

# **Role-Play Peacegame**

## **Blended Family Conflict**

### **Parties**

**The Stiller Kids  
The Robinson Kids  
Mr. and Mrs. Stiller**

©Copyright 2000 David W. Felder  
**Wellington Press**  
**WWW.Peacegames.com**  
Toll Free 877-390-4425

# **Title Page**

## **Blended Family Conflict**

**By  
David W. Felder**

**Copyright © 2000 by David W. Felder  
All rights reserved. No part of this book  
may be reproduced in any manner  
whatsoever without permission.**

**ISBN: 0-910959-82-X**

**Wellington Press  
P. O. Box 13939  
Tallahassee, Florida 32317-3939  
E-Mail: [Peacegames@aol.com](mailto:Peacegames@aol.com)  
[www.Peacegames.com](http://www.Peacegames.com)**

**Orders Handled by Findhorn Press  
Call Toll Free 877-390-4425  
In Florida call (850) 893-2920  
Fax (850) 893-3442**

# Invoice

Item: Role-Play Peacegame      Delivered: Electronically      Price: \$5.00

Thank you for downloading a role-play peacegame from Peacegames.com. You may examine games for free but are obliged to pay \$5 for each game you use.

Description: Wellington Press has delivered a Role-Play Peacegame written by David W. Felder who holds the copyright.

Price: The price for this game delivered electronically is \$5.00 for each game. A printed booklet version of this game is available for \$8.95.

Methods of Payment: Payment may be made by Visa or Mastercard from the Peacegame.com website or by a check made out to Wellington Press. Credit card payment may also be made by calling toll free 877-390-4425 to Findhorn Press which handles order fulfillment for Wellington Press.

Grant of Rights: Wellington Press grants the right to inspect the game for free before deciding whether to use the game. Upon payment of \$5 Wellington Press and the copyright holder grant the right to use the peacegame that was downloaded from the Peacegames.com website.

Reservation of Rights: All rights not expressly granted are reserved by Wellington Press and the author David W. Felder including but not limited to the right to make any copies. Anyone making copies will be prosecuted.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Wellington Press**  
**P. O. Box 13939**  
**Tallahassee, Florida 32317-3939**

## Order Form/ Invoice

Fax (850) 893-3442 Call Toll Free 877-390-4425

Orders handled by Findhorn Press (850) 893-2920  
www.peacegames.com Games sent by E-mail \$5 each  
For discounts and store displays: Peacegames@aol.com

Mail to: Wellington Press, P.O. Box 13939 Tallahassee, FL 32317-3939

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Please Circle Your Choices. All games are \$8.95 plus \$2.50 postage  
Sets of five games in binders are \$24.95

- |                                |                                   |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| American Revolution            | Racial Tension in High School     |
| United States Constitution     | Hiring More African Americans     |
| Civil War                      | National Summit on Racial Justice |
| Reconstruction                 | Multicultural Curriculum          |
| United States in Vietnam       | Visit by Farrakhan                |
| Thirty Years War               | Gang Fighting                     |
| Wars of Frederick II           | Love Triangle                     |
| Napoleonic Wars                | Blended Family Conflicts          |
| First World War                | Sexual Harassment                 |
| Reforming the United Nations   | Breaking Up                       |
| Syria & Israel                 | Caught with Stolen Goods          |
| Middle East Regional Issues    | Arguing over Mary's Grades        |
| Lebanon & Israel               | Visiting Divorced Dad             |
| Camp David Accords             | Helping Out by Babysitting        |
| Palestinians & Israel          | Tolerating Mom's Boyfriend        |
| Bosnia & Herzegovina           | Deciding Whether to Get Married   |
| Conflict over Macedonia        | Arguing About Relocation          |
| First World War Begins         | Raising Biracial Children         |
| Ethnic Cleansing               | Deciding Where to Retire          |
| Conflict over Kosovo           | Money Problems                    |
| Tracy Accuses Travis of Lying  | Woody, Mia, & Soon-Yi             |
| Pushing the Little Kids Around | Arguing Over Money                |
| Fighting Over Modeling Clay    | Untangling the Family Finances    |
| Getting Into Trouble           | They Work at the Same Place       |
| Catch with a Hat               | She Wants a Share of His Practice |
| Criminal Court Plea Bargain    | Saddam & Uncle Sam                |
| Small Claims Court             | Vietnam War                       |
| Civil Court                    | S. D. I. Negotiations             |
| Divorce Court                  | Test Ban Treaty                   |
| Family Court                   | Seabed Arms Control               |
| The Curfew                     | Selenium Contamination            |
| Race Riot after a Verdict      | Reviving the Everglades           |
| Civilian Review Board          | The Greenway River Cleanup        |
| Removing the Homeless          | Conservation and Indian Rights    |
| Choke Holds Scandal            | Southern Prospect Development     |
| Rehabilitation Center          | Unmarried and Pregnant            |
| High Mist Training Center      | Being Equal Partners              |
| Extended Care Center           | Election 2000: Let's Mediate!     |
| Rehabilitation Hospital        |                                   |
| Spinal Center                  |                                   |

