too many pieces to try to fix it. I'll just clean it up very carefully and keep on washing the dishes. I wonder if my mother will be mad when she finds out. I should tell her about it, even if she doesn't like it.

Child: Well, now I'm all done with the dishes.

Mother enters.

Mother: Hi! What have you been up to!

Child: I've been washing the dishes, and they're all done.

Mother: What do you know! Thank you! That was really nice of you to do that!

Child: Thanks, but before you get feeling too good, there's something you need to know about.

Mother: What's that? It sounds serious.

Child: Well, while I was washing them a plate slipped out of my hand and I broke it.

Group 4: Honesty

Mother: Well, you sure are brave to tell me about that. That's OK. You didn't cut yourself, did you?

Child: No, I didn't cut myself. I just got a little careless.

Mother: Well, you learned something for next time. Thanks for washing the dishes, and thanks for telling me about the plate.

Child: Thanks for being so nice, Mother.

Narrator: That's the end of this play.

The Boy Tells His Mother About the Torn Newspaper

Mother: It's nice to get home from work and be able to read the newspaper. (Mother is carrying a rolled up piece of paper.)

Mother: Hi, son! How was your day today?

Son: It was good! I had a good day at school. How was your day?

Mother: It was pretty good, but I'm tired. I'm looking forward to just sitting back and reading the newspaper here. But first I'm going to go up and take a shower and change clothes. I'll see you in a few minutes. (Mother exits.)

Son: OK. Hey, may I look at the newspaper while you're gone?

Mother: Sure, just don't get it all mixed up.

Son: OK.

Son: Hey, this is pretty interesting. (Unrolls newspaper and spreads it out.) Humh, I want to see what's on this next page. (Turns the page and rips the page in two.) Oh, oh. Now I've done it. I've ripped this page. I wonder if my mother is going to be mad. I feel like running away, but that wouldn't do any good. I could tell her that my sister came in and ripped it, but that wouldn't be honest. Well, I'll just tell her what happened.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Mother: (Reenters.) Well, that felt good. Now I'll sit down in my easy chair and read the paper.

Son: Mother, I have some bad news. I ripped a page of the paper right in two. It was an accident. I'm sorry.

Mother: Oh, you did, didn't you? Well, next time you can be more careful. But I'm glad you were brave enough to tell me, instead of trying to get out of it. That's the sort of son I'm proud of. I tell you what, how about running and getting some tape and taping it back together for me?

Son: Hey, that's a good idea. (Son tapes the newspaper back together.) Here, Mom.

Mother: Thanks. (Starts reading paper.)

Son: I sure am glad she was nice about that. And I'm glad I decided to come out and tell her.

The Animals are Saved from the Poison

The prop for this one is the poison drain-cleaning stuff, which is five or six very tiny wads of paper, in a sack formed by another piece of paper.

Farmer: Tommy, would you please do me a favor? Would you please put this poison drain cleaning stuff in the thing over near the barn?

Tommy: Sure, I'll do that for you, Mr. Farmer.

Tommy takes the sack of poison drain cleaning stuff and goes toward the barn with it. The farmer goes in the other direction.

Tommy: Now let's see. I'm not sure what thing near the barn he wanted me to put this poison drain-cleaning stuff in. I guess maybe this thing. I'll put it in here.

(Tommy pours the poison into the trough.

Tommy runs back to the farmer.

Group 4: Honesty

Tommy: (To himself) I'm not sure I did the right thing. Should I tell the farmer? I'd be really embarrassed. But I should tell him, because something bad might happen if I put it in the wrong thing.

Tommy: (To the farmer) Mr. Farmer, I did put the drain-cleaning stuff in a thing, like you asked me, but I'm not sure I put it into the right thing.

Farmer: Where did you put it?

Tommy: It was a white bucket that was very wide.

Farmer: Was it pretty near the fence? (The Farmer sounds distressed).

Tommy: Yes.

Farmer: Oh no, you put it into the thing that the animals eat out of! If they eat the poison it'll kill them! Let's get going! We've got to stop them! (They start running around, to the tune of the William Tell Overture).

Narrator: Meanwhile:

The horse and the pig are looking in the trough.

Horse: I wonder what this stuff is.

Pig: I don't know, but let's try it.

Just as they start to try it, the farmer and Tommy come running up.

The farmer: Stop! Don't eat that stuff!

Horse: Why not?

Farmer: It's poison! It would kill you! It's drain-cleaner, not food!

Pig: Well, I'm glad you got here in time!

Tommy: I'm sorry, Mr. Farmer. I'm sorry, animals.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Farmer: Tommy, I'm sorry I didn't tell you what to do more clearly. I shouldn't have said put it in the "thing."

Tommy: That's OK, Mr. Farmer.

Farmer: But Tommy, the good thing is that you were honest with me about not being sure you did the right thing. Because you were honest, nothing bad happened.

Tommy: You're right. I guess I can celebrate that I chose to be honest!

Skill 20. Awareness of your own abilities

The Song and Dance Team Assigns Roles

Teacher: (To a group.) OK, folks, let's divide you up into pairs and let you practice to put on little shows for us. One of you sing, and the other dance. OK, you two. Maybe you can sing, and you can dance. You two, and you two.

First member of first pair: She said for me to sing, and you to dance, huh? Shall we give it a try?

Second member of first pair: Why not?

First member sings, rather poorly, and second member dances, and falls over.

First member: Well, I suppose that's OK for a start. We weren't perfect, but if we keep practicing, we'll get better. I haven't learned to sing very well yet. I've spent most of my time learning to dance.

Second member: Is that right? I'm not very good at dancing yet, because I've spent most of my time learning to sing.

First member: What do you know! Well, maybe for this play, it would be better if I danced and you sang!

Group 4: Honesty

Second member: Let's give it a try.

Second member sings, well, and first member dances, well.

First member: Wow, that was really good! We'll really be able to put on a great show!

Narrator: They did put on their show, just as they had practiced.

Crowd: Yay! That's really good!

Second person: I'm glad we each knew what we could do well and what we couldn't do well, aren't you?

First person: That's what did it for us.

Narrator: And that's the end of this play.

Group 5: Fortitude

Skill 21. Fortitude, frustration-tolerance

Not Getting to Drive the Car

First person: May I drive your car when we go out?

Second person: No, I'll have to drive it, but you can ride.

First person: OK, I can handle that.

Second person: You're good at taking it when you don't get your way.

(The second person drives and the first person rides.)

Narrator: That's the end of the play.

Having to Sleep in Her Own Room

Child: Mommy, may I come in and sleep in your room with you?

Mother: No, you'll have to stay in your own room. I'll walk back with you.

Child: Well, I guess I can handle it.

Mother: That's the spirit. You can handle it.

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

At the Candy Machine

Child: Daddy, look, a candy machine. Could you get me some, please?

Group 5: Fortitude

Parent: No, but we'll be eating supper before long. That will be better for us than candy.

Child: I guess I can handle that.

Parent: That's good putting up with not getting your way.

Child: Thank you.

Narrator: That's the end of the play.

Skill 22. Handling separation

Saying Goodbye at the School

Mother: Time for us to go to the school. (They walk together from the house to a place where several other people are.)

Mother: Bye-bye, son.

Child: See you later, Mommy. Have a nice morning.

Mother: Thank you, you too. (Mother walks away.)

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Skill 23. Handling rejection

Inviting a Friend to Go to the Water Slides

The additional props in this play are some blocks or folded pieces of paper or something else to be water slides.

Parent: Guess what! We get to go to the water slides after school today! And you get to ask a friend of yours to go along with you!

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Child protagonist: Yay! I love those water slides. It's such fun to slide down into the pool of water!

Parent: Remember, you can ask one of your friends to go with you.

Child protagonist: I'll do it at school. Well, good-bye.

Parent: Good-bye.

(Child walks to school, where there are several other children.)

Child protagonist: I'll ask my friend Tommy. Hey Tommy, could you come here? I've got something to ask you. How would you like to come with me and my father out to the water slides this afternoon after school?

Tommy: That's nice of you to ask. But I really don't like water slides. In fact, I'm scared of them.

Child protagonist: OK. We'll get together another time.

Tommy: Sounds good.

Child protagonist: (To himself) Humh, I made an invitation, and Tommy rejected it. But that's OK; I can handle that. It isn't that he doesn't like me. He just doesn't like water slides. I'll invite someone else.

Child protagonist: I'll ask my friend Jane. Hi, Jane! I'd like to invite you to something. My father and I are going out to the water slides this afternoon after school. Would you like to come with us?

Jane: I don't think so, but thanks for asking me. I'm in a big rush now -- I'll see you later.

Child protagonist: Humh, I made another invitation, and Jane rejected it. I couldn't really tell whether she doesn't like me, or doesn't like water slides, or had something else to do, or what. Oh, well, I won't worry about it. I want to take a friend along, so I'll keep asking until somebody can do it, or until I've asked everybody I know.

Group 5: Fortitude

Child protagonist: This is the sort of thing that my friend Ted might be interested in. Hey Ted! How would you like to go out to the water slides with my father and me this afternoon after school?

Ted: Sounds good to me! I'll have to ask my parents when I get home, but I'm pretty sure it will be OK! Thanks for asking me!

Child protagonist: You're welcome.

Narrator: After school ended that day, here's what happened.

Father: Hey, did you get someone to go with you?

Child protagonist: I had to ask three people before someone said yes.

Father: Only three? No problem. Today when I was selling things, I had to ask about fifteen of them for every one that said yes.

Father and protagonist, in car, pick up Ted.

Father and protagonist: Hi Ted!

Ted: Wow, I can't wait to slide down!

(Car goes to water slides. The three start sliding down.)

Father, Ted, and protagonist: Whee! Wow, this is a good one! This one goes fast! This looks scary! I'm going to try it anyway! Wow!

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Skill 24. Handling criticism

Hearing a Good Criticism from a Friend

First child: You don't act friendly lots of times. I think that people would like you better if you were friendlier.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Second child: (To himself) Let me think to myself about this. I'm getting criticized. It sure doesn't feel too good. I wish that people would say only nice things to me. But is this person telling the truth, or just trying to make me feel bad? I think that he's probably wanting to tell the truth. Let me find out some more.

(To the other child): What do you mean by that? What would I be doing exactly if I acted friendlier?

First child: If you acted friendlier, you would smile at people more, and say hi to people more, and say more nice things to people, like "I like what you just did."

Second child: You know, I think you have a good point. I could stand to do those things more often. I'll work on it.

First child: Thanks for listening to me!

Second child: You're welcome.

Third child: (Sings alphabet song.)

Second child: Hi, Rashonda. That's good singing.

Third child: Thank you! I really appreciate that!

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Hearing a Random Criticism

First child: Boy, this is a nice day to walk outside.

Second child, to first: (In spiteful tone) Nyah, nyah! You don't know anything about mathematics, and you aren't good at compliance or frustration tolerance, either! (Note to reader: I'm trying to have a taunt that children are extremely unlikely to imitate.)

Second child walks away.

Group 5: Fortitude

First child: Humh, let me think about that. That person was criticizing me. But I don't even know that person, and that person doesn't even know me. So I think that person was just shooting off his mouth. I don't think I even want to worry about what he said. So I'll not let it bother me.

First child's friend: Hey, he said something to you that was not nice. I can't let him do that and get away with it!

First child: Oh, don't worry about it. He doesn't even know me, so I won't even listen to it or let it bother me. It doesn't make any difference.

First child's friend: You know, I guess you're right. You're pretty smart about this type of thing.

First child: Thanks!

Narrator: And that's the end of the play!

Skill 25. Handling mistakes and failures

The Person Tries to Stand On His Head

Protagonist: Hi Mommy! Guess what, I saw somebody today who was able to stand on his head!

Mommy: That sounds like it was pretty exciting!

Protagonist: Yes! And I want to learn to do it myself, right now. Watch this!

(He tries to stand on his head, but can't get up.)

Protagonist: Well, I couldn't get up far enough that time. I didn't make it. But that's OK. I'll try again.

Mommy: It was a good try, and you handled it well when you couldn't do it.

(He tries again, and this time he goes over too far.)

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Protagonist: That time I went over too far. This is a lot harder than it looks. I didn't make it, again. But, at least I didn't hurt myself. I'll try again.

Mommy: I like how you keep feeling OK, even though you're not able to do it yet. That's a good job of handling it when you don't succeed at something.

Protagonist: Here I go again. Nope. Again: Nope, didn't make it. I'll keep trying for a while longer....

Protagonist: I think maybe before I can do this, I need to get my arms stronger, and maybe try something else easier for a while. I'll try a somersault instead. Here I go. I did it! I didn't succeed at standing on my head, but at least I could do a somersault.

Mommy: Good for you! Some things you don't succeed at right away. I'm so proud that you are a big enough boy to realize that, and not get upset with yourself.

Protagonist: Thanks, Mommy. I appreciate that compliment.

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

The Farmer Helps With the Fence

As this play begins, the fence pieces are not set up, but are lying on their sides.

Horse: (To someone other than the farmer). Hey, Tommy, could you put up a fence for me so that I could be inside it?

Tommy: Sure, I'll do that for you. Let's see, now, how is it that you do this.

(Tommy tries to put the fence up, but he puts the pieces upside down, so that they keep falling over).

Tommy: What is wrong with this! I can't get it to stand up right! Well, let me just relax. It won't help anything for me to get down on myself.

Group 5: Fortitude

Farmer: Hi, Tommy. Do you need some help?

Tommy: Hi, Mr. Farmer. Yes, I could use some help. How do you get these things to stand up and not fall over?

Farmer: Here's how you do it. You see this piece? (Farmer shows him the prop on the bottom of the piece of fence). You put this side down. (He demonstrates). That way it won't fall over. If you put it upside down, it falls over. (He demonstrates that).

Tommy: Oh, I see. Let me try it. You put this side down. Look, you're right, it stands up! Now, I can put it up for you, Mr. Horse. Here we go. (He puts it up). Thanks for your help, Mr. Farmer!

Farmer: You're welcome, Tommy!

Tommy finishes putting up the fence, and the horse goes inside.

Horse: Thanks for putting my fence up, Tommy!

Tommy: You're welcome, Mr. Horse!

Skill 26. Magnanimity, non-jealousy

Handling it When the Little Brother Gets the Attention

Girl: (Walking home from school.) This is a nice walk home. Boy, I had a nice day at school. I learned all sorts of stuff. I want to tell my Mommy about it.

Girl walks into the house.

Girl: Hi, Mommy! I'm home.

Mother: Hi, Honey. Welcome home.

Girl: Wait until you hear about what I learned....

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Mother: Sorry to interrupt you, but I need to attend to your little brother for a while. (Mother walks out.)

Girl: But I wanted to talk to her myself! Oh, well, I guess I can handle it. She'll get done with my little baby brother sooner or later.

Mother: I think your little brother's got another ear ache. I'm going to take him to the doctor. Here comes the baby sitter right now. Bye bye.

(Mother and brother go out, baby sitter comes in.)

Girl: Now I won't get to talk to her for a long time! That baby brother of mine is always getting ear infections! Oh, well, I can handle it. Maybe the baby sitter would like to hear about all this good stuff.

Girl: (To baby sitter) How are you today?

Baby sitter: Pretty good. (Baby sitter speaks to the toddler brother.) Look at you, little fellow. You're just starting to walk. Aren't you interesting? I'm so interested in children your age.

Girl: Would you like to hear something I learned about at school?

Toddler brother: Gaa daa, daaa, gaa...

Baby sitter: Oh, listen to you! You started to talk! Gaa daa, daaa, gaa...

Girl: (To herself) Humh. It looks like that baby sitter is really interested in children that are just starting to walk and talk. I guess that leaves me out, at least for a while. Oh well, I can take it. I know! I'll call up my aunt on the phone!

Girl: Hello, Aunt Elizabeth? How are you! I just thought I'd call up and chat. Things are fine. Guess what I learned about in school. Did you know that the air has pressure, enough to crumple a metal can? It was really neat, what we did.

Group 5: Fortitude

Narrator: And the girl had a good time talking with her aunt. And that's the end of this play.

The Dog Lets the Sheep Play with Him and the Farmer

Prop needed: a piece of paper about an inch square, rolled up to make a stick.

Dog: Come on, Mr. Farmer, let's go out and play together!

Farmer: OK, Mr. Dog, let's go! I'll throw the stick, and you can get it!

(Farmer throws the stick. Dog goes running after it, barking as he goes).

Dog: Here, Mr. Farmer, throw it again!

Farmer: OK, here it goes again!

Dog gets it and brings it back.

A sheep comes close to where they are.

Dog: Growl! Ruff! Ruff!

Sheep: Hey, Mr. Dog! Don't growl at me! All I wanted to do was to play with you Mr. Farmer!

Farmer: Yeah, Mr. Dog. Let's let the sheep play with us.

Dog: But I thought it was just going to be the two of us. I didn't want somebody else getting in on it.

Farmer: But we can all have fun together. Let's play some tag. I'll be it first, and you two see if you can run away from me.

Dog: I don't know about this. But ok, let's give it a try.

(They play tag together). I got you! I'm it!

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Narrator: They have lots of fun.

Sheep: Well, it's time for me to go back home. Thank you for letting me play with you.

Bye-bye.

Dog and Farmer: Bye-bye, Mr. Sheep.

Dog: That was fun! I'm sorry he's gone, now!

Farmer: I'm proud of you! You got over being jealous and had a good time!

Dog: I guess I did, didn't I?

The Horse and the Pig Share the Ball

The only prop other than the farm toys is a ball, which is made from a small round wad of paper.

Farmer: Hey, Mr. Horse, look, I've got a present for you!

Horse: What is it? Oh, look, it's a ball! Thank you, Mr. Farmer!

Farmer: You're welcome.

Horse: (runs along, and bats the ball with his nose). Hey, I sure do like my new ball that Mr. Farmer gave to me. Yahoo!

Pig: Hey, look at that ball. I want to play with it. (Pig goes up and bats it with nose).

Horse: Hey, that's my ball, and he's playing with it!

Farmer: Well, why don't you share it with him some?

Horse: That's my new ball, Mr. Pig, but I'll share it with you. You can play with it too. Why don't we bat it back and forth to each other?

Group 5: Fortitude

Pig: Hey, that's a good idea. (They bat it back and forth to each other).
Whee!

Pig: Well, I've got to go now. Thanks for letting me play with your ball, Mr. Horse.

Horse: I enjoyed it, Mr. Pig. Let's do it again some time. Bye-bye.

Pig: Bye-bye.

Skill 27. Painful emotion-tolerance

Not Getting Anxious About Feeling Anxious

Girl: This should be fun. I like to sing and play my guitar. And now, for the first time in my life, I'm going to get up in front of a whole bunch of people, and sing for them all at once.

(People start filing in, and sitting down.)

People: I'm interested in hearing her sing and play her guitar, aren't you?

Other people: Yes. I heard someone say that she sounds good.

(More people come in.)

Girl: Hey, something's happening to me. What is it? I want to ask my mother.

Girl, to mother: Mommy, something's happening to me. My heart is pounding, really hard! And my hands are getting all sweaty. And my stomach feels a little funny. And my hands are starting to shake a little bit. And I have a scared feeling. What's wrong; am I getting sick or something?

Mother: No, you're not getting sick. All those things are just the normal way that people feel when they're a little nervous. It's natural to feel a little

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nervous when you're going to sing and play for lots of people. You gradually get over it after you've done lots of singing and playing.

Girl: So I should just not worry about all these things I'm feeling, huh, but just try to have a good time singing and playing?

Mother: That's right. Just enjoy yourself, and don't worry about being nervous.

Girl: OK.

Girl walks out in front of the people.

Girl: Hi people! I'm glad you came to hear me. Here I go.

(Girl plays and sings a song.)

People: Yay! Hooray!

Narrator: Later on, the mother and the girl talked again.

Girl: You know something, my voice sounded a little different because of being nervous, when I first started singing. But I figured, that's just another thing that happens when you're nervous; don't worry about it. Was I right?

Mother: You were right! You were really smart to think that way.

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Skill 28. Fantasy-tolerance

The Boy Asks His Father About the Dream

Narrator: A boy was asleep, dreaming, and here's what he dreamed.

