

## Relationship Rescue (1): Breaking Out Of TAG

Hi, I'm Glenn Pickering, the relationship doctor; Welcome to this first video in the Relationship Rescue Kit.

In this video, I want to talk to you about a "game" that often keeps people stuck in their particular relationship ruts – the game I call TAG.

Most of you played the childhood version of the game in/backyard

It was kind of a fun game but sort of an odd one too, right?

No way to win; only goal is to NOT be IT

Nobody on your team, so you had to stay distant from everyone

And how did it feel to play? Mostly anxious, right? Watchful

passive strategy: keep self safe (distance)

active strategies: make them IT (then passive!)

The adult version of the game is very similar but definitely not fun

The people in the game are trying not to be the bad one - IT

There is no team; everything is me against you

And it generates a lot of anxiety!

Passive strategies:

Keep thoughts to yourself (meetings/decision)

Shut down (emo/verb) in a conflict (dissociation/trauma)

Be "nice" (Frozen TAG): fine, you know . . .

Be gone (Absent TAG) work, video games, sports – for all!

So, don't: speak up, express emotion, tell truth, be pres, make decisions

A whole lot of things you don't do, just to not be tagged/IT. A small life.

Active strategies also destructive (criticized, blamed, hurt = IT)

lash out/at them, often unexpectedly (stroller, garage door)

blame: "That hurt my feelings!" You're not perfect either

People in HR never get the information to us on time!"

defensive: (blaming others); roads, not email, so busy  
roads not plowed, never got the email, I'm so busy

get angry (or cry/act hurt) ["See what you did to me?"]

leave the room in a huff: IT + don't get response

The effect of all these responses is: = "No, you're the bad one!" (Not IT!)

So, you can see why no two people can keep playing a form of TAG and think that somehow, in the end, they are going to have a great relationship.

Because whether I'm playing passive or active TAG, I am not speaking lovingly, finding resolution to our conflicts, or creating intimacy = RR

What I am creating is a lot of hurt, which creates a whole lot of distance

So, it's important to find ways to break out of this destructive game.

And step one is to do what we call "Name the Game."

As soon as either of us notices that we are playing TAG, it's important to say, "I think we're playing TAG."

Notice: 1.) It's an observation, not a judgment 2.) It's about us, not you.

This one sentence gives us a chance to GRACEFULLY stop playing the game and hit re-set. I hope you start using that one sentence, today! It will make an immediate difference in your life, I promise.

In the next video, I will be talking to you about control and why the concept of "letting go of control" is so incredibly unhelpful to us.

In the meantime, you can learn more about TAG by visiting my website, DrGlennPickering.com, which has lots more information about the game.

Thanks for listening; you take care.