# Role-Play Peacegames Directions

Preliminary: Decide who will be the mediator and who will be each disputant in the conflict. Assuming a role that runs counter to the individual's personal position is desirable.

The mediator and the disputant should not look at sheets other than their own. If booklets are used, it may be desirable to cut pages out for the disputants.

1. Someone reads the "Introductory Statement" aloud.
2. The mediator reads the fact sheet aloud.
3. Everyone studies their sheets. Disputants in the conflict study their parts. The mediator studies the sheet on mediation.
4. The mediator begins the session.
5. The disputants can meet together and also can request to meet separately with the mediator.
6. Try to write down an agreement.

The game can be played without a mediator in which case it is a negotiation game in which disputants try to come up with an agreement on their own.

Copyright © 2000 by David W. Felder. Anyone making copies will be prosecuted.

# Role-Play Peacegames

## INTRODUCTION

Role-Play Peacegames are designed as an introduction to the role of mediation in resolving disputes. Wellington Press hopes that those using these games will decide to learn more about mediation. There is much to learn.

The term "disputant" refers to the people who have a dispute, and the term "mediator" refers to a person who helps the disputants reach a settlement.

In each game there is a fact sheet that explains the background of the dispute. The mediator reads this at the start of each game. Do not alter or add facts. Some games also have a sheet that tells what actually happened. Do not look at this until after you have finished your mediation.

The disputants each have an information sheet that cannot be read by anyone else. These sheets list what each disputant wants.

Some Role-Play Peacegames from Wellington Press assign percentage values to each item to indicate which items are most important. When percentages are not assigned you can assume that each item is of equal value. For example, if there are five items, each is twenty percent.

Disputants can use the percentage scores to see how their interests are served in the final settlement. The mediator's score is the average of the scores of the disputants. All players have an interest in reaching an agreement because if no agreement is reached, then everyone has a score of zero. The game can also be played without scoring.

Disputants are expected to realistically perform the roles they are given, and to make an honest effort to reach a settlement. Since this is a game that develops the skills of mediation, the disputants should not try to arrive at a settlement through their own negotiation skills, but should depend on the skills of the mediator.

## Blended Family Conflicts

# The Facts

David Stiller, 43, father of two, and Cynthia Robinson, 46 mother of two, have been married for one year, having dated for two years before that. David Stiller has custody of his children for 10 months of the year. During the other two months, his children visit their mother who gives them expensive gifts, including an automobile. Cynthia Robinson has exclusive custody and her ex-husband has shown little interest in his children. Since the merging of the families the Stiller children, Ann 17 and David Jr. 14, and the Robinson children, Michael 16 and Diana 14, have not been able to get along.

The Stiller kids have both accused the Robinson kids of stealing their personal possessions, and the Robinson kids claim that the Stiller kids just hide things and then report them stolen to make trouble. This problem came to a head when Ann's high school textbooks disappeared, costing her over a hundred dollars in replacement fees. When that happened, she announced that she was "withdrawing from the family," and she began sleeping on the couch and locking all her possessions in the trunk of her car. David and Cynthia have "forbidden" her to continue doing this, but have not punished her for it.