Boy: Wow, I'm rich. I stole all this money.

People: Hey, where did you get that money?

Group 5: Fortitude

Boy: Uh... uh... I won it in a lottery.

People: OK. (They run off.)

Narrator: Then the boy woke up.

Boy (in bed): Yawn. Hey, I was dreaming then. I feel bad about what I was dreaming. I'm going to ask my father.

(Goes to father). Daddy? Can I ask you something?

Father: Sure, son. What's up?

Boy: I was just sleeping, and I dreamed that I had stolen a lot of money, and when people asked me where I had gotten it, I lied about it. I had a really bad feeling in the dream.

Father: It sounds like it was a really unpleasant dream.

Boy: But my question is, does that mean that I'm a bad person, or a thief or a liar, because I imagined myself doing these things in the dream? Is it wrong to think these things?

Father: No, son, what you dream about when you're asleep doesn't make you a good or bad person. It's what you really do or say in real life that makes you a good or bad person.

Boy: Is that because what goes through your mind when you dream at night doesn't really hurt or help anybody?

Father: That's right. Some people think you can learn from your dreams, but other than that, what you dream doesn't help or hurt anybody else and for that reason it doesn't make you good or bad.

Boy: Thanks, Dad.

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Group 6: Good decisions
6a: Individual decision-making

Skill 29. Positive aim

Deciding Not To Feel Homesick

First child: Sniffle. Sniffle. Wannnh!

Teacher: Oh, you poor baby. Are you homesick? I'll put you in my lap and hug you and comfort you.

Second child: Wannh! I feel homesick too.

Teacher: Then come up here and I'll hug you and pat you too.

Third child: Hey, what a deal this is. All you do is get real upset and homesick and start crying, and the teacher hugs you and pats you on the back.

Fourth child: But is it really worth it? I think I'd rather find ways of having a good time here. Maybe we can get a hug from the teacher anyway. Let's play with these toys, want to?

Third child: OK. That sounds like fun.

Teacher: And how about you two kids? Are you miserable and homesick too?

Fourth Child: Nope, we're having a good time. But how about a hug too?

Teacher: Good idea! (Hugs fourth and third child.) I'm proud of you for being able to figure out a way to have a good time!

Narrator: That's the end of that play.

Group 6A: Individual Decision-Making

Skill 30. Thinking before acting

Checking the Lake for Rocks and Logs

A piece of plastic or a piece of paper represents the lake in this play. A pencil or pen can represent the log.

First person: Hey, do you want to go swimming? I know where there's a lake!

Second person: Yes, that sounds good! I'll get my swimming suit on.

They go to the lake.

Second person: That looks like a good place to dive in! Here I go!
(He starts running toward the lake.)

First person: (Runs after him and catches him.) Wait a minute! Don't just dive in without checking the lake first!

Second person: Well, why not?

First person: What if there are some rocks just under the water, and you land on them? You could break your neck.

Second person: I guess you're right.

First person: Let's get in slowly, and check to see what's under the water.
(They get in.)

Second person: What do you know, you were right, there's a big log right below the water. I would have dived right on it. Thank you for reminding me to check! I might have gotten hurt badly, if it weren't for you!

First person: You're welcome! I'll help you drag it out of the water. (They drag the log out of the water.) Now I'll check one more time. It looks like it's safe to dive in here, now.

Second person: Great! (Swoosh!) (Dives in.)

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First person: Swoosh! (Dives in.)

Second person: Man, this is great swimming in this lake!

Narrator: That's the end of that play.

Checking the Runway Before Landing the Plane

The play starts out with the plane in the air. A little dog is out on the runway.

Person in the plane: Well, here we go; we're about to land the plane!

Other person in the plane: Before landing, it's always good to check lots of things very carefully. Are the plane wheels down? Yes. Is the runway clear? Humh. Let me see. Look, what's that down there on the runway? It's a little dog!

First person in the plane: You're right! We shouldn't land right now. We might hit the dog. Let's radio down to someone, and ask him or her to help the dog get out of the way.

First person, in radio voice: Airplane to ground! Airplane to ground. Come in, ground!

Person on the terminal, right in front of the tower: Yes, airplane. What seems to be the problem?

First person, on airplane: There is a dog on the runway. We don't want to hit him. Could someone go out and get him?

Person on terminal: Roger! I see him, and will get him.

Group 6A: Individual Decision-Making

Person on terminal runs out and gets dog, speaking very gently and kindly to him: Come here, little fellow. Yes, you are a nice dog. You wouldn't want to be on this runway when the plane lands.

That person takes the dog back to the terminal.

Person on terminal: Ground to airplane. Ground to airplane. Dog is safe now. You can land.

Person in airplane: Roger!

The plane lands. The people get out.

Person on the plane, to the person who checked: Thank you for thinking before acting and checking the runway. He's a cute little fellow, isn't he?

Other person: He sure is, and you're welcome.

Narrator: That's the end of the play.

Skill 31. Fluency

The Child Puts the Request into Words

(The props for these are any sorts of toys for the hostess to foist upon the guests.)

Hostess: I'm so glad you children can be with me. I sure do want you to have a good time at this party. Now you just tell me any time what you want that will have you have a good time, and I'll do it. Now you two, come over here, and play with this, I think you'll like it. You, come here and look at this, it'll be fun for you. You put your coat up right here. You, I bet you'll enjoy looking out our nice window here. Look out it. Keep looking; you don't have to turn away from it. Now you, tell me, how can I make this party more fun?

First child: Uh, er, I don't know.

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Hostess: Don't know, Oh, well. OK, you come and have a bite of this food. It's good, isn't it? Have another bite; I know you must like it. You go back over to where you were and finish playing with that thing; it'll be lots of fun for you. It looks like some people aren't having a good time. I don't see enough people smiling. Let's see. I know what would be fun, come over here and do this. It'll be fun for you. You: can you tell me how to make this party more fun?

Second child: Humh, uh, well, I guess not.

Third child (to protagonist): You're good at using words to tell what's on your mind. Why don't you tell her?

First or second child: Yes, that's a good idea. You're good at putting your thoughts into words.

Protagonist: OK, I'll tell her.

Protagonist (To Hostess): I think it's really wonderful that you want us to have such a good time at this party. Thanks so much. And I think I can tell you exactly how to do it. All you have to do is to sit back and relax and not tell us what to do so much. We need a little more freedom if we're going to have a good time.

Hostess: So I'm giving you too much advice and bossing you around too much! I thought so! Thank you so much for being able to put that into words! I'll just sit back and relax.

First child: This is a pretty interesting thing here. Want to play with it with me?

Second child: I sure do.

Third child: Thank you for letting us come over here. It's fun.

Hostess: You're so welcome. I enjoy seeing you have a good time.

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Skill 32. Awareness of your emotions

The Fall of the House of Blocks

Prop in this play is a structure built with blocks, very high and very precariously. First person is standing under the structure.

Second person: Hi, how are you feeling today?

First person: Well, now that you mention it, I have a feeling that isn't very good. I'm not sure why.

Second person: That's interesting. Maybe you can figure out why, if you think about it.

First person: Now that I think about it, I'm feeling a little scared. Why am I scared? I'm scared that this building is going to fall down on me!

Second person: Now that I look at the building, I feel that way too.

First person: Let's get out of here.

They get out from under the building.

The building then falls down.

Second person: Wow, look at that! I'm glad you figured out what you were feeling bad about, so that we could both do something about it!

First person: Me too!

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

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Skill 33. Awareness of control

Not Feeling Guilty About the Lightning

Child is outside. (Thunder and lightning sounds: Flash! Boom!)

Child: Hey, lightning is starting. I think I'll go inside.

(Goes inside.)

Child: Wow, is that lightning ever pretty. I love to see it. And I love to hear the thunder. I hope it keeps going for a long time.

Sound effects continue.

Narrator. It did thunder and lightning for a long time. Later that evening, the boy (or girl) and his parents were listening to the news on the radio.

Father: Let's hear what's on the news.

Radio announcer: Today the lightning hit a tree, and caused a fire. The fire spread to the barn that Mr. and Mrs. Tom Jones owned. It burned down the whole barn. The animals got out, but all the hay and all the crops that they had harvested were all burned up. They are very sad.

Father: Well, that's too bad. I'm sorry to hear about that.

Child: Daddy, that really makes feel guilty to hear about that fire happening today and burning down those people's barn.

Father: Guilty? Why?

Child: Because I sat in the house, looking at the thunder and lightning, wishing that it would thunder and lightning for a long time. The thing that I wished for destroyed those people's barn.

Father: So do you feel that if you wish for thunder and lightning, more thunder and lightning happen?

Group 6A: Individual Decision-Making

Child: Well, yes. I did wish for it, and it did happen. Didn't I cause it?

Father: I'm glad you asked me about this. No, you didn't cause the thunder and lightning. It's something you have no control over. It would have lasted just as long if you'd wished that it had stopped.

Child: Really? So you mean I didn't have anything to do with those people's having their barn burn down?

Father: That's right. So there's no reason for you to feel guilty.

Child: Wow, that's good to know. What a relief. Thanks for explaining that.

Father: You're welcome!

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Making a Plan About the Teasing

Child, same as in previous play, with same father, is in this one.

Child: Daddy, you know how we talked about the lightning, and I learned I didn't have to feel bad about it?

Father: Yes! I remember that.

Child: Well, I wanted to talk with you about something else I feel bad about.

Father: OK. What is it?

Child: Well, I was at school today. I'll act out for you what went on.

(The child takes some of the toy people and acts out a play within the play, to show the father what happened, while child narrates it.)

There's this one girl that people seem to want to make fun of. We were all at lunch. And she was sitting by herself. And one boy said, "Imagine having

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her as your sister!" And everybody laughed, and some of them looked at her. I laughed, too; I don't know why. But I think she realized that people were talking about her and laughing at her, and she looked like she felt really bad. I felt bad too, but I didn't do anything.

(End of the play within the play.)

Child: Is that like the lightning, Daddy? Is that something that I don't have any control over? Is this something I don't need to feel bad about?

Father: With the lightning, nothing that you did made any difference. But what about this? Do you think you could have done any thing that would have made any difference?

Child: Sure. I could have stuck up for her, and said to the others, "She's my friend, and I like her." Or I could have gone over and sat with her at lunch.

Father: That's good thinking. Either one of those would have helped her. So this is different from the lightning, isn't it?

Child: Yes. So maybe it's good if I feel a little bad about this one, isn't it?

Father: That bad feeling is your conscience. It's there to remind you of what you want to do the next time.

Narrator: A few days later, at school, the same thing happened at lunch.

One child: There she is, sitting by herself. I'm glad she doesn't want to sit by me!

Other children: Me too!

Child: I don't agree with you folks about that. I like her, and I think she does lots of nice things. I think it's unfair that she gets picked on so much. I wouldn't mind sitting with her at all.

Other child: Oh yeah? Well, I don't see you sitting with her now.

Group 6A: Individual Decision-Making

Child: You're right, but I think I'll go over and join her. She almost always has something interesting and nice to say.

(Child goes over and sits with rejected girl.)

Child: Hi. Do you mind if I sit with you?

Rejected girl: Did they send you over to play a trick on me or something?

Child: Nope, I sent myself.

Rejected girl: Then I'd be very pleased for you to join me, thank you.

Child: I'm sorry that the kids aren't nice to you. And I'm sorry for anything I've ever done that wasn't nice. I want to be friendly with you.

Rejected child: That makes me feel really good to hear you say that.

Narrator: Later that night, the child talked to the father again.

Child: Daddy, today the same thing happened at school. Only this time I did what I planned to do last time.

Father: You mean with the girl that other people didn't want to be friends with?

Child: Yes, they weren't sitting with her, and they were laughing at her. And I stuck up for her and disagreed with them, and then I went over and spent the rest of the lunch with her.

Father: How do you feel this time?

Child: Good!

Father: I feel good too. I feel very proud.

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

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Skill 34. Decision-making

Deciding Whether or Not to Drink the Stuff

First child: I wish that the water wasn't turned off here at the library. I'm thirsty.

Second child: Me too. Want to go outside for a while?

First child: Sure. Hey, look over there. It looks as though someone threw away a whole bottle of some kind of drink. It looks like it wasn't even opened.

Second child: You're right. What is it? Hmm, the label says "Vodka." What's that; is that any good?

First child: I don't know. How can we decide whether or not to give it a try? We're both thirsty.

Second child: Well, we're right in the library. Why don't we go look up vodka and read about it?

First child: That's a great idea. We'll get some information to make our decision with.

They go back inside.

First child: Let's start out by looking it up in the encyclopedia, want to? Let's see: v should be in this volume. Vodka. Hey, vodka has lots of alcohol in it. It's something that people drink at bars.

Second child: Let's read more about what alcohol does. I'll look up more about that. Hmm, alcohol is what gets people drunk. They can't think straight when they are drunk. Alcohol also causes a disease of the liver that can kill people. It makes them less coordinated, so they have more car accidents.

Group 6A: Individual Decision-Making

First child: We're learning a lot! I'm glad we read before we just drank that stuff.

Second child: Me too! It's always easier to make a decision when you have information! Let's tell the librarian that it's out there, so no other kid will get into it.

Narrator: And that's what they did, and that's the end of the play.

The Chewing Gum in the Chair

Person 1: Well, that was a nice walk I had. I think I'll sit down in my chair, and rest a while. (Goes toward chair.)

Person 2: (Just before the other one sits down) Hey, stop! Don't sit down! (Runs over to him and touches him just after saying this.)

Person 1: Why shouldn't I sit down?

Person 2: Because I just noticed that somebody left some chewed chewing gum on the seat of that chair. If you sat in it, it would get all over your pants and you'd have a terrible time getting it off.

Person 1: Look at that! What do you know! That is so nasty! Well, thank you. You really helped me out. Thanks for telling me.

Person 2: You're welcome.

Person 1: Well, let's see, what should I do now. I can just go and sit in another chair, but then the next person will get this nasty chewing gum all over him. Maybe I can clean it off the chair.

Person 2: Or I could help you clean it off. How should we do that? One option is with our fingernails. Another option is to use a couple of dull knives. Here, I'll get a couple of knives that we can scrape it with.

Person 1: Hey, that's really nice of you. (They clean it off together). I think we've just about got it. Thanks a lot.

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Person 2: You're welcome. Now we can both sit down and take it easy. Want to listen to some music?

Person 1: Yes!

They sit down and some music plays, as our show ends.

The Cow Helps the Chickens Find a Place to Perch

The toys for the farm are set out, with the fence set up, and the tractor out. The man is in the tractor. The cow is not inside the fence, and the chickens are on the ground near the cow.

Farmer: (Driving his tractor) Boy, I need to hurry, I've got lots of things to do today!

The farmer almost runs over the chickens. The chickens see him just at the last minute and fly away, making chicken-like noises.

Chicken: Hey Mr. Farmer! Watch it! You almost ran us over!

Farmer: Gosh, I'm sorry. I didn't see you. You're so little I didn't see you. (Farmer drives away).

Chicken: Golly, we're in trouble. What if he doesn't see us next time? What are we going to do? We might get run over! (This chicken is really scared).

Other chicken: Well, let's think about what to do. Maybe we could get on something big, so that he can see us next time.

First chicken: How about the cow over there, she's big.

Other chicken: Yeah, that sounds good.

(The chickens fly over and perch on the cow's back).

Cow: Hey, what's that on my back?

Group 6A: Individual Decision-Making

(The farmer comes driving by again. He steers out of their way).

Chicken: Hey, it worked. Ms. Cow, thank you letting us be on your back just then. You helped us not get run over.

Cow: Well, you're welcome, but I don't want you on my back all the time. You'll have to get off.

Chicken: Oh no, what are we going to do now?

Cow: Let's list some options. There's inside the barn. Or on top of the barn. Or over there on the fence.

Chickens: What a nice fence! It looks like it's just made for us! Let's go there!

Other chickens: Good idea! (They fly over to the fence, and perch there, facing each other).

(The farmer drives by again.)

Cow: How's that working out, Chickens?

Chickens: This is just great! Thank you, Ms. Cow!

Cow: You're welcome, chickens!

The Farmer Decides How to Keep the Trough from Getting Knocked Over

(The children may not know the word trough, which is pronounced to rhyme with off. But just use it in the play, and they'll catch on quickly to what it is.)

Farmer: Well, I'll fill up this trough with water for my animals. (Sound effects: the farmer empties several buckets of water into the trough, while going back and forth from the barn to the trough.)

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Farmer: There, now it's all full.

The Horse comes running by, saying: Hey, what a good day to run!

The horse knocks over the trough.

Farmer: Oh, no. Now the trough is knocked over. All that water is spilled out.

Horse: I'm sorry, Mr. Farmer. I didn't mean to knock it over.

Farmer: I know you didn't, Mr. Horse. Don't worry about it. Just be more careful next time.

Horse: I'll help you fill it again.

Farmer: That's nice of you.

They fill it again.

Cow: Yay, it's fun to run!

Horse: Look out for the trough?

Cow: Look out for what? (Just at that moment the cow knocks the trough over.)

Horse and Farmer: Oh, no, there it goes again!

Cow: I'm sorry. I just didn't see that trough there.

Farmer: Don't worry about it.

Cow: Here, I'll help you fill it up again.

Farmer: What can we do about this? We can make a rule that people can't run near the barn.

Group 6A: Individual Decision-Making

Horse: Or we could put the trough inside the barn.

Cow: Or we could build a fence around the trough.

Farmer: Hey, that's a good idea; let's build a fence!

They take the sections of fence and put it around the trough.

The sheep: Hey, what a nice day to run. Whoops, there's a fence. I'll run this way instead.

Farmer, and cow, and horse: Look, our plan worked! The trough didn't get knocked over this time! Hooray!

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Deciding How to Get Out of the Silo

The Prop for this play is a pipe cleaner or long strip of paper that stands for a rope.

Dog: Hey, look at this ladder! I think I'll climb up and see what I can see. (The dog climbs up the ladder on the side of the silo. The silo has the top open.)

Dog: Wow, look at this! Hey, I wonder what's down there! (The dog looks over the side, into the silo.) Uh, oh, I'm losing my balance! (The dog falls into the silo.)

Dog: Unh, that didn't feel good. But at least I'm not hurt. Now how do I get out of here? I can't climb up the side; it's too slick. I'll bark, and maybe somebody will hear me, and help me to get out. Ruff! Ruff! Howwwll! OOwwww! Ruff!

Person: Hey, I wonder why the dog is howling? I'll go out and see.

Dog: Hoowwwl!

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Person: I can hear you, Mr. Dog, but I can't see you. Where are you?

Dog: I'm in the silo! I fell in, but I can't get out.

Person: Oh, my. Let me climb up and see. (Person climbs up ladder.) Don't worry, Mr. Dog. We'll figure out some way to get you out. Let's list some options. We could get one of those big cranes. Or maybe I could turn the silo over. But in both of those options, the dog could get hurt. I could get a ladder. But I don't have one of those. I know! I'll get a rope, and pull the dog out. (Person gets the pipe cleaner, or strip of paper.) Here, Mr. Dog, can you reach this? Tie it around you.

Dog: OK, it's all tied around me.

Person: OK, here I go, I'll pull you up very slowly.

Dog: Be careful not to drop me!

Person: Here you are! Now we can both go down the ladder.

(They go down the ladder.)

Dog: Thank you! I don't know how I would have gotten out of there if it hadn't been for you!

Person: You're welcome, Mr. Dog. It was my pleasure to be of service to you.

Narrator: That's the end of that play.

Getting the Nails Off the Runway

First person: Well, here I go again in my car.

Pow!

First person: Oh, no! The tire blew out again! Oh well, at least I know how to change it.

Group 6A: Individual Decision-Making

(The first person jacks up the car, and is going through the motions of changing the tire. Meanwhile second person walks up.)

First person: My tire blew out again. But I know how to change the tire, thanks to your teaching me.

Second person: That's great. And you're doing a good job of changing it.

First person: All done!

Second person: And you didn't even need any help. Good for you. But let's think a minute. Why is your tire blowing out so much?