David Jr. claims that on several occasions Michael beat him up, and once he displayed a set of bruises to his parents. Michael claimed that David Jr. got into a fight at school. Diana says that David Jr. keeps trying to get a look at her when she is undressing or using the bathroom (which David Jr. denies), and Michael says he has to "protect her." Both parents overheard Michael threaten to beat David Jr. once and they confronted him, but Michael insisted that he has never beaten David Jr.

When they married, Cynthia Robinson and her kids moved into David Stiller's house, a small three-bedroom house which costs slightly more to rent than they can afford on David's salary alone. The tension between their kids has been so severe that Cynthia quit her job so that she could stay home and insure that the kids would never be left alone together, but things just got worse.

# Blended Family Conflicts

## The Stiller Kids

The Stiller Kids, Ann, 17 years old, David Jr. , 14 years old

### Your General Viewpoint

Things were just fine until Michael and Diana moved in with us. We never had a problem before that. They are a pair of sneaky, vicious little thieves and liars. Before they moved in we each had our own bedroom and we always had plenty of money in the family. Now we're cramped and broke all the time. Ann had to pay for the textbooks out of her own money because Diana lied and wouldn't admit she took them. She should either return the books or pay for them. We can't live like this.

We don't know how such lousy kids can have such a nice mother. We like Cynthia, and we want our Dad to be happy. Everyone would be better off if Michael and Diana went to live with their father.

### What You Want

1. We want Diana and Michael to move out and live with their father. 20
2. We want Diana to either return the stolen books or to pay for them. 10%
3. We want Michael to admit he lied when he denied beating David. Jr. 10%
4. We want Diana to admit that she lied about David Jr. trying to look at her naked. 10%
- 5.. If they don't move out, then we want Michael to stop beating on David Jr. 10%
6. If they don't move out, Ann wants her room back. Diana can sleep in the living room. 20%
7. If they don't move out, we want Cynthia to return to work, so we aren't so broke as a family and the Robinsons can pay their own way. 20%

# Blended Family Conflicts

# The Robinson Kids

The Robinson Kids  
Michael, age 15, Diana, age 14

## Your General Viewpoint

From the moment we moved in, the Stiller kids have tried to make us feel like unwelcome invaders. We never asked for this – the divorce or them. You'd think they would understand since they are in the same situation. The Stiller kids have tried to make us as miserable as possible. They have lied about us, and that pervert David Jr. has been trying to see Diana naked. It's driving her to a nervous breakdown. Michael has to protect her from him because Mom won't stand up to David. She quit her job to protect us, so now we're all broke all the time.

Ann and David Jr. get to leave this miserable rathole every summer and go stay with their Mom, and their Mom sends them checks and presents all the time. She even sent Ann a car. We can't go to see our old man, and he never sends us anything. We're trapped here. Let them go stay with their mother full time. That's the solution.

We think Ann lost her school books on a date. We would have helped her look for them, but before we could do that she started accusing Diana. Now Ann keeps blaming Diana for something Ann did not do. It's not fair.

## What You Want

1. Since Ann has a car and Michael doesn't, we want Michael to be able to borrow Ann's car. After all, she got it from her mother and our father isn't going to give Michael one. 40%
2. We want David Jr. to admit that he has been trying to see Diana naked and to stop doing it. 25%
3. We want David Jr. to admit he lied about Michael beating him (except for once when Michael caught David peeking at Diana and he deserved it.) 15%
4. We want them to stop calling us thieves. 20%

# Blended Family Conflicts Mr. and Mrs. Stiller

## Your General Viewpoint

We refuse to let our kids push us around or force us to separate. We love each other very much, and we're determined to stay together. Both sets of kids have lied so much we don't know who to believe. We can't change our custody arrangements and we can't move to a bigger house—not that moving would solve anything. The kids have to get along and they have to obey us—we won't accept anything else.

We must make all the kids understand that they are going to have to live together, so they might as well learn to get along. Diana is going to have to improve her grades. We are not going to accept failing grades from any of our children.

## What You Want

1. We want to Ann to move back into the girls' bedroom. 20%
2. We want all the kids to promise not to hit each other in the future, regardless of whatever provokes them. 30%
3. We want all the kids to drop their demands for confessions and apologies, because this just delays settling things and makes more trouble. 20%
4. We want all the kids to promise to respect each other's privacy and possessions. 30%

# Blended Family Conflicts

## What Actually Happened

Under the therapist's probing, David Jr. admitted that he had been trying to see Diana undress a few times. He denied peeking all the time. Michael admitted that he had beaten David Jr. up for it, but said he beat him up only a few times. The therapist decided that he and David Jr. would work on the issue privately. Both the Robinson kids continued to deny having stolen anything, and the issue was tactfully dropped. The parents agreed to reimburse Ann for the cost of replacing the textbooks. Ann at first refused to change her sleeping arrangements and kept locking her possessions in the trunk of her car. As things quieted down, though, she began to feel pretty silly, and she eventually moved her things a few at a time back into the room she had shared with Diana. Now she is sharing the room. Eventually, she even allowed Michael to use her car, in return for his agreeing to do all the maintenance on it. Everyone agreed that it was important for Diana's grades to come up. David Jr. was often the one to help her with her homework.

The entire family lived several years together. Today, all the Stiller/Robinson kids have left home. They get along reasonably well when they come back for holidays. David and Cynthia's marriage is doing fine.

# Role-Play Peacegames

# Mediation Procedure

## **I At the Beginning of the Session**

1. **INTRODUCE YOURSELF.** Ask the disputants their names. Explain that your job is to help them reach an agreement and that the process is voluntary. Thank them for coming.
2. **ASK FOR THE JOB.** Have the parties commit themselves to the process by asking "Would you like me to be your mediator?"
3. **LIST GROUND RULES.**
  - Everyone agrees to try to solve the problem.
  - No name-calling or insults are allowed.
  - Everyone gets to speak without interruption.
4. **ASK EACH OF THE DISPUTANTS IF THEY AGREE TO THE RULES.**
7. **EXPLAIN THAT EVERYTHING SAID HERE IS CONFIDENTIAL.**  
In some situations such as mediation in public schools the confidentiality rule can be broken if issues of health or safety are involved.
6. **EXPLAIN THAT PARTIES MAY REQUEST TO SPEAK TO THE MEDIATOR PRIVATELY. THE MEDIATOR MAY ALSO REQUEST TO SPEAK TO A DISPUTANT PRIVATELY.**

Anything said in private will be kept private unless the mediator is told otherwise.

## **II Let Each Person Tell His or Her Story**

1. **THE MEDIATOR CHOOSES THE FIRST SPEAKER**
2. **ASK THE PERSON FOR HIS OR HER VIEW.**
3. **REPEAT WHAT YOU HAVE HEARD, SHOWING THAT YOU UNDERSTOOD BY RESTATING THE FACTS, OR REFLECTING THE FEELINGS EXPRESSED.**

"Let me see if I understand" (then repeat)

"So it seems to you" (restate their view)

"It sounds like your feeling is" (describe it)

4. **LET EACH PERSON SPEAK, AND SHOW THAT YOU ARE LISTENING TO EVERYONE.**

## **III Try to Understand the Problems**

Copyright © 2000 by David W. Felder. Anyone making copies will be prosecuted.

1. HELP PEOPLE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER AND THE PROBLEMS BY ASKING QUESTIONS SUCH AS:

"Tell me more about that"

"How did you feel about that?"

"What would you like to see happen now?"

2. CHECK TO MAKE SURE YOU UNDERSTOOD EACH PERSON, AND HELP THEM TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER.

"I heard you say. . ."

"Is that right?"

#### **IV Help Disputants Find a Solution**

1. ASK EACH PERSON:

What can you do now to solve this?

Can you think of other options?

2. BE AVAILABLE TO MEET SEPARATELY WITH DISPUTANTS. ASK DISPUTANTS:

"What would you be willing to accept?"

"What do you suppose others will accept?"

3. TRY TO WRITE DOWN AN AGREEMENT.

4. IF AGREEMENT IS REACHED, CONGRATULATE THE DISPUTANTS FOR MAKING THEIR AGREEMENT.

# Basic Lesson in Conflict Resolution

## Approaches to Conflict

**Conflict Avoidance** – occurs when a party to a conflict decides to forgo his or her interest in favor of another party. People choose this strategy when they decide that trying to pursue their interest is not worth the trouble.