First person: You know, rather than just driving off, let me think a bit. One option is to do that. Another option is to look around a bit and see if there's anything that is causing my tires to pop.

First person: That's a good idea. Let's look around.

They look around.

First person: Hey look! Here are some nails and tacks out here on the runway. They must have been popping my tires! No wonder the tires blew out!

Second person: You're right! We can solve the problem by picking up all these nails and tacks. I'll help you.

They pick them up.

First person: Thanks for helping me. Now my tires will last longer!

Second person: I'm glad I could be helpful to you!

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Helicopter Rescue of the Hurt Person

There is a person lying on the ground.

First person: He's hurt! He's hurt! He got hit by a car!

Second person: Let's give him first aid. We'll press on all the places where he's bleeding. We'll make sure not to move him any more than we have to, so we won't hurt him worse.... He needs to go to the hospital, doesn't he?

First person: Yes. But the hospital is a long way from here. He might not get there quickly enough. He needs to get there right away! (This person sounds distressed.) Let's call 911.... Hello, I want to report an accident. Can you send a helicopter? No, just an ambulance? But I think he needs help really quickly.

Second person: Let's think of more options. I know a friend who has a helicopter. Let me call him. Friend, can you come? In one minute? That sounds great.

Third person: (Flying up in the helicopter) Hi. I hope I can help out.

First person: (Talking on the phone) Emergency person, we're going to take him to the hospital in a helicopter. OK, thank you for calling the hospital and telling them we're coming.

Third person: Let's lift him onto the helicopter very carefully, so we won't hurt him worse. I'll fly him to the hospital. There's only room for the two of us. Wish me luck!

First and second person: Good luck!

Third person flies in helicopter, and lands where there are a couple of doctors. We pretend they are in a hospital.

Third person: Doctors, you have to help this person, he's hurt!

Doctors: Let's bring him right on in. Yes, he's hurt. I'm glad you got him here soon. (Doctors work on him, saying things like: We have to decide

Group 6A: Individual Decision-Making

carefully what to do first. Let's take him to the operating room. Would you please hand me that stuff to sew him up with? Thank you. Let's get that x-ray over here now. That's good.)

Doctors: He'll have to rest up, but we think he'll be all right!

Third person: Oh good! I'll go back and tell the other people.

Third person flies back to the first and second person.

Third person: They think he's going to be all right!

First person: Thank goodness!

Second person: Hooray! Thank you for taking him in your helicopter! You probably saved his life!

Third person: It was my pleasure! And congratulations to you for making the good decision to call me up!

6b: Joint decision-making, including conflict resolution

Skill 35. Toleration

Letting the Friend Pick What to Do

Girl, to friend: Hi, welcome to our house. I'm glad you could come over and play with me.

Friend: Thanks! I'm glad I could come too!

Girl: I've got lots of things that we could do. And you can pick any of them you want. I can show you some really interesting things on the computer. Or we can play with the toy people. Or we can get something to eat, if you're hungry.

Friend: If I can pick, do you know what I'd like to do the most? I'd like to go outside and look at those flowers that somebody has grown outside.

Girl: Great! Let's do that! They also smell really good, too. We can't pick them, of course, but we sure can look.

(They look at the flowers.)

Friend: Wow, look at these things in the middle of the flowers.

Girl: You know something; I had never really noticed those before.

Friend: I think this is called the stamen, and this is called the pistil, and these are called the petals.

Girl: Wow, you know the names of the parts of the flower.

Friend: Thanks for letting me do what I wanted to do! You're a really good host!

Girl: I appreciate that!

Group 6B: Joint Decision-Making, Conflict Resolution

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

The Boy Who Could Have Fun With Anyone

First Person: Hey, did you hear about this amazing boy? He is the most amazing boy I've ever heard of!

Second Person: What's so amazing about him?

First Person: He can have fun playing with anybody! Not just kids that other kids like to play with. Even the ones that nobody else wants to play with.

Second Person: Wow, that is amazing! I wonder how he does it!

First Person: Here he comes right now! Let's ask him.

First Person: Hey, is it true what they say, that you can have fun playing with anybody?

Boy: Well, just about anybody, yes.

Second Person: How do you do it? What if the other person takes all the toys and won't let you have them?

Boy: Well, then I have fun watching what he does with them.

First person: What if the other person says nasty things to you?

Boy: I just have fun reminding myself that they aren't true, if they aren't.

Second Person: What if the other person just sits like a bump on a log and won't do anything?

Boy: Then I do something I think he'll like, and if he doesn't, maybe I'll like it myself.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

First Person: I bet I know someone that you can't have fun with. I bet you can't have fun with this person here, named Gruffo. (He brings in the fourth person.)

Boy: Well, let's see. I'm glad to meet you, Gruffo. We can go in the house and play together.

(They go into the house together, and play.)

Second Person: This I've got to see. There has been nobody that has yet been able to enjoy playing with Gruffo.

Boy and Gruffo come out of the house.

Boy: Well, Gruffo, I had a good time playing with you. I'll see you later.

Gruffo: OK, bye-bye.

First and Second Person: Did you really have a good time?

Boy: Yes, I did have a good time!

First and Second Person: What an amazing boy!

Narrator: That's the end of the show.

The Girl Who Could Have Fun Playing With Anyone

First Person: Guess what I have heard!

Second Person: What?

First Person: You know that boy who can have a good time playing with anyone in the whole world? Well, I hear that there's a girl who can have fun playing with anyone, too!

Second Person: Wow! I never thought we'd see another person like that boy in all the world. I don't believe it.

Group 6B: Joint Decision-Making, Conflict Resolution

First Person: Here she comes, right now.

Girl: Hi, how are you folks doing?

Second Person: Fine, thanks. Are you really the girl who can have a good time playing with anyone in the whole world?

Girl: Well, almost everyone.

First Person: What if you're stacking some blocks up, and that other person just knocks them all down?

Girl: Well, I think maybe I'd have fun watching them fall down, and be as nice as I could be.

Second Person: I don't believe that there really is another person who can have fun playing with everybody. Let's see if you're just joking. See if you can have a good time with Gruffelda here. No one has yet had a good time playing with Gruffelda in all Gruffelda's life.

Girl: Well, I'd be privileged to be able to play with you, Gruffelda.

(They go into the house or barn etc. together.)

Girl: Here are some toys we can play with, and here are some books we can look at.

(The door closes.)

Second Person: Just wait. In a couple of seconds she'll be out of there.

(Sounds of laughter come from inside.)

First Person: What's that I hear? It sounds like they're both laughing together!

Girl and Gruffelda come out.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Girl: Thank you so much for playing with me, Gruffelda. That was fun.

Gruffelda: I'll see you later!

Girl: OK, bye-bye!

First Person: Did you really, really have a good time with Gruffelda?

Girl: Sure. It was easy!

First and Second person: Amazing! Incredible!

Narrator: And that's the end of the show.

The Boy Who Can Have Fun With Anyone Saves the Day

First Person: Oh my! We've got a problem.

Second Person: What is it?

First Person: See that boy over there? He's really sad. He's sad because no one wants to play with him.

Second Person: Why don't they want to play with him?

First Person: Because he isn't nice.

Second Person: And why isn't he nice?

First Person: I think it's because no one will play with him and be nice to him.

Second Person: Oh, my. That is a bad problem. What will we ever do?

First Person: I don't know.

Group 6B: Joint Decision-Making, Conflict Resolution

Second Person: Hey, I just thought of something! I heard that there's a boy who can have fun being nice to and playing with anybody in the whole world!

First Person: Really? That's wonderful! Let's go see if we can find him.

(The first and second person get on the horse, and go riding around, to the tune of the "William Tell Overture." They say to people, "Have you seen the boy who can have fun playing with anyone?" And people guide them in one direction or the next. Finally they come upon the boy himself.

First person: Are you the boy who can have fun playing with everyone?

Boy: Well, almost everyone.

Second Person: Thank goodness we have found you. Would you come and play with someone who is very lonely?

Boy: Why don't you invite the person over here to play with me?

First and Second Person: OK! We'll be back soon!

(They ride back, to the tune of the William Tell Overture, and say, "Come on!" to the person no one will play with. They go back, and drop off the person no one enjoys.)

Boy: Hello, I'm glad that you could come over and visit me. What's your name? (They go into the house.)

First and Second Person: I hope that this boy really can have fun playing with everyone.

Second Person: Yeah, maybe we did the wrong thing. Maybe he won't be nice to that person who is so lonely.

First Person: Let's peek in the window!

(The boy and the other person are in the house together, with the house now opened so that you can see them. The other two people peek in through the

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

window. The boy and the other person are on the floor, playing with toy people.)

First Person: Look! They seem to be having fun with each other!

Second Person: Yes! It's true! They're actually enjoying each other!
Hooray! Hooray!

Narrator: And that's the end of the show.

The Girl Imitates the Girl Who Can Have Fun With Everybody

First Girl: Hey, have you heard about this girl who can have fun playing with just about anybody in the whole world?

Second Person: Yes! It is really something, isn't it!

First Girl: Yes! I can hardly believe it. I've decided that I'm going to see if I can be like her, and have a good time with somebody that's hard to have a good time with.

Second Person: Are you sure you want to try it? It may be very hard.

First Girl: I know it's hard, but I'm going to try it anyway. There's somebody in my class, named Gruffinka, that I never have been able to have fun with. But I'm going to try to have fun with her today.

Second Person: Good luck!

First Girl goes over and meets Gruffinka.

First Girl: Hey, Gruffinka, I have some toy people. Would you like to look at them with me?

(First and Gruffinka go off stage.)

Narrator: Now it's the next day.

Group 6B: Joint Decision-Making, Conflict Resolution

Second person: I wonder how it went between my friend and Gruffinka.

First Girl: Hi!

Second Person: Hi, how did it go yesterday?

First Girl: I did it! I had a good time playing with Gruffinka!

Second Person: Was she nice to you?

First Girl: Not all the time, but I took care of myself and didn't let it bother me when she wasn't nice.

Second Person: Hooray! Congratulations! I bet you feel good about yourself!

First Girl: I sure do! Maybe some day I'll be as good at getting along with people as the Girl Who Can Enjoy Playing With Everybody!

Second Person: Wow, that would really be something if you could do that!

Narrator: And that's the end of the show!

Skill 36. Rational approach to joint decisions

The No Big Deal Break in Line

Several people are in line to see a movie. Take a couple of large blocks and let that be the movie theater, if you don't have another building more suitable. There will be two people in the middle of the line who are our protagonists, and one person in front of them who lets somebody in with him.

First child: I can't wait to see this movie. I've read so much about how good it is.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Second child: Me too! And it should be starting in just a few minutes.

Line-breaker: (Comes up and speaks to his friend, who's in front of the protagonists.) Hi! I didn't know you were coming to see this movie tonight! I am, too.

Line-breaker's friend: I'm glad to see you! Why don't you come into the line with me here, and we can sit together.

Line-breaker: Sounds good. Thanks.

First child: Did you notice that that person got in front of us in line?

Second child: Yes. The rule is to get in line at the back, just as we did when we got in line.

First child: Let's see, what we should do about this? We could yell at him, and order him to get to the back of the line. Or we could politely tell him that the line forms at the back. Or, we could just forget about it and not worry about it.

Second child: Well, since there aren't a huge number of people here, there are going to be plenty of seats in the movie for everybody. So his getting in line in front of us isn't causing us any problem at all. Let's just forget about it.

First child: Sounds good to me. I guess some problems are solved best by just not letting yourself get bothered over nothing.

Second child: I think you're right, buddy.

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Skill 37. Option-generating

Taking Turns with the Wind-Up Toy

Group 6B: Joint Decision-Making, Conflict Resolution

The prop for this play in addition to the toy people is a wind-up toy, one that when wound either walks around or turns a flip or does something else interesting. Before doing this play it's a good idea to let the child play with the toy for a while, so that he won't be distracted from the play by wanting to play with the toy.

Parent: Hey children, come here! (The two children come.)

Children: What is it?

Parent: I've got a present for you. Here. (The parent gives them the wind-up toy, and then walks away.)

First child: Oh, look! I want to see it!

Second child: I want to see it too!

First child: Want to take turns with it?

Second child: OK. You look at it first, for just a little while, and I'll watch, and then it'll be my turn.

First child: Thanks, that's nice of you to let me go first.

First child: I'll wind it up and see what it does. (First child winds it up, and has it do its thing.) Oh, look!

Second child: Hey, that's really something.

First child: OK, now it's your turn.

Second child: Thanks. I'll wind it up again. (The second child winds it up again, and has it do its thing.) Look at that! Ha! Ha! Do you want to take another turn?

First child: Yes, thank you.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Parent reenters the scene. Parent: I've been hearing you two taking turns! Good for you! I wonder if you're proud of yourselves for playing together so nicely!

Children: Thank you! And thanks for the toy!

Parent: You're welcome!

The Boy and His Sister Take Turns With the Book

The mother or father comes home with a book.

Children: Hi Mommy! Hi Daddy!

Mother and Father: Hi! We brought you a present!

Children: Oh look! It's a new book! (The mother and father exit.)

Brother: I want to read it, right now!

Sister: Hey, but I wanted to read it right now, too!

Brother: Humh, what can we do about this. We could read it together, but that wouldn't work out well, because I like to read so much faster than you do.

Sister: Well, we could take turns, and I could let you go first.

Brother: That's awfully nice of you to offer that. Why don't I let you go first, and I'll go jogging while you're reading the book. I was just ready to go jogging anyway.

Sister: OK, that sounds really nice of you.

(Sister reads the book, and brother goes out jogging. As sister reads book, she giggles and laughs.)

(Brother comes back from his run.)

Group 6B: Joint Decision-Making, Conflict Resolution

Sister: Boy, are you going to enjoy this book. It's funny!

Brother: Oh, good. Are you through with it now? Is it my turn?

Sister: Yes.

(Brother reads book, and giggles and laughs also.)

Sister: (Thinking out loud) I sure am glad that we were able to take turns with this book!

The People Prevent the War

(There are several people, divided into two groups.)

People in first group: This means war! Get all the guns! Get the planes! Let's drop a bomb on them!

People in the second group: Get the army together! We'll blow up lots more of them than they will of us!

Protagonist: (Stands up on something, speaks to people of the first group.) People, listen to me! You may think you want a war now, but think a little more! Do you really want lots of your people to get killed? Do you really want to kill lots of their people, people that you would like if you were to meet them? Don't have a war!

Person in the first group: But they're living on land that is our land! How else besides war can we get our land back?

Protagonist: Take your problem to the court of nations instead, where the judges can decide it, peaceably! Send your leader with me, and I'll show you where the court is.

(The people in the first group get together and talk in a huddle.)

People in the first group: We'll do it, but only if the other group also agrees to go to the court instead of fighting!

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Protagonist: Fair enough, I'll talk to them too.

(Protagonist goes over to the second group.) Oh people, stop your preparations for war, for just long enough to listen to me! Your own sacred writings and your own leaders say that war should be used only if everything else fails. But there's something you haven't tried yet. If you go to war without trying this thing, you'll be doing something you all know is wrong!

Person in the second group: But they want us to get off the land that is our very own land! What are you talking about? What have we not tried, that you think is such a good idea?

Protagonist: Send your leader to the court of nations. Your leader can explain what's going on, and a judge will decide on a solution, so that nobody will get killed in a war!

Person in the second group: But will our enemies agree to go to the court of nations too?

Protagonist: Those people that you're getting ready to fight have already agreed to do it if you do it. So send your leader with me, and we'll all go to court.

Person in the second group: OK, I'm the leader; let's give it a try.

Person from the first group: I'm the leader of my group. Let's go.

(The three people go over to where the judge is.)

Judge: OK, I sure am glad you folks decided to solve your problem in the court of nations rather than having a war. Tell me about the problem.

Leader of first group: They're living on land that's really ours! And here's a piece of paper to prove that we really own the place they're living in!

(Judge reads the paper.)

Group 6B: Joint Decision-Making, Conflict Resolution

Leader of the second group: It would be easy for somebody to print that piece of paper. We don't know who signed it. But our folks have been living on the land a long time! We can't just tell people to get off the land, when there's no place else for them to go!

Narrator: They talked a lot more, and the judge asked them a lot more questions. Finally the judge made his decision.

Judge: Here's my decision. Your country has lots of cars that you've made, that you don't need. Your country needs lots of cars. My decision is that your folks get to keep living on the land, but you give the other country a whole bunch of cars. You folks give the other folks the land, but in return for it you get a bunch of cars. That's my decision, and from what you've told me, I think you both can live with it.

Leaders: That's right. It'll be better than having a war.

First leader, to first group: Guess what, people! We get to stay on the land! All we have to do is to pay them a bunch of cars that we don't even need! It's a great triumph!

People: Hooray!

Second leader, to second group: Oh people, guess what! The judge decided something good. We give them the land, but in return, we get all sorts of cars! And here they come!

(The cars are rolled over from the first group to the second group. The people get in them and drive around.)

People: Hooray! Who needs all that land, we've got cars to go around in!

Leaders, protagonist and judge get together and say to each other things like:

Leader 1: Hooray, there isn't going to be a war!

Leader 2: We figured out a way to solve our problem! Judge, you helped us come up with a good solution!

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Leader 1: Thanks to you, for persuading us to go to the court of nations instead of having a war!

Protagonist: It was my pleasure!

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Skill 38. Option-evaluating

Being Quiet for the Sleeper

First person: Yawn! I'm sleepy! I think it's time for me to go to bed! (Person lies down on the bed.)

Second person: Boy, do I like to sing! LA, LA, LA DAH! (Then sees the other person lying down, and abruptly starts to whisper.) Oops, I didn't see that you were trying to go to sleep. If I sing that loud, I bet that will keep you awake, won't it?

First person: Yes, that will. But if you go farther away, and sing more softly, I bet it will be just fine.

Second person: Let's try it out quickly. How's this. (Goes farther away from the sleeping person, and sings more softly. La la ta de, dah dah...

Second person: (Comes back to first person) How's that, is that soft enough?

First person: That's just fine! That won't keep me awake at all! Thanks a lot!

Second person: You're welcome! Have a good sleep!

Second person goes back to the place where he was, farther away from the first person, and sings softly.

Narrator: That's the end of that play!

The Pig Helps the Dog Save His Friend the Mouse

The prop for this is a piece of paper about an inch square, rolled up to represent the newspaper.

Farmer (in the barn): Hmmh, I hear mice in my barn. Look at this; a mouse has been eating some of my corn and hay. I'll just have to get some mouse poison and kill those mice. (The farmer leaves, and goes off to get some mouse poison.)

The pig is nearby, and he hears what the farmer said.

The pig: Oh, no! The farmer is going to poison the mice! Wait until I tell Mr. Dog this!

The pig runs off to find the dog, to the tune of the William Tell Overture.

Farmer: Hi, Mr. storekeeper. I need some mouse poison, to kill a few mice with.

Storekeeper: Here you are.

Farmer: Thanks.

Farmer starts back to the barn.

Meanwhile, the pig finds the dog.

Pig: Mr. Dog! Mr. Dog! You've got to come quick.

Dog: Calm down, Mr. Pig, and tell me what's happening.

Pig: The farmer is going to poison the mice, because they're eating his corn.

Dog: Oh, no. He'll kill my mouse friend. We've got to stop him, before it's too late.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Again there is the song of the William Tell Overture, and they run to where he is.

Farmer: Well, here's the poison, I'll just put it out.

Dog: Stop! Don't poison the mice, Mr. Farmer.

Farmer: Why not? They are eating my corn and hay.

Dog: But they're my friends. I have a really good mouse friend. I like him. He's very cute.

Farmer: Well, I don't know about this. I'm losing some money on these mice eating my food.

Dog: Come look at him, Mr. Farmer. When you see him, you won't want to kill him.

They go to where the picture of the mouse is.

Farmer: Aw, he is a cute little feller. Hi, little mousie. But Mr. Dog, what can we do about this corn and hay he's eating up?

Pig: Let's think of options. Maybe the dog could pay you for the corn and hay by getting the newspaper for you each morning.

Dog: That's a good idea. How about it, Mr. Farmer?

Farmer: OK. That sounds good.