**Negotiation** – occurs when disputants try to reach an agreement on their own without a third party.

**Arbitration** – occurs when parties to a dispute either decide to or are forced to accept the decision of third party. An arbitrator has the power to make authoritative decisions.

**Mediation** – occurs when disputants use a third party to help them come to an agreement, with the disputants still deciding their own process and settlement. Mediation is a voluntary process.

## Interests, Positions, and Personalities

**Interests** When disputes center on interests, people concentrate on the end result of satisfying their needs. Conflicts of interest occur when the satisfaction of one party's needs prevents the satisfaction of another party's.

**Positions** Positions are statements people make regarding the means they want to use to achieve their ends. People may differ on positions even when they agree on interests.

**Personalities** When disputes are centered on personalities, people talk about individuals and what they dislike about them.

It is most productive to focus on interests as Roger Fisher and William Ury illustrate:

*Consider the story of two men quarreling in a library. One wants the window open and the other wants it closed. They bicker back and forth about how much to leave it open: a crack, halfway, three quarters of the way. No solution satisfies them both.*

*Enter the librarian. She asks one why he wants the window open: "To get some fresh air." She asks the other why he wants it closed: "To avoid the draft." After thinking a minute, she opens wide a window in the next room, bringing in fresh air without a draft. (Getting to Yes, Penguin Books, 1983, p. 41.)*

Positions are represented by how open or closed each wants the window to be, and interests are what each person needs. It is best to focus on interests instead of positions because there may be many ways to achieve the same end.

## **Exercise 1**

Directions: Use the following choices:

- A) This is centered on interests.
- B) This is centered on positions.
- C) This is centered on personalities.

1. We will begin this mediation session with each person stating their opinion on what should be done.
2. We will begin this mediation session with each person saying why the the existing situation is harming them.
3. We will begin this mediation session with each person stating what they think of the other person.
4. Am I correct in saying that neither the Democrats nor the Republicans benefit from the partisan fighting?
5. What would benefit you?

## **Concepts: Competition, Compromise, and Collaboration**

**Competition** – A strategy a person in a dispute may follow which, if successful, would result in the person getting all of what he or she wants, with other parties getting nothing, a win/ lose outcome.

**Compromise** – A strategy which aims to result in a middle position, usually 50% for each.

**Collaboration** – A strategy that involves the integration of interests so that a person helps others satisfy their interests while still protecting his or her own interests, a win/win outcome.

### **Exercise 2, Directions:** Use these choices

- A) This is an example of competition.
- B) This is an example of compromise.
- C) This is an example of collaboration.

1. I'll grab the biggest piece of cake before he does.
2. If I help you with your English, will you help me with my math?
3. Since I don't want her to get a better grade than I get, I won't let her know the assignment.
4. I watched my show for thirty minutes and he watched the basketball game for thirty minutes.
5. I tampered with her racing car, so I am sure to beat her.
6. We want a twenty percent salary increase and don't care what it does to the company.
7. We will meet you half way on our demands.
8. We would be willing to take a compensation increase in the form of a stock-sharing program if this would help the company.
9. You heard my offer. Take it or leave it.
10. I'll get to know her better and try to help her realize her goals.

## **Principled Conflict Resolution**

It is easier to come to agreement when people can appeal to principles, especially when people share the same principles. When settlements are not based on an appeal to principles, people can end up pitting their will against each other. The fault with this is that one party ends up the winner and the other the loser, and no one wants to be the loser. It is desirable to have some basis for settlement that is independent of will, to base decisions on principles that all parties can accept. Some relevant principles are:

### **Majority Rule**

The party or policy that has the support of the majority of the people is the one that should prevail.

### **Respect for Rights**

Human rights and any rights recognized within the constitutional framework governing your country should be respected.

### **Equality**

Everyone should have the same rights. Radical egalitarians say that everyone should have the same income and amount of goods.

### **Equity**

Everyone should have the same opportunity, which does not mean that everyone ends up with the same income or amount of goods.

### **The Golden Rule**

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Do not do to another person what you would not want them to do to you.

### **Fair Standards and Procedures**

Fair standards and fair procedures are standards and procedures for determining a settlement that either party might accept, even if they were in the other party's position. If procedures are fair, then either party would be willing to take the other party's position.