Narrator: The next morning:

Dog: Well, here I go to get the newspaper for the farmer. I'll keep my end of the bargain.

Farmer: Thanks for the paper, Mr. Dog. How are your mice friends this morning?

Group 6B: Joint Decision-Making, Conflict Resolution

Dog: They're doing just fine.

Dog: Thank you, Mr. Pig, for helping save the mice.

Pig: You're welcome!

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Taking Turns with the Tractor

First farmer: Hey, it's nice weather out today. I think I'll use the tractor that I share with the other farmer, and get some of my corn and put it in the barn. (He starts walking toward it.)

Second farmer: Hey, I think I'll use the tractor today.

The two farmers both reach the tractor at the same time.

First farmer: Good morning! I thought I'd use the tractor today.

Second farmer: It is a good morning, isn't it? That's why I wanted to use the tractor today, too.

First farmer: Hummh, what are we going to do about this?

Second farmer: I know, let's take turns! First we'll work on your field, and I'll help you, and then we can use the tractor on my field, and you can help me.

First farmer: Good idea! Ok, here we go on my field. (The first farmer gets in the tractor, and the second farmer walks along beside.)

Second farmer: Here goes your corn, right into the wagon. (The prop for the corn is little wads of paper.)

Then they drive to the barn, and unload the corn.

First farmer: Now it's your turn.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Second farmer drives the tractor, and the first farmer puts the wads of paper in the wagon. Then they put them in the silo.

First farmer: Hey, we both got our work done, because we helped each other out and took turns.

Second farmer: We sure did! Thanks a lot!

First farmer: Thank you!

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Skill 39. Assertion

Getting the Car off the Roof

Person in car: I think I'll park my car on the roof of these people's house.

Person parks car on the roof and leaves.

Person in house: I think I'll take my computer up to the top of the roof and write today.... Whoa! What's this car doing up here! This car shouldn't be parked up here. It'll damage our roof, and make it leak!

Person from car returns.

Person from house: Is this your car?

Person from car: Yes, it sure is. It's a nice one, don't you think?

Person from house: It is a nice car. But you can't park it up here. Cars aren't supposed to go on roofs. They damage the roofs and make them leak. And you don't get on other people's roofs without their permission.

Person from car: Oh, I don't think so. I think it's not such a big deal.

Group 6B: Joint Decision-Making, Conflict Resolution

Person from house: Well, I want you to know that if you park here again, I'm going to call the police and have them tow the car off to the pound. You won't be able to get it out until you've paid a fine and also have paid us for any damage to our roof.

Person from car: Oh, come on. You're getting all upset over nothing.

(Person from car drives away.)

Person from house: Look, it's starting to rain! I'll get inside. Hey, my roof is leaking. He damaged it. I'll have to get it fixed.

Narrator: The next day, the person parked on the roof of the house again.

Person from car: I don't care what he says. I want to park here again.

(Parks and walks away.)

Person from house: He parked here again! Well, I told him what would happen. I'm calling the police. (Person goes back into house.) Hello, is this the police? I'm calling to report someone who's parked on the roof of my house, and has damaged it so much that it leaks.

(Sound of a siren. Policeman comes and tows the car away. Later, person from car returns.)

Person from car: Hey, what happened to my car?

Person from house: I told you that if you parked here again I would have it towed away and get you to pay to fix my roof.

Person from car: I guess I made a mistake. Well, let's see if I can find the car pound. (Walks.) Here it is.

Person from car pound: You can have your car back if you pay a 50 dollar fine and 500 dollars to fix the person's roof.

Person from car: OK, here's the money. Drives away.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

(Person from car pound goes to person in house.)

Person from car pound: OK, here's the money to fix your roof with.

Person from house: Thanks. (He goes to phone.) Roof fixer? Time to come fix the roof, please.

(Roof fixer drives up in car.)

Roof fixer: Hi, I'm the roof fixer. Here I go. OK, your roof is as good as new. That'll be 500 dollars, please.

Person from house: OK. (Hands fixer the money. Fixer leaves.)

Person from house: (Soliloquy) Well, I'm glad I stuck up for myself rather than just letting that guy park on my roof and keep damaging it. I imagine he won't do it again, and risk losing all that money again.

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Having a Race

First person: Want to race?

Second person: Yes! Let's race to that thing over there. (They designate any sort of thing as the finish line for their race.)

First person and the second person line up.

First person: On your mark, get set, go!

They race to the finish. One of them wins.

Winner: Hooray, I won!

Loser: Good for you, you ran really well.

Winner: You ran a good race too. Do you want to race again?

Group 6B: Joint Decision-Making, Conflict Resolution

Loser: Yes.

They line up. One of them says: On your mark, get set, go!

They race again. This time the other one wins.

Loser: Hey, this time you won! Congratulations!

Winner: Thank you! I'm glad I won! You ran fast too.

(They continue racing, and tie sometimes, if the audience stays interested.)

Narrator: That's the end of that play.

Saving the Boy Who Climbed Onto the Wing

First person: Well, we are about ready to take off. Everybody get on board the plane.

The people get into the plane, and the door is shut.

A little boy goes out onto the runway.

Little boy: Hey, look at this plane! I think I'll climb around on it.

The little boy climbs up onto the wing of the plane.

First person: OK, the plane is about ready to take off.

Person in the terminal building: Well, the plane is about to take off. Hey, look at that! There's a little boy on the wing of the plane! If the plane takes off, he could get killed!

Person in the terminal building runs out, yelling: Stop, stop! Don't take off yet!

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Person gets out of the airplane, and says to that person: You're not supposed to be out on the runway. Go back inside, and I mean it.

Person who ran from terminal building: Turn around and look! There's a little boy on the wing of your plane!

Person who got out of airplane: Oh, my goodness! If we had taken off, that little boy would have fallen off and gotten killed! (To the other person): Thank you!

Person who ran from terminal building: Come on, let's get him and take him inside. (To the little boy:) Hi, little fellow. You have to get off the plane now.

Boy: But I don't want to get off the plane.

Person who ran: But you must. The plane's about to take off. I'll walk with you into the building.
(The person helps the boy down from the wing and takes him into the building.)

Person who got out of airplane: Thank you for telling us about him!

Person who ran from terminal building: You're welcome!

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Skill 40. Submission

Conceding the Point about the Dinosaurs

An additional prop for this play is a dinosaur toy.

First person: Boy, it's nice that genetic engineering could recover the genes of a dinosaur and grow some pet dinosaurs! Hi, little fellow. Would you like a pat on the head? Nice boy.

Group 6B: Joint Decision-Making, Conflict Resolution

Second person: Hi! It's good to see you! Looks like you've got a new pet dinosaur, huh?

First person: That's right! It's my new Tyrannosaurus Rex! It's very friendly.

Second person: Well, I'm glad you like it. But it isn't a Tyrannosaurus Rex. It's a Brontosaurus. [The second person is right.]

First person: I could be wrong, but I thought for sure this was a Tyrannosaurus Rex.

Second person: Do you want to look it up in a book?

First person: Yes, I'd like that.

(They go to where some books are, and find one on dinosaurs, with pictures; the dinosaur goes along with them.)

Second person: See, here's a picture of the Brontosaurus. He looks just like your dinosaur. And here's a picture of the Tyrannosaurus Rex. He doesn't look like your dinosaur at all.

First person: Hummh! You're right! I had it wrong! Well, that's good, anyway, because I see here that the Tyrannosaurus Rex is very ferocious, whereas the Brontosaurus is a nicer dinosaur who doesn't eat anything but vegetables. I didn't want a ferocious fighter, anyway. Well, thanks for straightening me out on that point!

Second person: Glad to be of service!

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Skill 41. Differential reinforcement

Thanks to the Brother for Bringing Things Back

Girl, to Girlfriend: We get to play with all these things. We can do something really nice with all of them.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

(They have a bunch of toys with them, such as cars, or pieces of paper, or dolls, or pencils and crayons, or stuffed animals, and so forth.)

Girlfriend: I really like playing with these things.

Little brother: Hey, I'm going to take one of these things!

(He picks up the thing, and runs off with it.)

Girlfriend: Hey, he took something! Aren't you going to run after him and try to get it back?

Girl: No, that would just be a fun game for him, which wouldn't be fun for me. He's so young, that he wants to play some sort of game. And what he took isn't dangerous for him, and we can't play with everything at once. So what I do is just thank him when he brings it back. You'll see; he'll probably do it after a while.

Little brother: Here it is, you can have it back!

Girl: Oh, thank you for bringing it back! I really appreciate that!

Little brother: You're welcome.

(Little brother picks up something else, runs off with it.)

Girlfriend: What do you know; it happened just as you thought it would.

Girl: Yep. It's a little distraction, but you get used to it after a while. And he gets tired of it after a while.

Little brother: Here's this other thing back.

Girl and Girlfriend: Thanks; you're so nice to bring it back!

Little brother wanders off.

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Group 7: Nonviolence

Skill 42. Forgiveness and anger control

Forgiving the Baby Sister for Tearing the Airplane

(The prop in this one is a paper airplane that has been decorated with some drawings.)

Boy and Friend are outside.

Boy: (To Friend) Let me show you something. I made this really neat airplane out of paper, and drew things on it. It flies better than any other airplane I've made.

Friend: Hey, I'd like to see it. Where is it?

Boy: I think I left it in the living room, inside. Let's go in.

Narrator: Meanwhile, inside:

Little sister: Goo, goo. Doop do doop de doo. (Little sister takes the paper airplane and tears it up.)

Boy and Friend walk in.

Boy: Let's see now, where did I leave it? I hope I can find it.

Friend: I'm sorry to tell you this, but I think your little one-year-old baby sister has already found it.

Boy: Oh, no! My airplane! Look at her, just having a good time. She doesn't have the slightest idea that she's tearing up something I wanted to keep, does she. She's too little to know that.

Friend: Wow, you have a cool head, don't you? I would have gotten really upset.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Boy: Well, I've trained myself to forgive her. She isn't doing harmful things on purpose. I have a place I can lock up valuable things if I really want to. But I can make another paper airplane. Come on; want to see how to do it?

Friend: Sure.

Boy: You start off by folding the paper like this...

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Forgiving the Person for Stepping on the Toe

First person: What a nice day to be outside! (There are several other people and animals around nearby, so as to make it more credible that the second person could step on this person's toe.)

Second person runs by, touching the second person lightly as he passes, and says: Whee! It's fun to run!

First person: Ouch, he stepped on my toe! That hurt! I feel like going and stepping on his toe! But wait a minute, let me think of what to do. He didn't mean to step on my toe. And even if it did, it wouldn't help to hurt him. I'll forgive him. I do think I should let him know he did it, so that he'll be more careful next time.

First person goes over to second person, and says: Hey, did you know that you stepped on my toe when you ran by just a minute ago?

Second person: Oh, no, I'm sorry, I didn't mean to do that. I feel bad. Is your foot OK now?

First person: Yes, it's OK. Don't worry about it. I just wanted to let you know, though, so that you can be more careful next time.

Second person: I will be more careful, and I appreciate your letting me know.

First person: See you later.

Group 7: Nonviolence

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Forgiving the Person Who Spilled the Water

First person is seated at the table, outside, on the deck of the terminal building. First person says: This sure is nice to have a little restaurant where you can eat outside. I think I'll order some soup and a glass of water.

Waiter or waitress: Hi, I'm your waitress. May I take your order, please?

First person: Yes, please. I'd like some vegetable soup and a cup of water.

Waitress: OK, I'll bring it right out for you.

Waitress goes into the building and comes out again.

Waitress: Here's your water, sir. Whoops! (She stumbles over the table.) Oh, no, I spilled it all over you! You got drenched with the water! I'm sorry!

First person: (to himself:) Now let's see, how do I want to act about this? I could get really mad, but that wouldn't do any good. She didn't do it on purpose. I'll wipe as much of it off as I can, and forgive the waitress.

First person: To waitress: Don't worry about it. I know that you didn't do it on purpose.

Waitress: I feel bad that I got that water all over you. Well, at least I can bring you another glass. (She goes back inside and comes out with another glass of water.) Here, I won't spill it this time.

First person: Thank you.

Waitress: Thank you for being so nice. Most people would get mad.

First person: You're welcome.

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

The Anger Control Test

Man: Who wants to take the anger control test? It's an experiment. You get paid five dollars to take the test and tell us about yourself.

First kid, Second kid: Sounds interesting. Let's give it a try.

Man: OK, who wants to go first?

First kid: I will.

Man: Come with me and wait right here, please. (There's another kid, who is actually a robot, waiting there too.)

Robot, to first kid: You think you can do this test? You look too wimpy to me to do anything.

First kid: You think so, huh? I'm not too wimpy to push you all the way across the room. (The first kid just touches the robot, ready to push him.)

Robot: Beep, beep, beep, beep.

Man: OK, the test is over. It was to see how long you could go without hitting or pushing or doing anything to our robot here.

First kid: Hmm. I guess I didn't do too well on the anger control test.

Man: That's OK. We thank you for participating. You still get your money. Please go back here and answer these questions.

Man goes to second kid.

Man: OK, we're ready for you to come back now. You can wait here for a little bit.

Robot: You think you can do this test? You look too wimpy to do anything.

Group 7: Nonviolence

Second kid: (To himself) Hmm. Do I really look wimpy? I don't think so, particularly. I think this person is just trying to get me upset. I won't let him upset me.

Robot: What's the matter, why don't you say anything? I guess you aren't smart enough, huh?

Second kid: (To himself) Yes, he's definitely trying to make me mad. I am feeling very determined not to let him. I want to be kind, too. (To robot) Sounds like you are in a pretty bad mood. I hope you cheer up soon.

Robot: What you just said didn't make any sense at all. You aren't very smart.

Second kid: Everything you say criticizes me in some way or another. It sounds like you're trying to make me mad. Why do you want to do that?

Robot: Your face looked really silly when you said that.

Second kid: Hmm, it's almost as if you are programmed to say something that criticizes me. To me, it doesn't feel good to feel like criticizing people. I hope you get feeling better soon.

Man enters.

Man: Incredible! You have passed the anger control test. In fact you did better than anybody else. How did you do that?

Second kid: What, you mean this was the test?

Man: Yes. This is a robot, programmed to try to make people mad. Some very few people can keep themselves from getting mad, just as you did. We want to hear all about how you did it. Thank you for being in our study.

Second kid: It's interesting. I'll be interested to answer the questions, too. And I'm glad it wasn't a real person who was feeling so cranky.

Narrator: That's the end of the play.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Skill 43. Nonviolence

Teaching the People to be Nice to the Dog

Boy: Hey, look at that dog's tail. I think I'll go pull it, just to see what he does.

Man, speaking to the horse: Hey, did you hear that? He's not going to be nice to the dog. He's going to be mean to the dog. We have to stop him.

Horse: Yes, I'm not going to let him mistreat my friend the dog. I'll go up and kick that boy.

Man: Hold on, Mr. Horse. That wouldn't be right, either. That would be doing what we're trying to get him not to do. Let's show him how to be nice to the dog.

Horse: OK, but let's go quickly.

Man and Horse run up to where the boy and the dog are, just as the boy gets there.

Horse: Hey, boy, we heard you saying you were going to pull the dog's tail. Don't do that, the dog doesn't like that.

Boy: You mean it hurts the dog when someone pulls his tail?

Man: Yes. Here's how to pet the dog. (Pets dog and says,) Hi, fellow. You are a nice dog. I'll pat you on the head, and rub your back very gently, and if you lie down I'll rub you on the stomach. (He speaks very gently and kindly.)

Dog: Ruff. Ruff. I like that. Thank you.

Boy: May I pet him?

Man: If you'll be very gentle.

Group 7: Nonviolence

Boy: I will. (Pets dog and says,) (Hi, fellow. You are a nice dog. I'll pat you on the head, and rub your back very gently, and if you lie down I'll rub you on the stomach. (Speaks very kindly and gently.)

Dog: Ruff. That feels good, thank you.

Horse: That's the way to treat my friend the dog. I like to see that.

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

The Soldiers of the Kings Decide Not to Fight

King: How I like to be a king! I get to give orders and have people follow them!

Messenger: King, somebody sent me a message that someone else said that he heard that the other king over in our neighboring kingdom said that you weren't very smart.

King: What! I have been insulted! This means war!

Narrator: Meanwhile, the news spread to the other king.

Second messenger: King, the other king over there heard about something that someone said you said about him, and he's planning to start a war!

Second King: What! Call all my soldiers! We must defend our country!

Narrator: So the soldiers of both kingdoms were called together.

(There are two groups of soldiers.)

Soldier: What's this all about? How come we have to go out and risk our lives and kill each other today? I wanted to stay home with my kids and ride scooters today.

Second soldier: I hear it's because one king thought that the other king insulted him. I'm not sure which was which.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

First soldier: What? And these kings expect us to shoot and stab each other and maybe get killed, just because of that? I'm going over and talking to the other soldiers. (He walks over to the other group of soldiers.)

First soldier: Hey, did you guys hear that all this war is about is that some king got upset because he thought some other king insulted him? And for this he expects us to all go out and kill each other?

Other soldiers: We did hear about that. Sounds really stupid, doesn't it?

First soldier: About the dumbest thing I've ever heard of. I'm going home.

Other soldiers: Us too. I can't see getting killed over something so ridiculous.

Other soldiers on the other side: Yeah, let's all go home.

One soldier: I'll leave a note for the kings. (He leaves a piece of paper, and exits.)

First king: OK men, I want you to go out and defend our country's honor. Men? Men?

Second king: Men, I want you to give all for our country. Men? Where are you? All I see is the other king!

First king: There's a note here. It says, "Dear Kings, we decided we didn't want to have a war today. You two work out your own problems. Your friends, Your Soldiers."

Second king: Why, those cowards! Those deserters!

First king: Yeah! So shall we go get some swords or guns and fight each other to the death?

Second king: Are you kidding? I could get hurt really badly by doing that. Kings don't do that kind of thing.

Group 7: Nonviolence

First king: You're right. You know something, if we don't want to get ourselves killed, maybe we shouldn't be so quick to send other people out to do it.

Second king: That's an interesting point. Maybe we could work things out. What was it, that one of us insulted the other?

First king: Oh, well, I'm sure we've both insulted each other, but it isn't such a big deal. Let's just go home and issue royal proclamations that the war is cancelled. Want to?

Second king: Great idea.

They go back to their homes.

First king: Oh people, I have a proclamation! The war is cancelled!

People: Wise king! Good thinking! Yay!

Second king: My people, we decide not to have a war!

People: Yay rah king! Now you're thinking!

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Group 8: Respectful talk, not being rude

Skill 44. Respectful talk, not being rude

Returning the Machine to the Store

Customer: I bought this machine at the store. Let's see how it works. Oh, no, it doesn't work! I'm going to take it back to the store.

Store worker: (To himself) Hmm, I see someone coming who looks mad. I'm getting the urge to say, "That frown on your face sure looks ugly." But, I guess I should talk respectfully to our customers. That's my job, and besides, it's the right thing to do. (To the customer) Hello, what can I do to help you today?

Customer: (To himself) Hmm, I'm getting the urge to say, "Your junky store sold me a piece of worthless garbage, and ripped me off!" But I guess I should speak respectfully to my fellow human being. (To the store worker) Hello, this machine that I bought doesn't work, and I was hoping to get my money back, please.

Store worker: (To himself) Before he talked, I was getting the urge to say, "What do you expect, when you buy the cheapest piece of junk in the store?" But now that he spoke so respectfully to me, it's easier to speak respectfully back to him. (To the customer) That will be no problem, sir, and I'm sorry that the thing we sold you didn't work out. Here's your money back, and we'll let the people who produced it know that it didn't work. Have a nice day, sir.

Customer: (To himself) Wow, he really is a respectful talker. It makes it easier to talk respectfully back to him. (To the store worker) Thank you very much. It was a pleasure to do business with you.

Store worker: Thank you for saying that, and it was a pleasure for me too.

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Group 8: Respectful Talk

Fixing the Family Emotional Climate

First child: It is so!

Second child: It is not!

Father: You kids quit bickering!

Mother: Why don't you quit yelling at them!

Father: I'm not yelling!

Father: I think I'm going to go for a walk, and think about this....

It just isn't pleasant to be in our family, because people are always angry at each other. What can be done about this?

Street Vendor: Nice sentences for sale! Nice sentences for sale! Get them to fix up your family emotional climate!

Father: What do you mean, fix up your family emotional climate?

Street Vendor: You know, make people feel good about each other and talk nicely to each other rather than always bickering and getting upset with each other.

Father: Hey, that's just what I need! What do you mean by sentences for sale?

Street Vendor: Well, you pick out any nice sentences you want, and this handy little installer installs them right into your brain. Then you start using these sentences every chance you get! I've got a nice special today. Pick any five, for the price of four.

Father: OK, I'll try it. Let's see. I'll take one "Thanks for doing that!" and one "I'm glad to see you!" And a "Please tell me more!" and a "Would you like some help with that?" and let's see, I get one more.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Street Vendor: How about a “You’re doing a great job on that!” It goes nicely with the rest of them.

Father: Done! Here’s your money.

Street Vendor: Here’s your change, and now let’s install them right into your brain... OK, we’re all done!

Father: OK! Thanks for doing that!

Street Vendor: You’re welcome!

Father goes back into the house.

Father: Hi everybody! I’m glad to see you!

Child: Hi Daddy! I’ve been reading a book while you were gone.

Father: Please tell me more about that!

Narrator: The child told the father about the book.

Father: You told me all about it, thanks for doing that!

(Mother comes through the room, carrying some garbage.)

Father: (to mother) I’m glad to see you! Hey, you remembered that it’s garbage day! Thanks for doing that!

Mother: Why, you’re welcome.

Father: Would you like some help with that?

Mother: Yes, please, that will be nice.

Second child: I’ll carry some too.

Father: Thanks for doing that! You’re doing a great job with that!

Group 8: Respectful Talk

Second child: Thanks!

First child: You are doing a great job, brother.

Second child: Thanks for saying that!

Narrator: Gradually the five nice sentences got installed into the brains of the other family members, too, and the family emotional climate got better! And that's the end of the play.

Group 9: Friendship-Building

Skill 45. Discernment and Trusting

Getting Across the River

(Some paper is cut out or torn out to indicate a river. Some other paper is folded to represent a boat, unless you have a toy boat. The other prop is a toy alligator (or other carnivorous animal with a big mouth).

Boy: I've been walking a long way. Hey, look at this river! This is really wide! And the water is moving fast. I wonder how I'll get across. Let me see.

Alligator: Hi, boy! Do you want me to give you a ride across the river? You can sit in my mouth while I swim across.

Boy: Mr. Alligator, I may be wrong, but don't you sometimes eat up boys?

Alligator: That's only when I'm very hungry. I'm not very hungry now. At least not yet.

Boy: Mr. Alligator, thank you, but I think I'll get across the river some other way. You have a nice day.

Alligator: OK, good-bye.

Person: Hi, if you'll pay me lots of money, I'll take you across the river.

Boy: How do you get across?

Person: I'll swim, and you can ride on my shoulders.

Boy: Are you a very good swimmer?

Group 9: Friendship-Building

Person: Sure, I'm good at everything. Of course, I never have swum before, but I'm sure I'll pick it up very quickly.

Boy: I think I'll save my money and look for another way to get across the river, today. But thank you anyway.

Person: You're welcome.

Boy's father comes up in a boat.

Boy: Hi, Daddy! I sure am glad to see you!

Father: Hi, Son! I thought you might be coming along this way. Would you like to ride across the river in my boat?

Boy: I sure would! You're great at driving boats.

(They get into boat, and ride across.)

Father: How's your trip been?

Boy: Fine! I got an offer to be taken across the river by an alligator and on the back of someone who didn't know how to swim.

Father: I'm glad you're smart enough not to have taken those offers!

(They reach the other side.)

Boy: Thanks, for the ride, Daddy!

Father: You be careful as you walk along the rest of the way!

Boy: I will!

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Accepting a Ride in the Car

Several people are far away from the house. They have a wadded up piece of paper that represents a ball. The car is in a third place; a person is sitting near the car. Another boy is in the house.

A person in the group: Hey, let's call Ralph on the phone and see if he can play ball with us!

Another person in the group: That's a good idea!

The first person: Here's a telephone. I'll dial his number. 863-4567.

In the house, the telephone rings.

Telephone: Ring! Ring!

Ralph: Hmmh, I wonder who that could be on the phone. I'll see. Hello?

First boy: Hi Ralph, this is Ted. Can you come over to Taylor's field and play ball with us?

Ralph: Yes, that sounds good. Only that's a long way over there, and I don't have a bike, so I'll have to walk. It'll take me a long time to get there.

First boy: That's OK, we'll be here for a long time.

Ralph: OK, I'll see you when I get there.

Ralph: (Starts walking.) Well, it's a long way, but I'll just go ahead and walk. I wish I had some way of getting there quicker, but I don't.

Jack: Well, it's time for me to go to the store. I'll start up my car and go. (Car starting noises, and he drives toward the place where Ralph is walking.)

Jack: Hi, Ralph! Do you want a ride somewhere?

Ralph: Hi, Jack.

Group 9: Friendship-Building

(Ralph talks to himself): Let's see. Can I trust him? I wouldn't get into a car with a stranger, but I know Jack really well, in fact he's my uncle. I know that Jack is a really careful driver, and that he never drinks alcohol or takes drugs of any sort that would mess up his driving.

Ralph: (To Jack): Yes, that would be really nice if I could get a ride with you. I'm going to Taylor's field.

Jack: Hop in; I'm going right past there.

Ralph gets in, and they go to where the people are.

Jack: Here you are, Ralph!

Ralph: Thanks for the ride, Jack! You really helped me!

People in the group: Hey, Ralph, you got here earlier than we expected! Thanks for giving him a ride, Jack. You helped us, too!

Jack: You're welcome! (Drives off.)

Narrator: And that's the end of the show.
Not Accepting a Ride in the Car

Ralph: Well, that was a fun game. I guess it's getting to be time to go home now. See you guys later.

Other guys: See you later, Ralph.

Ralph: I'm a little tired from the game, but it's a nice walk home.

(Pete pulls up in a car.)

Pete: Hi. Would you like a ride?

Ralph (Talks to himself.) Let's see; let me think to myself. Can I trust him? I don't even know exactly who he is. I don't ever want to get in a car with somebody I don't know really well.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Ralph: (To Pete) No, but thank you anyway.

Pete: OK. (Pete drives off.)

Ralph: I made a good decision.

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

The Person In the Wheel Chair Helps Out

Prop for this play is a computer, or anything else that someone can either know or not know how to use. Also there is a book on how to use the computer, or whatever. There are some paper wheels taped onto the sides of a chair, to make a wheelchair.

First person: I wish I could figure out how to use this computer. It seems to be stuck. I don't know what to do.

Second person: I don't either. Maybe we can find someone to help us. Hey, there's somebody. Maybe that person can help us.

First person: That person is in a wheelchair. I'll look for someone who isn't handicapped.

Second person: Now let me think. Does what he just said make sense? A wheelchair has to do with having your legs not able to walk. But that doesn't have anything to do with using a computer. What evidence do I have? I notice that person has a tee shirt on, saying University Department of Computers. That has to tell me something. And I see that that person is carrying a book about computers. That tells me something. I'll give that person a try.

(To the person in the wheel chair) Excuse me, but I wonder if you could give me some help. I am trying to get a computer to work, and it seems to be stuck. Can you get it unstuck for me?

Group 9: Friendship-Building

Person in wheel chair: Sure, I'll be glad to help you. I'll just wheel right over here. Is there anything you need to save?

Second person: No. I just need to get it working again.

Person in wheel chair: Then all you have to do is turn off the machine and turn it back on again. Like this.

Second person: Wow, there it goes!

Person in wheelchair: Now you're all set.

Second person: Thanks so much for helping me.

Person in wheel chair: No problem.

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Skill 46. Self-disclosure

Telling About Being Adopted

First child: Bye, mommy!

Mommy: Bye bye, I'll see you after school's over!

Second child: You don't look much like your mom. In fact your skin isn't the same color as hers.

First child: (To self) Hmm. Should I tell this friend of mine about my being adopted? Why not? If my friend doesn't like it or says something mean, I can still handle it.

(To second child) I don't look like her because she adopted me. She isn't my birth mother.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Second child: I don't understand. Can you tell me more?

First child: Well, everybody has a birth mother. That's the mother whose belly you grew in before you were born. That's the one that you inherit things like your skin color from. But my birth mother couldn't take care of me. When I was a baby, she let my mommy whom you just saw be my mother. That's what it means to adopt someone.

Second child: Oh! Well, that's cool. Now I understand. Want to play on the swings some with me?

First child: Sure.

Narrator: That's the end of the play.

Telling About Not Reading

First Person: Wow, look how young this person is, to already be able to read!

Second Person: I want to see this.

Third Person: Me too.

Protagonist: (Takes a story book and reads from it. E.G. :) It was a cold day out. Eddie had on a very warm sweater and a very warm coat. His friend Maureen was cold. Eddie said, "Maureen, how would you like to wear my coat for a while?" She put it on. She said, "Thanks, Eddie." Now she wasn't cold anymore. Eddie felt good that he had helped her.

First person: Wow, amazing!

Second person: Yes, that is truly awe-inspiring.

(First and second person exit.)

Third person: How did you learn to read so early in your young life?

Group 9: Friendship-Building

Protagonist: Well, it's easy to tell you this, because you're my friend. I'd have told them too, if they had stuck around. I'm not really reading. If I were to pick up a book I'd never seen before, I couldn't read it. I just remember the words to these stories, word for word, because I've heard them so much.

Third person: That's brave of you to be able to tell me that, when they had made such a big deal of it. But you know something? It's amazing that you can remember so many stories word for word! You really have a good memory.

Protagonist: Thanks. I imagine before long I'll learn how to read.

Narrator: And that's the end of the story.

Skill 47. Gratitude and Approval

Glad to See the Guest

First person: (Rings the doorbell.) I'm going to visit my friend.

Second person: (Opens door, comes out). Hi! Welcome! I'm glad to see you! Come inside!

First person: Thank you! I really appreciate that cheerful greeting! (They go inside.)

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

The Person Comes Into the Barn from the Rain

The People and Animals: Hey, it's starting to thunder. It looks like it's going to rain. We'd better go into the barn.

They go into the barn.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Sound effects: Boom! Boom! (Thunder) pssshhhh (with finger motions representing rain.)

People and animals: Listen to that thunder, and look at that lightning! It's really raining hard now!

Person, walking along: Boy, I wish I'd brought my umbrella. I've gotten caught in the rain.

Person in barn: Hey, look at that person; he doesn't have any place to go to. Let's let him come in here, to get out of the rain.

Other person: Yes, we can help him out that way. I'll yell to him. HEY! Come on in here, if you want to get out of the rain!

Person walking outside: Thank you! (He runs to the barn, and they open the door for him and let him in.) You really helped me! If it hadn't been for you, I would have gotten really wet, and might even have been hit by lightning!

Other person: We're glad to be of service. Would you like some hot apple cider, to warm you up?

Person who had been walking outside: Yes, please! You are really nice!

They get him the hot apple cider. He says, "This feels really good, to drink this. Let me know if I can do something for you in return."

Narrator: And that's the end of this play.

Nice Whistling

First person: (Whistles a tune.)

Second person: Hey, nice whistling! I like that!

First person: Thank you!

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Group 9: Friendship-Building

Complimenting the Dress

First girl, in the house: Let's see, what am I going to wear? I think I'll wear this new green dress. (Or blue, or whatever color the girl's clothes are.) I think this looks good.

First girl walks out.

Second girl: Good morning. How are you doing?

First girl: Fine, thank you. How are you?

Second girl: Just fine, thanks. Hey, you know something? That is really a pretty dress you have on!

First girl: Thank you! That really makes me feel good to have you say that.

Second girl: You have a nice day.

First girl: You too.

(They both go their separate ways.)

Second girl: Good-bye. (Pause.) I think she liked it when I mentioned how good her dress looked. I feel good, that I made her feel good.

Narrator: That's the end of that play.

Skill 48. Social initiations

The Visitor Gets Some Lemonade

Someone is in the house. Someone else is outside the front door. That person, whom we'll call the first person, rings the doorbell.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Second person: I wonder who that is. I hope it's not somebody mean. (He sounds a little scared. He walks across the living room floor to the door.)
Who is it?

First person: It's I; it's Jerry.

Second person: Oh, good, my friend Jerry's come to visit. (Opens the door.
Hi Jerry! Welcome! Come in!

First person: Thank you! I'm glad to see you!

Second person: You've come a long way, and it's hot outside. Would you like some lemonade?

First person: Yes, that would be really nice!

Second person: (Goes and gets lemonade in other room. Comes back and says:) Here's your lemonade.

First person: Thanks! This is really good.

Second person: You're welcome. Sit down. (They sit down.)

Narrator: That's the end of the show.

The Child Starts Playing With Other Children at Free Play

(Prop needed for this one: a few blocks.)

First Child: Wow, look at all these other children playing here. Some are playing with blocks, and some are playing with cars, and some are playing with toy people, and some are listening to music and dancing around, and the teacher is reading a story to a couple of them over there. But here I am, with nobody to talk to. I want to start playing with someone. Hummh, who around here looks friendly?

(First Child goes up to the children playing with blocks.)

Group 9: Friendship-Building

First child: First I'll just watch and listen and see what they're up to.

Second child: (To third child) This is a great zoo we're building. The animals are going to have lots of room. They will be able to run around all they want to.

Third child: Yeah! We don't want them to be too cooped up and nervous.

First child: That's a good idea, to give the animals lots of room! I bet they'll like that!

Second child: Yeah! The animals are over there. But they're not ready to come in yet, until the zoo is all built.

Third child: We'd better build this wall very thick. This one will hold the elephants' place.

First child: Yeah, the elephants might knock it down if it's a thin wall. Maybe another layer of bricks would be good, huh?

Third child: Yeah! Let's do it.

First: Yeah. I'll put some here.

Second child: Don't forget the gate here, so that the zoo people can get in every now and then if an elephant gets sick.

First child: (Aside) These are nice folks. I'm glad I started playing with them.

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

The New Pig Introduces Himself

The Farmer drives up to the farm with the pig in the wagon. The other animals are talking with each other.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Farmer lets the pig out of the wagon, and says: Well, here you are, new pig, here's your new home. Hope you like it.

Pig: Gosh, here I am. I don't know anybody.

Other animals, to each other: Oh, is that right? What do you know? Hey, guess what!

Pig: Look at them; they all know each other. And I don't know anybody. I wonder if they'll like me! I could go up and start talking to them. But I feel a little nervous. Maybe I'll go and listen first.

The pig walks up to the group.

The animals are talking to each other. But the dog seems not to be in the group.

The pig: Hey, that dog looks like he doesn't have anybody to talk to. I'll introduce myself to him.

Pig goes up to dog, and says: Hi, my name's Mr. Pig. I just got here. What's your name?

Dog: My name's Mr. Dog. I'm glad to meet you, Mr. Pig. Welcome to the farm. Where did you come from?

Pig: I came from a farm a long ways away.

Dog: I've lived here all my life. Would you like me to show you around?

Pig: Yes, please, that would be really nice.

They walk around, and the dog says: This is the silo. It can hold a lot of stuff in it. Here's the barn. There's some hay in it. This is the trough. This is where we drink our water.

Pig: This is nice of you to show me around, Mr. Dog. I'm glad I came up and started talking with you.

Group 9: Friendship-Building

Dog: I'm glad you did too, Mr. Pig. It's fun to make a new friend.

Narrator: And that's the end of this play.

The Boy Shows His New Friend the Ladder

The girl: Gosh, I'm lonesome. I don't know anybody.

Boy (A good distance away): I wish I had somebody to play with. (He sees the girl.) Hey: she looks like she's lonesome. I'll see if she wants to see my secret ladder.

Boy comes up to girl and says: Hi! My name's Mike. What's your name?

Girl: My name's Susie. I'm glad to meet you, Mike. Have you been around here a long time?

Boy: Long enough to know about some really fun things. Would you like to see one of them with me?

Girl: Sure!

Boy: But it can be dangerous. You have to promise to be very, very careful.

Girl: I'm always careful. I don't like to get hurt.

Boy: Good! Come on. I'm going to show you my ladder. You can climb it and see all over everywhere.

They go to the silo, and he shows her a ladder on the side of it.

Girl: Hey, that is really something!

Boy: Would you like me to show you how to climb it very carefully?

Girl: Sure, I'll watch you first.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Boy: (Climbs ladder.) You have to hold on very tight, and keep as many hands and feet holding on as you possibly can.

Girl: How's the view from up there?

Boy: It's great! Now it can be your turn. (He climbs down.)

Girl: OK, here I go. I'm going to be really careful. (She climbs up.) Wow, you can see all over everywhere! I really like this! (She climbs down.)

Girl: Thanks for showing me the ladder!

Boy: You're welcome!

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Skill 49. Socializing

Having a Telephone Chat with the Grandparents

A prop for this play can be a long string that is meant to represent the telephone line.

First Grandparent, to other grandparent: You know, I haven't talked to our grandchild in a while. Let's call up on the phone and say hi, and chat for a while.

Second Grandparent: Well, I wouldn't expect too much. You know how kids that age sometimes can't talk too much on the phone. Sometimes they need you to be right there before they can think of anything to say or do with you.

First Grandparent: Maybe so. But let's give it a try anyway. I'll call up. Let's see: 412-323-5191. It's ringing.

Group 9: Friendship-Building

Grandchild: Hello, this is the Smith residence.

Grandparent: Hi, Grandson!

Grandchild: Hi, Granddaddy! It sure is good to hear from you. How have you been doing?

Grandparent: Your grandmother and I have both been doing fine. What have you been up to?

Grandchild: Guess what, just a little bit earlier I was reading some story books to my little sister! I've learned how to read them, and she's learned to be interested in them, since we've seen you last! She really likes it!

Grandparent: Wow! That's really exciting! She's only a little older than 2 now, isn't she?

Grandchild: That's right. We had a little birthday party for her, about a month or two ago. I'm not sure whether she really understood what a birthday is or not, but she seemed to have a good time.

Are you still playing your violin, Granddaddy?

Grandparent: I sure am.

Grandchild: I really did like hearing you play that violin the last time you were down here. You should bring it again and come back soon.

Grandparent: Thanks! That sounds like a good idea.

Narrator: And the boy also talked with his grandmother on the phone. And then they said goodbye.

Grandchild: I really appreciate your calling. Call back again soon. Good-bye.

Grandparent: Good-bye, Grandson.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Second Grandparent, to First Grandparent: Boy, was I wrong on that one! He can talk to us on the phone really well, can't he?

First Grandparent: He sure can. Let's call him up and talk very often. Do you want to?

Grandparent: I sure do.

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Skill 50. Listening

Listening to the Dream

(The characters in this one are some larger toy people or animals, one of whom will use some smaller ones to act out what he is talking about.)

First animal: Hi, friend. How are you today?

Second animal: I'm doing well. How are you?

First: Great. I just had a very interesting dream last night!

Second: Oh! It sounds from your voice as if it was a fun one, too, is that right?

First: Yes. Would you like to hear about what happened in it?

Second: Sure.

(The first animal gets some toy people and acts out the dream, as he is telling it.)

First animal: I dreamed that I was a boy.

Second: So in your dream you were not a bear [or whatever] any more, but a boy.

Group 9: Friendship-Building

First: That's right. And I dreamed that if I did something in my mind just right, and worked my hands and arms just right, I could float up into the air, just as people float on water.

Second: So it was like you were flying, in your dream?

First: Yes. But after a while, I didn't have to work my hands and arms any more, and all I had to do was lie back and relax, and float through the air.

Second: You didn't even have to work to stay up floating in the air. Sounds really magical, and nice.

First: Right. And then I floated along over the city, for a long time. I went a long way. I saw all sorts of new places. They looked really beautiful from way up in the air.

Second: I'll bet it was really fun floating over the whole city.

First: It was. And then I decided to come down, in a place where I'd never been before.

Second: Was that scary, as if you were lost?

First: No, because there was a big piece of paper that would magically tell you how to jump from any place to any other place. I just looked at it, and it told me how to jump back to my home. So I took one big jump, and there I was, at home again. And that's when I woke up from the dream.

Second: I wish I had a magic piece of paper that could tell me how to get anywhere, in one jump. That sounds like a really fun dream. Thanks for telling me about it.

First: Thanks for listening to me.

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Group 10: Self discipline

Skill 51. Self-discipline

Using the Alarm Clock

Mother: Our son is getting to be such a big boy. I'll bet he's ready to start getting out of bed with an alarm clock, instead of my having to wake him up. Do you think so?

Father: I don't know whether he's old enough for that yet. It is pretty hard to get up when the alarm rings, instead of turning it off and going back to sleep. But let's try him and see.

Son comes in. Son: Hi Mom! Hi Dad!

Mother and Dad: Hi son!

Mother: Son, we've just been talking. We've been wondering whether you're a big enough boy to use an alarm clock to get up in the morning. Do you think you are?

Son: Yes! An alarm clock is something that you set, and it rings at the time you set it for, and then you get up when it rings, isn't that right?

Father: That's right, but it's very easy to just turn off the alarm clock and go back to sleep. That's why using an alarm clock takes a lot of self-control.

Son: I think I can do it. Why don't I try tomorrow morning?

Mother: That sounds good. Let's set it now. (They go to his bedroom.) We can set it for 7 o'clock, the same time I usually wake you up. When it rings, you just push this to make it stop ringing, and then you get up.

Son: I think I can do it. Well, good night, I'll see you at 7 o'clock in the morning.

Group 10: Self-Discipline

Mother and Father go to bed too. Then mother and father get up.

Mother, to Father: Good morning.

Father: Good morning. Here's the morning where we see if our son can get up with the alarm clock. What time is it?

Mother: It's almost seven o'clock. Let's see what happens.

Alarm clock: Ring! Ring!

Son: Hey, there goes the alarm clock! I'm still sleepy, but I'm going to get up out of bed anyway!

Son runs down to mother and father. Son: I did it!

Mother and Father: Hooray for you! You did it, on the very first time! What a big boy! We're proud of you!

Son: Thanks, Mom and Dad!

Narrator: That's the end of that play.

Helping Wash Dishes

In this play the only prop other than the house is a wad of paper meant to be a ball.

The first person is in the house at the sink, washing dishes.

First person: Look at all these dirty dishes to wash. Well, I guess the thing to do is to go ahead and get them done.

Second person: Hey, look what I have!

First person: Wow, look at that! You got a new ball!

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Second person: Yes! I brought it over so we could play with it together!

First person: Well that's really nice of you, but I need to finish washing these dishes first.

Second person: (To himself) Aw! I wanted to play with the ball right now! What could I do? I could run off and try to find someone else. Or, I know! I could help my friend wash dishes so she'll be done sooner!

Second person: (To the first person) How would you like some help with those dishes, and then after we finish we can play with the ball?

First person: That sounds great!

(They wash dishes, saying things like, OK, I'll use this rag here, and I'll dry this with this towel, and I'll put this one up in this cabinet.)

First person: That's the last one! We're all done! Thank you for helping me!

Second person: You're welcome! Ready to go play ball?

First person: I sure am!

They play with the ball, kicking or throwing it back and forth.

Narrator: That's the end of the show!

Not Eating the Brownie

Child: Oh, those brownies smell great! Did you just bake them, mom?

Mom: I did! They smell good to me, too.

Child: Could I have one, please?

Group 10: Self-Discipline

Mom: You can have one now if you want. BUT: here's a special deal. If you can wait and not touch a brownie until you have finished helping me put the laundry away and put the dishes away, you can have three brownies!

Child: Let me make sure I understand. I can have one now, but if I do that, that's all I get today. But if I wait until we're done with the laundry and the dishes, I can have three?

Mom: That's right.

Child: I'm going to go for the three! Dishes and laundry, here I come. Putting dishes away, this goes here, this goes there.... Done! (Mom goes out of the room.) Oh, look at those brownies. My mom is out of the room at this moment. I'm really tempted to take one. But self-discipline! Where is that laundry? (Goes up to bedroom, where mom is.) Hanging the laundry up, putting it in the closet. Doing more and doing more. I'm done!

Mom: Congratulations! You waited! You get three brownies now, instead of one!

Child: Thanks, mom!

Narrator: That's the end of the play.

Group 11: Loyalty

Skill 52. Loyalty

Being Loyal to the Sister

A group of girls is sitting together.

First girl: My younger sister really gets on my nerves. Doesn't your younger sister get on your nerves?

Second girl: She gets on my nerves all the time. I get so annoyed with her. She's a pain in the neck. I think nobody likes having a younger sister. How about you, Amelia?

Amelia: (To herself) It sounds like they really would like me to join in with them and agree with them. But I want to be loyal to my sister, even though she isn't here. Plus I want to tell the truth. (To the second girl) My sister is really nice to me. We have lots of fun together. In fact, I think of her as my best friend.

Second girl: Wow, you're weird, Amelia.

Amelia: (To herself) I don't think she enjoyed hearing that. But I'm proud of myself for sticking up for my sister.

First girl: Wow, Amelia, you're lucky. I wish I could say that my sister and I have as much fun as you and your sister do.

Amelia: Thanks. I am lucky, to have such a nice sister.

Narrator: That's the end of the play.

The Irritable Friends Solve Their Problem

Group 11: Loyalty

First person and second person are in the car.

First person: Wow, we've been on this trip with each other for a whole week now.

Second person: Yes, and I think we're getting really irritated with each other. I can tell by things like when you said, a while ago, "I don't want to hear about what you're thinking, why don't you please just keep it to yourself!" and when I said, a while ago, "Please just quit bugging me!"

First person: You're right. I think we're sick of being together. Do you think that means we should say good-bye to each other and never speak to each other ever again, and never be friends?

Second Person: No, I think that's going way too far. I want to stay friends. Let's just spend some time away from each other. Let's each go for a walk by ourselves. That way we can come back together and be glad to see each other.

First Person: What a good idea. Let's stop right here in this town, and each go for a walk on our own. How about if I meet you back here in about two hours.

Second Person: OK, fine.

(They park the car, and they go their separate ways.)

Narrator: They each walked around, and talked to some of the people they met in the town, and sat by themselves and thought.

First Person: Well, the two hours are up. Time to meet my friend.

Second Person: Hi, Buddy! How did your time go?

First Person: It went well! I'll tell you all about it, if you want to hear.

Second Person: Sure! I don't feel so irritable now. Do you?

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

First Person: Nope. Spending some time by myself really put me back in a mood to chat with you, old friend.

(They get in the car and drive off.)

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Group 12: Conservation

Skill 53. Conservation and Thrift

Saving Money and Getting Interest

The prop in this play is some play money.

First person: Hi ho hey, we're done with work today.

Second person: And for our work we got paid this money!

First person: I'm going to buy things with my money. I'm going to get some potato chips, and some pop, and go see about three movies. What are you going to do with yours?

Second person: I'm going to save it. I'm going over and putting it in the bank. (To Banker) Hi, Mr. Banker. Here's my money.

Banker: Thank you. Here's your piece of paper saying that we're holding it for you.

First person: What, all you got for your money was that piece of paper?

Second person: It's still my money. It's just that the bank has borrowed it from me. In a while, they'll pay me some more money, just for me letting them borrow it. It's called interest when they do that.

First person: I don't believe it. I'm going to go see a movie. Well, bye-bye.

Second person: See you later.

Narrator: A long time passed. Then they saw each other again.

First person: Hi, I remember you. How are you doing?

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Second person: Pretty well, I guess. The job ended, so I don't get paid any more.

First person. That happened to me, too. That's why I haven't had anything to eat for three days.

Second person: Nothing for three days! You must be really hungry! Come on, I'll buy you something to eat.

First person: But how do you get money? I thought you said the job ended.

Second person: Remember I told you that when I put money in the bank, they pay me money just to leave it there? I'm going to get some now.

Second person, to Banker: Hi. How are you today?

Banker: Hi. Here's the money we're paying you to leave your money with us.

Second person: Thanks.

First person: You didn't even have to work for that money? He just gave it to you because you saved other money?

Second person: That's right. OK, so let's go to the grocery store. How about some beans, and peaches, and some flour to make bread with?

First person: Sounds wonderful!

Second person: I'll buy it and we can eat it together.

(He buys it.)

First person: Wow, what a nice treat! Thank you so much. I'm going to save some money too, some day.

Second person: I feel good that I'm able to help you.

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Group 13: Self-care

Skill 54. Carefulness

Choosing Not to Play Ball in the Street

First Person: Come on, let's go out and play ball in the street!

Second Person: OK. Let's all go!

Protagonist, who is the third person: Hummh, I don't like the sound of this, but I'll go out and see what's up.

(The first and second person play ball.)

First person (to protagonist): Hey, what's the matter? Don't you want to play with us?

Protagonist: I'm scared that a car will come around and hit us.

Second Person: If a car comes around, we'll get just out of the way for a little while. Here comes one now.

Car: Beep! Beep!

(The first and second person get to the side of the road, and then go back out into the street.)

Second Person: What's the matter, are you still scared, scaredy cat?

Protagonist: I am, and I think you should be, too. I think it's better to feel scared when you're in a lot of danger than to feel unscared, if feeling scared makes you act more safely. That car came around slowly. What if a car came blaring down the street really fast? I really think we should walk over to the park, instead. It's only a little way down the street.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

First person: Oh, all right. If he's too scared, let's do it. We need three people to have a good game anyway.

Second person: Oh, OK.

Protagonist: Now you're getting smart.

(They walk down the sidewalk. All of a sudden a car from out of nowhere tears down the street where they had been, at lightning fast speed, with the tires screeching.)

First Person: That person must be crazy to drive that fast!

Second Person: That guy must have been going 90 miles an hour! If we had still been out in the street we would have been dead, for sure!

First Person (to protagonist): I think we owe you an apology for calling you a scaredy cat. If it hadn't been for you, we would have been killed. Thanks for using your judgment!

Second Person: Yeah, thanks!

Protagonist: It's good of you to say that. I'm so glad that you listened to me. Thank you.

Narrator: And that's the end of the play.

Going Inside to Get Out of the Noise

Two people are sitting outside, around the table in front of the terminal building at the airport.

First person: This sure is a pretty day, isn't it?

Second person: It sure is. Nice day to be sitting around and drinking pineapple juice.

The plane takes off. VAROOM!

Group 13: Self-Care

First person: Boy, that is too noisy, I don't like that noise! And I understand that loud noises can damage your ears.

Second person: I don't like the loud noise either. Oh, well, maybe it won't happen again.

Helicopter takes off. Varoom! Clatter, clatter!

First person: The helicopter is noisy too! I don't like this!

Second person: I don't either!

Third person comes up to them, and says: Hi, how are you doing today?

First and second person: Not too well. It's too noisy here.

Third person: Let's all list some options.

First person: We could get in your car and leave.

Second person: Or we could go inside the terminal building, where it will be much quieter.

Third person: I like that idea. The building will shield us from the noise. I'll help you move your table and chairs if you want me to.

First and second person: That's really nice of you. (They move the table and the chairs inside.)

The plane lands. Varoom! (Not so loud this time.)

First and second person: Hey, that's much quieter inside this building. It really worked! We made a good decision on how to take care of our precious hearing!

Third person: We sure did!

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Skill 55. Habits of self-care

Turning Down the Smokes and Booze, and Accepting the Run

First person: Hey, try smoking this cigarette. It's real cool.

Protagonist: No, man! And if I were you I wouldn't smoke those things. I know of some people who died of lung cancer from smoking those things.

First person: Aw, it'll never happen to me.

Protagonist: I hope not. Good luck.

Exit first person.

Enter another person.

Drinker: Hey, look what I've got! It's some beer! Want some?

Protagonist: No thanks. That beer has alcohol in it, and I don't think alcohol's good for my brain.

Drinker: Oh, well. I don't care about my brain. See you later.

Protagonist: Good luck.

Runner: Hey, how are you doing! I'm taking a little run now. Want to go with me?

Protagonist: Hey, I'd love to. It's a pretty day out, and I like seeing the neighborhood, and the running is good exercise for me! Let's go!

Runner and protagonist run off together.

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Group 13: Self-Care

Skill 56. Relaxation

Learning Muscle Relaxation

Prop for this is an audiotope player and audiotope.

Patient: Doctor, I get these aches in the back of my neck, and in my head. I've got one right now.

Doctor: Let me feel the muscles on the back of your neck. Wow, they are so tight and tense! They feel hard as a rock! They ache because you're holding them so tense.

Patient: How do I get them to relax?

Doctor: Take this audiotope, and listen to it, and do exactly what it says. Come back and let me know what has happened.

Patient: OK, doc.

Narrator: In the next scene, the patient puts the audiotope in the player and starts it up.

Patient: Let's see, I put it in like this, and I push the start button.

Voice from audiotope: This tape is to teach you to relax all your muscles. The way you learn that at first is to practice first making them very tense, and then getting them to go limp. First grip your hand really tight. Feel how hard the muscles are in your forearm? Now let your hand relax, and be as limp as you can possibly get it. Now feel how soft the muscles are?

Patient: OK, I understand! I tense my muscles, and then I relax them.

Voice from audiotope: You can tense muscles in your head, and neck, and face, and then relax them. If you can figure out how to make them tense, you can make them relaxed, by just doing the opposite.

Patient: Hey, I can do that with my neck muscles. I'm going to try it with all the muscles of my body.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Narrator: The person kept practicing relaxing his muscles. After a while he saw the doctor again.

Doctor: Did you learn how to relax your muscles, by listening to the tape?

Patient: I sure did! And I've been having a lot fewer headaches and neck aches! Thanks, Doctor!

Doctor: You're so welcome! I feel good whenever one of my patients gets better.

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Skill 57. Self-nurture

Saying Assuring Things To Oneself When the Lights Go Out

Father: Good night, son.

Son: Good night, Daddy.

Father: I'll turn the lights out now.

Son: OK.

Son: Well, here I am lying by myself in the dark. The dark can feel just as friendly as the light, if I say comforting things to myself that make me feel good. I'm a brave enough person to handle almost anything that comes along. I'm a really tough and resilient person. I have all sorts of make-believe friends in my mind, that will help me handle any make-believe thing that comes up, such as in dreams. If I dream, I'll get all the people in the dream to be my friends sooner or later. And I can imagine all sorts of stories about people being nice to each other, while I'm lying in bed. I think I'll imagine one right now.

Narrator: And here's the story that he imagined.

Group 13: Self-Care

Boy and girl walk into a new city.

Boy: Wow, look at this new city. It looks really different than any city I've ever seen.

Girl: Yes! I wonder what it will be like.

Host: Hi! I'm your host in this magic city. That means that if you want to know something, ask me and I'll tell you.

Boy: Wow, our very own host. I'm hungry. Can you tell us where we can get something to eat?

Host: No problem. There are great things to eat, right here.

(Boy and girl eat.)

Boy and Girl: Wow, this is great stuff. I've never had anything like this before.

Host: Let me show you something wonderful about our magic city. We have all sorts of wonderful books that only take seconds to read, even though they are very long, so that you get the whole book in your mind by magic.

Boy and Girl: Wow, let's try it.

(They flip the pages of a book really quickly.) Hey, it works! It comes into our minds like magic! And it's such interesting stuff in here! Thanks for showing us these magic books, Mr. Host!

Host: You're welcome! And there are all sorts of other wonderful things about this city. I want to show you lots more of them!

Narrator: This story about the magic city was part of what the boy thought about while he was lying in bed.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Boy: I'm enjoying this story that I'm thinking about! I'm getting really sleepy, though. I'll just keep thinking about my story, and maybe it'll turn into my dream.

Narrator: And that's what he did, and he slept well and woke up the next morning feeling refreshed.

And that's the end of that play.

Group 14: Compliance

Skill 58. Compliance

Taking A Test

Older person: Are you ready to take your test?

Younger person: Yes! I wonder how many I'll be able to get right.

Older person: This test is that I show you some pictures, and see if you can pick out the right one. Can you point to the picture where the man is on top of the horse?

Younger person: (To self.) Let's see now. Let me think to myself. In this picture, the man is beside the horse. In this one the horse is on top of the man! That's a funny picture. OK, here's the one that was asked for, where the man is on top of the horse.

(To the older person) It's this one!

Older person: You got it! Congratulations!

Younger person: Hooray, I got it right! Thanks for those congratulations!

Older person: (To himself) Wow, this young person is really good at complying. I asked him to answer the questions, and he did it for me! (To the child) Here comes the next one.

Narrator: And they did a whole lot more of them. The person missed some, but got very many right. And that's the end of the play!

Leaving the Playground

Child: Mommy, would you please take me to the playground to play?

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Mommy: Yes, but you have to remember one thing. When I tell you it's time to leave, you have to leave that very instant. You have to start going as soon as I tell you. Can you do that?

Child: Yes, mom, I promise.

Mother: OK, let's go.

(They arrive at the playground.)

Child: Wahoo! Hey, this slide is fun! Oh, boy, do I love this swing!

Narrator: They stayed there for quite a while.

Child: Oh, what's that? Hey, that's something I didn't see before! It looks really fun! I'm going to check it out.

Mother: It's time to leave right now.

Child: (To himself) I'm getting the urge to ignore my mom. But I have to use my compliance skills! This is tough! But I can do it. (To the mom) OK mom, here I come. I'm ready to go!

Mother: Wow, I'm really proud of you! Those are great compliance skills you just showed!

Child: Thanks, Mom. I feel good that you appreciate it. I was just starting to go to play on a new thing, just before you said we had to go.

Mother: And you were able to leave with me so well even so? Wow. Congratulations to you.

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Group 14: Compliance

Practicing Handwriting

Boy: It is really fun playing with these toys.

Mother: Son, it's time to practice your handwriting.

Boy: (To himself) Hmm, I enjoy playing with the toys a lot more than I enjoy practicing handwriting. But I want to obey my mom. So here I go. (To his mom) OK mom, here I come!

Mother: Wow, that was good compliance! I know you would have rather kept playing with the toys.

Boy: You're right about that one, Mom. Thanks for the compliment.

Mother: You're welcome. OK, here are the letters, and I want you to copy them, exactly like they are here.

Boy: Here I go. Start here; go around this way, up, down, and on. I'm done with that one! It looks pretty good! Here goes the next one.

Narrator: He kept working on it until he was finished.

Boy: Here you are, Mom!

Mother: Good handwriting practice, son! Now you can go back to playing. And thanks for your good complying.

Boy: You're welcome!

Narrator: That's the end of the play.

Group 15: Positive fantasy rehearsal

Skill 59. Imagination and positive fantasy rehearsal

Using Fantasy to Get Less Scared of Bedtime

Protagonist: I've got a problem. When I go to bed at night, I'm scared. I know someone's not going to get me, but I'm still scared. I imagine these scary people. One of them looks like a big green thing with a long nose, like this puppet here. One of them looks like a giant spider, like this puppet. (The big green thing and the giant spider are puppets that appear in the background.)

Second person: How would you like to feel instead of scared?

First person: Happy.

Second person: What's the happiest you've ever been?

First person: Well, one time was at my birthday party, when all my friends were around, and we played lots of fun games, and sang songs, and ate and drank good stuff.

Second person: Would you like to try something? Try lying down on your bed, in the daytime, and imagining those same big green thing, and the same giant spider, but imagine yourself having a birthday party with them, and having a good time, and singing songs, and the whole bit. That way you get to practice imagining happy things at bedtime rather than scary things.

First person: Good idea. I'll try it. OK, here I go to the bed, and lie down. Now let me imagine what's going to go on. Here will be my imagining, right here. (There's another toy character just like that of the First person, who appears in the fantasy sequence.)

Green puppet: Heh, heeh, heh heh!

Group 15: Positive Fantasy Rehearsal

First person: That sure is a creepy laugh, Mr. Green person. But welcome to my party! All my other friends are here!

Friends: Hi, Mr. Green person!

Green person: Hi, friends!

Spider: Da da da da da... (creepy music melody)

First person: That sure is creepy music you're singing, Mr. Giant spider. But I'm glad you're singing. We want to sing some songs right now.

Friends: Let's sing "The More We Get Together!"

Spider: Oh, good, I like that one!

(They all sing the song.)

First person: Now I've got some strawberries and cake for everybody!

Green person: Fantastic! I love cake!

Spider: And I like strawberries! Would you like to trade your strawberries for my cake, Green Person?

Green Person: Sounds great!

First person: There's enough for everyone to have all he wants!

Narrator: The boy kept imagining these things. Then he got up and did some other things, and then he lay down and practiced imagining again. Finally it came time for him to go to bed at night.

A piece of paper colored black is held in the background to represent that it's night.

First person: Well, now it's dark in my room. It's still a little scary. But I'm going to just imagine things like I did during the day.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Narrator: The next day...

Second person: How did it work out last night?

First person: I didn't feel nearly as scared! You really helped me! It's great to know that you can change the way you feel by imagining things on purpose!

Second person: I'm so pleased that my suggestion helped!

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Group 16: Courage

Skill 60. Courage

Sledding Down the Hill

You can make a hill by stacking up a few books, and leaning one other book against the stack, so that the leaning book tilts diagonally. This is the hill on which the kids are going sledding.

First kid: Lots of snow out today, we get to go sledding! Wow, look at the size of this hill! It is really high, isn't it!

Second kid: Yes. As a matter of fact, I'm kind of scared to go down it with my sled.

First kid: Me too, at least right now. It may be dangerous. But I know what we can do. Let's just take our sleds part way up, and see how it goes.

Second kid: Great idea. I'm not scared to slide down from here. (He slides.) Whee! That was fun!

First kid: I'll try it from just a little higher than that. Yahoo!

Second kid: Now that I know it's safe at the bottom, I'll do it from a little higher. Wahoo!

First kid: Higher still this time! Yay!

Second kid: We are doing it almost from the top. Now that we know it's safe, we can do it from the top. Do you want to?

First kid: Yes! (They both sled down from the top.) Wahoo!

First kid: We were afraid at the beginning, but now we're not any more, are we?

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Second kid: No! I guess that's because we took it gradually, and gave ourselves time to get used to it.

Narrator: That's the end of the play.

The New Dance

Child: Hi Mommy! Guess what I did today! I learned a new dance!

Mother: Good for you! How does it go?

Child: Do you want to see me do it?

Mother: Sure!

Child: I'll put on this record.

Record player: Da de dah, de de doo, etc.

Child: I'm feeling a little nervous and self-conscious all of a sudden. I guess I'm afraid I won't do the dance well enough. Oh well, it isn't the end of the world if I don't do it well enough. Time to get brave! Here I go!

Child does the dance.

Mother: Look at that! That's really good!

Other family members gather around.

Other family members: Boy, I didn't know she could do that!

Mother: She just learned today. Isn't that something?

The song ends.

Child: Well, that's it.

Family members: Yay, hooray for you! (They also clap.)

Group 16: Courage

Child: Thank you! Thank you! I appreciate that!

Narrator: That's the end of this show.

Feeding the Dinosaur

Child: Mommy! Daddy! Help! There's dinosaur after me!

Mommy and Daddy: We'll help you; don't worry. (They hold the child close to them and comfort him or her.)

(The toy Tyrannosaurus Rex dinosaur approaches, making some growling or roaring or groaning noises, more painful noises than angry ones.)

Daddy: Hey Mr. Dinosaur! Why are you coming this way making all those noises?

Dinosaur: Because I'm hungry! I want to eat something up!

Mommy and Daddy, to each other: What do you think we should do? Do we have some food to give him? Yes, let's offer him some of our food, he's hungry.

Mommy and Daddy, to dinosaur: Well, Mr. Dinosaur, we're sorry you haven't gotten enough to eat. How would you like some of our food? We've got some tofu hot dogs for you.

Dinosaur: Oh, good! I love tofu hot dogs! (Eats them joyously.) Umnh, umnh! Thank you!

Mommy and Daddy: How about some fried rice?

Dinosaur: Oh, I love fried rice!

Child: Have some baked beans!

Dinosaur: Thank you! You're really nice to me! Umh! Would you come and play with me sometime?

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Mommy, Daddy, or Child: Sure! And you come back to see us, too! We like having a dinosaur friend!

Narrator: That's the end of that play.

The Sheep Gets a Haircut

Mr. Pig: Hi, Mr. Sheep, how are you doing?

Mr. Sheep: Mr. Pig, I'm glad you asked that. I'm pretty scared.

Pig: I'm sorry something is scaring you. What are you scared of?

Sheep: The farmer told me I was going to get my hair cut. I never had it done before. Will it hurt? It hurt when I cut my arm, so won't it hurt when they cut my hair?

Pig: Gosh, Mr. Sheep, that's a good question. I don't know. I never had my hair cut before. But maybe I can help you find someone who does know. Maybe Ms. Cow knows.

Sheep: Good, let's go ask her.

Pig: Hey, Ms. Cow. We have a question for you.

Ms. Cow: What's that?

Sheep: I'm going to get my wool cut. Does it hurt when someone gets a haircut?

Ms. Cow: I don't think so, Mr. Sheep. But I'll tell you who knows for sure, and that's Mr. Dog. He has his hair cut pretty often. Let's go ask him.

All of them: Hey, Mr. Dog, we've got a question to ask you!

Dog: What is it?

Group 16: Courage

Sheep: I'm going to get my wool cut off. Does it hurt when they cut your hair?

Dog: Mr. Sheep, I have gotten lots of haircuts, and it doesn't hurt a bit.

Sheep: Oh, boy. That's good to know. Thank you, Mr. Dog. And thank you, Mr. Pig and Ms. Cow, for helping me find the answer.

Farmer: Mr. Sheep, are you ready to get your haircut?

Mr. Sheep: Sure!

Farmer: *zzzzz zzzzzz zzzzzz* (sound effects while he cuts the hair of the sheep.)

Sheep: Hey, Mr. Horse was right! This doesn't hurt a bit!

Farmer: Now we're all done, Mr. Sheep! Now you won't be so hot this summer. And we'll use your wool to make some clothes, if you don't mind.

Sheep: That's fine with me.

Farmer: Thanks, Mr. Sheep.

Sheep: You're welcome, Mr. Farmer.

Narrator: And that's the end of that play.

Comforting the Person Who's Nervous about Flying

The first and second person are on the ground near the terminal. The plane is nearby.

First person: Boy, I can't wait to get onto the plane. It is so much fun to fly around up in the air.

Second person: This is the first time I've done it. I'm scared.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

First person: Do you want me to help you not be scared? I'll sit beside you and be your friend.

Second person: Yes! That would really be nice.

Person on the plane: It's time for everyone to get on the plane!

Second person: Well, here goes. I think I can do it, even though I'm nervous.

They get on the plane together, and sit beside one another.

First person: When I ride on a plane, I think about how pretty those clouds look, and how they look like nice white cotton. And I think about what a pretty view there will be from way up high, and how you can look out and see all around for miles. It's really fun!

(While he is saying these things, the plane takes off.)

Second person: Yeah, when I think about those things, it is fun. Wow, we're really off the ground.

First person: Yes, doesn't it look pretty to see the view!

Second person: It sure does! I don't feel scared now! Thank you for being my friend.

First person: It's my pleasure!

Narrator: That's the end of that play.

Skill 61. Depending

The Person Asks for Help In Getting the Airplane Off

Person: It sure is a nice day for a walk, even if there are tornado warnings.... Hey, wow, it looks like the tornado is picking up that empty airplane, right up into the air! I'd better run to get out of the way!

Group 16: Courage

(The empty airplane spins around up in the air. The door of the airplane is open. The airplane falls down, with the open door down, right onto the person, so that the person is trapped, but not hurt.)

Person: Hey, what's happened? My goodness, the plane fell down on me! But I'm not hurt, because the open door fell right where I was! Boy, am I lucky not to have gotten hurt! Well, let's see. How am I going to get out of here? Hummh. It looks like I'm trapped in here until someone can help me get this plane off.

(Two people walk by.)

One person walking by: It sure is a nice day for a walk, even though we did have a little tornado. Look, that must be the empty plane that was picked up into the air and dumped.

Other person: Yeah! Isn't that something?

Person in plane: I wonder if I should ask those people for help. I'd like some help, that's for sure, but I'm just shy about asking anyone for help. I'll keep quiet for a while.

(The two people walk away.)

Person in plane: Hummh, here I am, trapped under the plane still. I guess I've got to get my courage up and ask some people to help me.

(Three people walk up.)

One person walking up: Wow, it was true what they said! The tornado really did pick up an empty plane and dump it down again!

Second person: And here it is, right here!

Person in plane: Excuse me, but I'd like to ask you three people to help me for a few minutes, if you would please.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

People outside: Hey! Did you hear that? I don't believe it! There's someone in there! I thought the plane was empty!

Person in plane: It was empty, but it fell down on top of me, in a way that didn't hurt me, but it trapped me. Do you think you could turn the plane over for me, so that I can get out?

One of people outside: Hey, you other two people! Can you help us too? This is a big job! We need to turn the plane over to get this person untrapped!

(All five people get on the plane, and lift it over, so that the person is no longer trapped.)

Person who had been in plane: You did it! Thank you for helping me!

People who had helped: Hooray! We were able to help! Yay! Congratulations!

Person who had been in plane, to himself or herself: Boy, I sure am glad I got up the nerve to ask for some help. I would have still been trapped in there!

Narrator: And that's the end of the play!

Skill 62. Independent thinking

Tom Plays With a Boy Other Children Are Teasing

There is a boy named Mike in a group of two or three other children. Tom's father is watching from a long way off.

One child, to Mike: We don't want to play with you.

Other children: We don't want to play with you. We don't like you. (This is chanted by them in that universal taunting tune, the tune of Nyah, nyah nyah nyah, nyah.)

Group 16: Courage

Tom: (Enters the scene. He doesn't know his father is watching from the other direction.) Hey, they're not being nice to him. He looks like he feels bad. Maybe I can cheer him up and make him feel good.

Tom: Hey, would you play with me? I've got a ball; do you want to kick it back and forth?

Mike: Sure! (Mike runs out of the group of taunting children, and kicks the ball back and forth with Tom.)

Tom: My name's Tom. What's your name?

Mike: My name's Mike. I sure am glad you aren't like those other people. I don't know why they tease me so much. I think it's because I use words that are too long for them to understand.

Tom: People are like that sometimes. Just forget about them, and have a good time with somebody else.

Another child: Hey, can I play with you?

Tom: Sure, my name's Tom, and this is Mike. What's your name?

The other child: My name's Ted. Hey Mike, you can kick pretty well!

Mike: Thanks!

Ted and Mike kick the ball back and forth.

Tom's father: Hey Tom, it's time to go home now, son!

Tom: OK, Daddy. Bye-bye, Mike. Bye-bye, Ted.

Tom's father, as they walk off: Tom, I saw what you did. I'm really proud of you. You made Mike happy, and you were brave not to just join in with everybody else.

Tom: Thanks, Dad.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

The Son Goes to Bed

The mother and father are sitting in the house or outside on the lawn. The son is playing with something, by himself.

Mother (to father): Let me look at my watch. I see that it's about time for our son to go to bed.

Father (to mother): Yep, it's that time, OK. Do you think he'll go and get ready and go to bed the first time we ask him to?

Mother: I think that he will. He's been getting to be a big boy lately, and I think he'll do it.

Father: Let's see if he can.

(To son): Son, it's time for bed now. Time to take a shower and get your pajamas on, and get in bed.

Son: OK, Dad.

Son puts what he's playing with away, and goes in the house.

Son: (to himself) I think a nice shower will feel good. (Sound effect: shhh, water coming out of the shower.) That does feel good. Ok, time to get dried off, and put my pajamas on, brush my teeth. (Sound effect: brush brush brush) That toothpaste feels good in my mouth. Now it's time to get in bed.

Father: Let's go up and see if he did it.

Father and Mother go up to the room, where the son is in bed.

Father and Mother: Hey, what a big boy! You did it all by yourself! You didn't even need to be reminded twice!

Son: Thanks, Mom and Dad.

Mother: Would you like to hear a story before you go to bed?

Group 16: Courage

(The mother and father sit down and the mother reads a quick story: e.g. Once upon a time a woman dropped some money. Sheila found it and gave it back to her. The woman said, "Thanks, Sheila.")

Mother and Father: Good-night, son. (They kiss him good night.)

Son: Good night, Mom and Dad.

Mother and Father walk out, and father says to mother:

Father: I'm sure proud of our boy.

Narrator: That's the end of the show!

The Play Plots

The plays in the preceding part of this book specified the characters' lines, as in an ordinary play. The "Play Plots" tell only the barest outline of the plot, and leave the lines for the actor or actors to improvise. Thus they give more freedom and flexibility to the actors, and at the same time delegate more of the job of creativity to them.

The same plot can be acted in unlimited numbers of different ways. The person who has acted out all these plots has gained lots of practice in psychological skills.

The players should feel free to imagine exotic, even outlandish circumstances for the play plots, while still keeping the basic plot intact. For example, one of the plots is that someone is moving something heavy, and someone else helps him move it. When one person is carrying something heavy, what might that thing be, and what might be the reason he wants to move it? Maybe it's a golden peacock that the Emperor of China has ordered the person to move to the site where the annual Peacock Party will be held. Someone has told the person that, if he doesn't get it moved on time, the Emperor (who also has magical powers) might turn the person into a monkey. Thus there is an embellishment of the basic plot, with the addition of another complication.

Of course it's possible to get off on tangents that lose the basic plot line and defeat the purpose of the play. It's also possible to simply act out a minimal plot line with grim determination, to get it over with quickly. Mixing fun and purposefulness in just the right proportion is the challenge for the players. If they can get this one just right, they have accomplished something worthwhile.

Videotaping the plays makes this exercise even more enjoyable. It will be fun to watch the plays again, and if watching them is fun, this provides more fantasy modeling of positive patterns.

I have acted out these plays mainly without an audience. If there is an audience, you need to select its members carefully. Sometimes an audience will reward slapstick violence or antisocial behavior by laughing, and the reinforcement will be too much for the players to resist.

These play plots are reprinted from *Exercises for Psychological Skills*.

Play Plots

Productivity

Two people are trying to take a message or some medicine or supplies or some other type of help to someone. The travel conditions are very bad. They have a strong sense of purpose that inspires them to push on. (purposefulness)

The first is teaching the second something. The second strays off task a lot. Just as the first is starting to give up, the second somehow becomes able to stay on task really well, for reasons that you may include in the play or may leave unexplained or due to magic. There may be other back-and-forth changes in the second person, if you so choose. (persistence)

The first person has a lot of unpleasant work to do. The second has work to do too, and they decide to do it together, and be in the same room so they won't be as lonely. (persistence)

The first person needs to move something very heavy, and the second person helps the first to move it. They keep going until it's where it's supposed to go. (persistence)

The first person has a deadline to meet. The second person helps him meet that deadline. (persistence)

The first person has been teased because he can't do something well, and tells the second. The second shows the first how to work and practice at it. The first does work and practice at it, a lot. The first comes back and impresses everyone with his skill. (competence-development)

Things are all in a mess, and the second person helps the first person get organized. (organization)

The first is very disorganized, and has lots of problems because of it. The second is an elf who comes in secretly and organizes the first. The first prospers because of the elf. The first finds out about the elf and finds a way to pay him back for his help, and to continue the organizing himself. (organization)

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Joyousness

The first person gets marooned on an island where there is enough food and water, but there is no one else on the island. So the first creates an imaginary person—the second person, to have fun with in creative ways. (enjoying aloneness)

The first person receives a compliment from the second person. The first person feels so good about the compliment that he works to get even better. Later, they see each other again, and the first person puts on an amazing performance at whatever the skill is. (pleasure from approval)

The first person has a skill that the other people around him don't value and even make fun of. But the first person knows that it is valuable. The first person creates an imaginary person (the second) who reinforces the first for his success in this skill, as he keeps on developing it. Finally the skill is proved valuable. (pleasure from accomplishments)

The first person is very cold. The second lends the first his coat to keep him warm. The second is a little cold, but the second feels good because of being kind to the first. (pleasure from your own kindness)

The first person is a scientist, working on a discovery. The second is the friend of the first. The second comes by and is able to help the first. Together, they achieve a big breakthrough. They then celebrate together that the discovery has been made. (pleasure from discovery)

The first person is curious about something. The second person helps the first to find the answer or tells the answer. (pleasure from discovery)

The first person is in trouble of some sort, and the second helps out the first. Later, the first comes to be rich or powerful, and returns to show thankfulness to the second in some big way. (pleasure from others' kindness)

The first person has some little problem or handicap. The second person has a much bigger problem or handicap. The first complains about how bad life

Play Plots

is. The second tries to help the first take pleasure in the blessings that he does have. (pleasure from blessings)

The first is a dog or cat. A fairy says that the dog or cat will get a big reward if he can get a grumpy, unhappy person to pet him a lot. The dog or cat figures out a way to get the person to pet him, and when the person does so, the dog or cat seems to enjoy it so much that the person keeps on petting him. Then the dog or cat gets the mysterious reward from the fairy. (pleasure from affection)

The prince or princess is trying to decide which of two or three people to marry. They all act nice when they are with the prince or princess. The prince or princess goes out in disguise to walk around and think. The prince or princess happens to see how the two or three people treat a dog or a stranger or someone else, and this lets the prince or princess decide. (favorable attractions)

The first person is helping the second person study for a spelling test. Each time the first one gets a word right, the second one dances or sings or does something else gleeful to celebrate in a fun way. (gleefulness)

The first person never laughs for some reason. The second person tries to make the first person laugh and finally succeeds. (humor)

Kindness

The first person has something that is very interesting to use or play with. The second is interested. The first ends up sharing with the second. (kindness)

The first person doesn't know how to get somewhere, and the second helps the first. (kindness)

The first person can't figure out how to get a gadget turned on, and the second person knows, and helps the first. (kindness)

The first person has some food, and the second person has none and is hungry. The first shares with the second. (kindness)

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

One person has lost something, and the second helps him find it. (kindness)

The first person is caught in bad weather, and the second helps him get out of it somehow, e.g., by inviting the first person into his house, or lending a coat or blanket. (kindness)

The first person drops something without knowing it, and the second person picks it up for him and gives it back. (kindness)

The first person has lost something, and the second person helps the first person look, and they find it. (kindness)

The first person is hungry, and the second person somehow gets food to the first person. (kindness)

The first person is sick or hurt, and the second helps the first. (kindness)

The first person takes the second to a very interesting place. The second is glad to see that place. (kindness)

The first person feels bad about some part of himself. The second person points out good aspects, and helps the person feel better about himself. (kindness)

The first person is very hot. The second person has a cool house, and invites the first over. (kindness)

The first person is lost, and the second person helps him find his way to where he is going. (kindness)

The first person gets his foot stuck in something, and the second person helps him get it loose. (kindness)

The first person wants to learn how to do something, and the second person teaches him how to do it. (kindness)

The first person and the second person are eating some snacks. There is one left. The first person lets the second person have the last one. (kindness)

Play Plots

The first person has a little brother or sister who is getting onto the bus. The little brother or sister forgets to carry the backpack on. The first person picks up the backpack and gives it to the little brother or sister. (kindness)

The first person feels bad about how someone said something unkind to him. The second person comforts the first person and cheers up the first person. (kindness)

There is a fire, and someone helps the other to put it out. (kindness)

There is a flood, and the two people help each other not get drowned. (kindness)

The first person has something that's broken, and the second helps him fix it. (kindness)

The first person wants to sleep, so the second person is very quiet. (kindness)

The first person is swinging the second person around, and they are laughing. But then the second person has his or her facial expression and tone of voice change. The first person can tell instantly that the second person isn't enjoying it any more, and stops. The second asks why, and the first tells, and the second confirms that the first was right. (empathy)

The first person accidentally hurts the second. The first person feels bad and tries to make it up to the second somehow, and/or makes sure that the same sort of thing will never happen again. (conscience)

The first person tries to answer a question in class at school, and can't get it. A chorus of other kids laughs at him. Later the second person, who is also in the class, is nice to him, takes his side, and comforts him. (conscience)

Honesty

The first person is getting blamed for something. The second person is the one who was really responsible for it, and the second person confesses so that the first won't get falsely blamed. (honesty)

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

The first person is getting interviewed for a job. The boss asks a question about how good the person is at something. The second person is the person's conscience. The person has a conversation with his conscience about what to say. The conscience advises telling the truth about what he can and can't do well. (awareness of your abilities)

Fortitude

The first person asks for something that the second person can't give. The first person uses fortitude to handle it well. (fortitude)

A person wants to play the piano, but someone else is playing help the baby get to sleep. So the person has to wait for a few minutes before he can play the piano. (fortitude)

A person wants to listen to a certain station on the radio. But the other person is listening to the news. So the first person has to wait, and after he waits, he can listen to what he wants. (fortitude)

Somebody wants some attention from a babysitter. But the babysitter has to put the younger brother down for a nap first. So the person waits and gets the babysitter's attention after she has waited for a while. (fortitude)

One person wants to play with a cat. But the cat is asleep. So the person has to wait until the cat wakes up. (fortitude)

One person sees a dog, and wants to pet the dog. But the person's mom or dad says no, because they don't know that dog and they don't want to pet the dog without knowing it first. So they wait a couple of days until they see the owner, and the owner tells them the dog is very safe, and they can pet the dog then. (fortitude)

The first person wins a competition with the second and is gracious; the second person loses the competition and is also gracious. (fortitude)

The two people are best friends, but one tells the other he will be moving away. They handle it (e.g., by making a plan to stay in touch and enacting that plan). (handling separation)

Play Plots

Someone wants to get together with someone else. This person invites people to do lots of different things. But everyone else has some reason for not getting together. Finally, the person either finds someone, or finds some other solution. (handling rejection)

The first person hears by telephone that someone has rejected him. The second person helps the first to realize that not everyone will reject him, and is nice to him. First feels better. (handling rejection)

The first person gives some constructive and polite criticism to the second. The second handles the criticism well by seeing what he can learn that will help him. (handling criticism)

The first person makes a big mistake. The first person talks it over with the second person. The first person decides to learn from the experience and make the most of it. (handling mistakes and failures)

Someone is asked a question in class and doesn't know the answer, and is embarrassed. The person responds by studying very hard from then on. Then more questions are asked, and the person knows the answer and feels good. (handling mistakes and failures)

The first person has a challenge to meet for work or school or sports. The second helps and advises. The first person either meets the challenge or doesn't. If he does, he celebrates. If he doesn't, he not doesn't awfulize and learns from the experience. (handling mistakes and failures or pleasure from accomplishments)

The first person and the second person are brother and sister. One of the two gets all sorts of awards and recognition at a ceremony. The other doesn't. The one who doesn't win anything manages to feel good about the sibling's success and support that sibling. Someone else asks how he or she keeps from being jealous, and the person explains how. (magnanimity, non-jealousy)

One person is going to do something of pretty risky, and feels scared. That person talks to the second person about it. The second helps the first see that

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

it's OK to be scared, that you should just go ahead and do what you have to do anyway. (painful emotion tolerance)

One person tells another about a fantasy that he has about something that he shouldn't do. Maybe he acts out the fantasy, to show the other person. The other person knows the first well enough to know he wouldn't actually do the thing, and helps him feel assured of the difference between real life and imagination. (fantasy-tolerance)

Individual Decision-Making

The first person is really nurturing and helpful and nice whenever the second one feels bad in some way. The first person doesn't pay nearly so much attention with the second one is doing well. After a while, the second one realizes he's getting in the habit of feeling bad or complaining to get the first person to act nice and be attentive. So he asks the first person not to be so reinforcing of bad feelings. (positive aim)

The first person is standing around and someone he doesn't know runs up to him and asks him to do something really quick (e.g., tackle someone else he doesn't know). The first person wants to think about it more, and doesn't do it. Then the person explains, and it turns out it would have been a bad idea. (reflectiveness)

There are two people who are being interviewed. (One person can play both parts, if desired.) A second person is interviewing both of them. When the second person asks questions such as, "Tell me, what have you been doing lately," one of the two people says things such as, "Nothing." The other can come up with things to say. The more fluent one gets the job. (fluency)

The first person says, "Boy, this was quite a situation we were in, with _____ happening." (The first person fills in the blank to describe what happened.) The first person asks, "How do you feel about this?" The second person feels at least two different ways about it, and explains why for each feeling. (awareness of your emotions)

Play Plots

The first person either feels guilty about something he can't control, or feels helpless about something he can control. The second person helps the first change his mind about it. (awareness of control)

Someone is sick or hurt or in danger in some other way. Someone else helps the person decide what to do. They define the problem, get information, list options, think about advantages and disadvantages, and make a choice, and see how it turns out. (decision-making)

Joint Decision-Making

One person is doing something, and the second person has some advice to give. But the second doesn't want to be too bossy. The second asks the first if he wants advice; the first says no, and the second accepts that. (toleration, non-bossiness)

The first person thinks that something should be done a certain way because it is cheaper and easier. But the second person thinks it should be done a different way because the effect on the environment is better or there are fewer health risks. They make a decision with each other in a rational way. (rational approach to joint decisions)

There is something that the two people want to use at the same time. They decide to take turns or share. (rational approach to joint decisions)

The first person has been waiting to use something. The second person has also been waiting to use it, without the first person's knowing it. They work out a plan together. (rational approach to joint decisions)

The first person in the family likes the temperature in the house hotter, and the second likes it colder. They talk to each other politely and work out the problem in a way that they can agree on. (rational approach to joint decisions)

The first person is working at a computer, and the second person wants the first person to give it up so the second person can use it. They talk together and figure out some solution to their problem. (option-generating)

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

The first person thinks that things should be kept very neat and orderly in a certain place. The second person isn't nearly as interested in neatness and orderliness. They make a decision with each other where they generate some good options for solutions to their problem. (option-generating)

Two people get to go someplace together. One wants to go one place, and the other wants to go another. They list options and choose, and come to an agreement that suits them both. (option-generating)

The first person is a judge. The second person plays the part of each of two people who have a dispute of some sort. The people list several options that have been generated. The judge asks about the situation and decides which option is most just, and explains why. (option-evaluating)

The first person tries to persuade a second person to eat or drink something or take a drug or do some risky activity. The second person assertively refuses to go along with the first person, without being either aggressive or passive. (assertion)

The two people have a debate or conversation in which they take opposite stands. One person is pretty sure he is right about his stand. But then he learns that he is not right. He admits this to the other person. (submission)

The first person is a young child, and the second person is a parent. Sometimes the young child whines and asks for things in an annoying way, and sometimes the child asks for things in a cheerful and pleasant way. The parent gives the child what he asks for when he asks in a pleasant way. (differential reinforcement)

Nonviolence

The first person accidentally does something that either physically hurts the second person or damages something the person owns or causes the second person to lose a lot of money. The second person handles the injury in a forgiving way. (forgiveness and anger control)

Play Plots

The first person is playing, and a young child comes over and grabs a toy away from the first person. The first person handles this calmly. (forgiveness and anger control)

People are in the legislature, and they are voting to start a war. The first person plays the person who listens to the people voting. The second person is the only person who votes against the war. He explains his position and persuades the others to change their minds. (nonviolence)

Respectful talk, not being rude

The first person is trying to teach the second person something, but the second person keeps messing it up and getting it wrong. The first person avoids saying anything disrespectful or rude, and keeps being patient and using nonhurtful talk. (respectful talk)

The first person doesn't bring a present to a party where all the other people have brought presents for the second person. The first person tells the second person, and the second person is gracious. (respectful talk)

The first person has borrowed something, and has forgotten to give it back. The second person doesn't want to be mean to the first. The second asks for it back in a very polite way, and the first returns it. (respectful talk)

Friendship-Building

The first person is applying for a job with the second. The second is trying to decide whether the first can be trusted to do the job right. The first has in mind some information that will shed light on this question, but the second has to work to get it. (discernment and trusting)

The first person talks to the second person about something that might be embarrassing. The second person responds in a trustworthy way. (self-disclosure)

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

The first person sings or whistles, and the second one compliments the first. (gratitude)

The first person does a favor for the second, and the second pays the first back somehow. (gratitude)

The first person talks about something, and the second person very frequently compliments the first person. (gratitude, admiration)

The first person receives a present he doesn't really like, but is very gracious and appreciative to the second one for giving it. (gratitude)

The first person is doing something, and the second person comes up and starts a conversation with the first, in several different ways. (social initiations)

The first and second person find themselves waiting in a waiting room together. They decide to get to know each other better and have a conversation with each other. (socializing)

The first person is new to the neighborhood. The second person meets him and gets to know him and tries to make him feel welcome. (socializing)

One person is lonely, and the second makes him feel better by coming up and greeting him nicely and talking with him. (socializing)

The first person tells the second about some problem or something good that happened, and the second person uses lots of reflections to be a good listener. (listening)

Self-discipline

The first person has lots of work to do. The first person uses self-discipline to get working on it, and the second one helps out the first. (self-discipline)

The first person is a student who uses self-discipline to study very hard. The second person is a teacher who tests the first person. The first person gives the right answers and feels good. (self-discipline)

Play Plots

The first person tempts the second with something that is pleasant but not good for him. The second uses self-discipline to turn down the temptation. (self-discipline)

The first person is very tired. The second person could use some help on some tasks. The first person uses self-discipline to help out when he would rather rest. (self-discipline)

The first person notices he is out of shape and asks the second person for help. The second person teaches the first to exercise and eat right. The first uses self-discipline, and is grateful for the second's help. (self-discipline)

Loyalty

The first person is taking care of a younger person. Someone tempts the first person to neglect the younger person in order to do something fun. The first person remains true to his duty. (loyalty)

The first person plays the role of several people who are criticizing someone. The second person is friends with that person, and the second person disagrees with them and sticks up for his friend. (loyalty)

Conservation

The first person has some money to spend. He is tempted to spend it on junk food, but uses self-discipline. Then second person tells him about something really important that the family needs the money for, and the first person can contribute. (conservation and thrift)

Self-care

The first person notices a safety hazard, and corrects it. The second person comes by and does something safely that could have been hazardous if the first hadn't acted. The first feels good. (carefulness)

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

People are driving cars too fast past the first person's house. The first person is concerned about the safety of his family. The first tells the second about the problem, and they figure out something to do about it. (carefulness)

The first person has a habit that is bad for his health. The second helps the first to break it. (habits of self-care)

The first person is nervous for some reason, and wishes he had a relaxation tape to listen to. The second makes up a little relaxation monologue to help the first relax. (relaxation)

One person is trying to learn how to do something. He keeps messing up, and using self-punishing statements. The second teaches the first how to use self-nurturing statements instead. The first gradually learns to do the task better after that. (self-nurture)

Compliance

The two people are at a place together. The first is having a great time. The second is the parent, and says they have to leave now. The first does so cheerfully. (compliance)

Positive fantasy rehearsal

One person is nervous about the prospect of inviting someone for something, or asking for an increase in pay, or something else. So the second person suggests that they practice it together by role-playing. They do it, and then the person does it in real life. (imagination and positive fantasy rehearsal) The first person makes a mistake of some sort. This person responds to it by asking the second person to help him practice doing the thing the right way, in role-playing, over and over. The second person helps him. (positive fantasy rehearsal)

Play Plots

Courage

The first person is afraid to sled down a high hill. The second suggests he try by starting part way up. The first starts there, and gradually works his way up, and finally gets over being scared. (courage)

Two people get separated from each other, and they work to reunite with each other, while staying brave. (courage)

The first person is unrealistically afraid of something, and the second helps him get over the fear by being encouraging and supportive while the first gradually faces what he's afraid of. (courage)

The first person needs to get the second to help him on something. The first asks for help, and the second gives it. (depending)

The first person plays the part of a whole group of people who are being asked their opinions about something. They all give the same answer, and agree with each other. But the second person plays the part of the last person who is asked, who expresses a different opinion. (independent thinking)

Examples of Improvising from Play Plots:

The two people pick the following play plot:

Two people are trying to take a message or some medicine or supplies or some other type of help to someone. The travel conditions are very bad. They have a strong sense of purpose that inspires them to push on. (purposefulness)

And here is the play that they act out:

First person: I wish those hikers hadn't gotten lost in the desert on such a hot day.

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

Second person: Right, and with us as the only two rescuers around. It must be a hundred and six degrees out today.

First person: Here, I'll douse you with water to help you cool off.

Second person: Thanks! That feels good! How about a little more right on my head?

First person: Like this?

Second person: Yes. Now you get to get some.

First person: Thanks! Hey, look out for that Gila monster starting to bite at your leg! (Pushes second person to safety.)

Second person: Thanks; I didn't see that little feller.

First person: These backpacks of water and fruit juice are heavy, aren't they?

Second person: They sure are. I hope we find them soon. Yodel-a-hee-hoo! Are you lost hikers out here?

First person: We've got to keep on going. Otherwise they could die.

Second person: Right, and I'm sure they have friends and family who are counting on us. We must push on.

First person: Look, there they are! Hey!

Hiker: Thank goodness you found us! We thought we would die of thirst.

Second person: So would you like orange juice, pineapple juice or water?

Hikers: Anything is fine! Thanks so much. Glug glug glug glug.

First person: We did it, partner. (They shake hands or give each other high fives.)

Play Plots

The two people pick the following play plot:

The first person can't figure out how to get a gadget turned on, and the second person knows and helps the first. (kindness)

They put on the following play:

First person: Darn it. I just don't see how you turn this computer on. It's supposed to be such a good one. But I can't get it on.

Second person: Excuse me, but would you like some help getting the computer on?

First person: Yes, please. I could use some.

Second person: Well, it's kind of strange. First you pick up the mouse with your feet and blow on it.

First person: You've got to be kidding! Oh well, I'll give it a try. Nope, it didn't come on.

Second person: Wait, I'm not through. Then you do a dance, and while you're doing that, you pretend to sneeze.

First person: Are you just trying to make me look silly? Well here goes. Achoo!

Computer: Hello, and thank you for turning me on. My name is Hal. What can I do for you today?

First person: It worked! Thank you for helping me!

Second person: It was my pleasure!

Appendix: The Psychological Skills Axis

Group 1: Productivity

1. Purposefulness. Having a sense of purpose that drives activity
2. Persistence. Sustaining attention, concentrating, focusing, staying on task
3. Competence-development. Working toward competence in job, academics, recreation, life skills
4. Organization. Organizing goals, priorities, time, money, and physical objects; planfulness

Group 2: Joyousness

5. Enjoying aloneness. Having a good time by oneself, tolerating not getting someone's attention
6. Pleasure from approval. Enjoying approval, compliments, and positive attention from others
7. Pleasure from accomplishments. Self-reinforcement for successes.
8. Pleasure from your own kindness. Feeling pleasure from doing kind, loving acts for others
9. Pleasure from discovery. Enjoying exploration and satisfaction of curiosity
10. Pleasure from others' kindness. Feeling gratitude for what others have done
11. Pleasure from blessings. Celebrating and feeling the blessings of luck or fate
12. Pleasure from affection. Enjoying physical affection without various fears interfering
13. Favorable attractions. Having feelings of attraction aroused in ways consonant with happiness.
14. Gleefulness. Playing, becoming childlike, experiencing glee, being spontaneous
15. Humor. Enjoying funny things, finding and producing comedy in life

Group 3: Kindness

16. Kindness. Nurturing someone, being kind and helpful
17. Empathy. Recognizing other people's feelings, seeing things from the other's point of view
18. Conscience. Feeling appropriate guilt, avoiding harming others

Appendix: The Psychological Skills Axis

Group 4: Honesty

- 19. Honesty. Being honest and dependable, especially when it's difficult to be so
- 20. Awareness of your own abilities. Being honest and brave in assessing your strengths and weaknesses

Group 5: Fortitude

- 21. Frustration-tolerance. Handling frustration, tolerating adverse circumstances, fortitude
- 22. Handling separation. Tolerating separation from close others, or loss of a relationship
- 23. Handling rejection. Tolerating it when people don't like or accept you, or don't want to be with you
- 24. Handling criticism. Dealing with disapproval, criticism and lack of respect from others
- 25. Handling mistakes and failures. Regretting mistakes without being overly self-punitive
- 26. Magnanimity, non-jealousy. Handling it when someone else gets what you want
- 27. Painful emotion-tolerance. Avoiding "feeling bad about feeling bad."
- 28. Fantasy-tolerance. Tolerating mental images of unwanted behavior, confident that you will not enact them

Group 6: Good decisions

6a: Individual decision-making

- 29. Positive aim. Aiming toward making things better. Seeking reward and not punishment
- 30. Thinking before acting. Thinking, rather than responding impulsively or by reflex, when it's useful to do so
- 31. Fluency. Using words to conceptualize the world: verbal skills
- 32. Awareness of your emotions. Recognizing, and being able to verbalize your own feelings
- 33. Awareness of control. Accurately assessing the degree of control you have over specific events
- 34. Decision-making. Defining a problem, gathering information, generating options, predicting and evaluating consequences, making a choice

Plays That Model Psychological Skills

6b: Joint decision-making, including conflict resolution

35. Toleration. Non-bossiness. Tolerating a wide range of other people's behavior
36. Rational approach to joint decisions. Deciding rationally on stance and strategies for joint decisions
37. Option-generating. Generating creative options for solutions to problems
38. Option-evaluating. Justice skills: Recognizing just solutions to interpersonal problems
39. Assertion. Dominance, sticking up for yourself, taking charge, enjoying winning
40. Submission: Conciliation, giving in, conceding, admitting one was wrong, being led
41. Differential reinforcement. Reinforcing positive behavior and avoiding reinforcing the negative

Group 7: Nonviolence

42. Forgiveness and anger control. Forgiving, handling an insult or injury by another
43. Nonviolence. Being committed to the principle of nonviolence and working to foster it

Group 8: Respectful talk, not being rude

44. Respectful talk, not being rude. Being sensitive to words, vocal tones, and facial expressions that are accusing, punishing, or demeaning, and avoiding them unless there is a very good reason

Group 9: Friendship-Building

45. Discernment and Trusting. Accurately appraising others. Not distorting with prejudice, overgeneralization, wish-fulfilling fantasies. Deciding what someone can be trusted for, and trusting when appropriate
46. Self-disclosure. Disclosing and revealing oneself to another when it's safe
47. Gratitude. Expressing gratitude, admiration, and other positive feelings toward others
48. Social initiations. Starting social interaction; getting social contact going
49. Socializing. Engaging well in social conversation or play.
50. Listening. Empathizing, encouraging another to talk about his own experience

Appendix: The Psychological Skills Axis

Group 10: Self discipline

51. Self discipline. Delay of gratification, self-control. Denying yourself present pleasure for future gain

Group 11: Loyalty

52. Loyalty. Tolerating and enjoying sustained closeness, attachment, and commitment to another

Group 12: Conservation

53. Conservation and Thrift. Preserving resources for ourselves and future generations. Forgoing consumption on luxuries, but using resources more wisely. Financial delay of gratification skills

Group 13: Self-care

54. Carefulness. Feeling appropriate fear and avoiding unwise risks

55. Habits of self-care. Healthy habits regarding drinking, smoking, drug use, exercise, and diet

56. Relaxation. Calming yourself, letting the mind drift pleasantly and the body be at ease

57. Self-nurture. Delivering assuring or care-taking thoughts to yourself, feeling comforted thereby

Group 14: Compliance

58. Compliance. Obeying, submitting to legitimate and reasonable authority

Group 15: Positive fantasy rehearsal

59. Imagination and positive fantasy rehearsal. Using fantasy as a tool in rehearsing or evaluating a plan, or adjusting to an event or situation

Group 16: Courage

60. Courage. Estimating danger, overcoming fear of non-dangerous situations, handling danger rationally

61. Depending. Accepting help, being dependent without shame, asking for help appropriately

62. Independent thinking. Making decisions independently, carrying out actions independently

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