

DO Therapy

Update the Playbook

Practicing More Ways to Show Up

You already have a playbook. It includes ideas about: Being strong. Handling problems. Showing emotion. Asking for help. Leading. Providing. Protecting. Relationships. Conflict. Success. Failure.

What men should do. And what men shouldn't. Some of those plays work.

The goal isn't to throw them away.

It's to notice when your automatic play isn't working and practice another one.

NOTICE

Think about a recent situation where you noticed yourself automatically responding in a familiar way.

Maybe you:

- Tried to fix something.
- Got defensive.
- Withdrew.
- Took control.
- Explained.
- Got angry.
- Stayed quiet.
- Avoided asking for help.
- Tried to handle everything yourself.
- Needed to win the argument.
- Didn't know how to say what you were feeling.

What happened?

What was my automatic response?

What rule might have been operating underneath it?

- Maybe: Be strong. Fix it. Don't look weak. Know the answer. Handle it yourself. Don't back down. Stay in control. Don't get emotional. Provide. Protect. Win.

REVIEW THE GAME TAPE

Look at what happened without beating yourself up.

- What was I trying to accomplish?
- What was I trying to protect?
- What was I feeling?

Go beyond: **Fine. Stressed. Frustrated. Pissed.**

Was I also:

- Embarrassed?
- Overwhelmed?
- Uncertain?
- Dismissed?
- Afraid?
- Powerless?
- Rejected?
- Lonely?
- Something else?
- Unimportant?
- Ashamed?

What did my response do well? This matters. Old plays usually exist because they worked somewhere.

What did my response cost me? Did it affect:

- Connection?
- My ability to get help?
- Communication?
- Someone else's willingness to talk?
- Trust?
- My ability to solve the actual problem?
- Understanding?
- Something else?

Did the situation actually require the play I used?

WHAT DID THE MOMENT NEED?

Look at the situation again. Did the moment need:

- **STRENGTH** - Hold steady. Follow through. Do something difficult.
- **CURIOSITY** - Ask questions. Gather information. Understand.
- **LISTENING** - Stop solving. Make room.
- **ACTION** - Make a decision. Solve the problem. Get moving.
- **VULNERABILITY** - Say what is actually happening internally.
- **ACCOUNTABILITY** - Own my part without defending it.
- **COLLABORATION** - Let someone else influence the decision.
- **BOUNDARY** - Say no. Hold a limit. Protect something important.
- **SUPPORT** - Ask for help or allow someone to help me.
- **REPAIR** - Return after something went poorly and try again.
- **SOMETHING ELSE**

What did this particular moment need from me?

PRACTICE

Don't eliminate the old play. Add another option.

OLD PLAY = When....I usually.....because somewhere I learned....

NEW PLAY = Next time, make it specific. I could also:

- Instead of: "**Be more vulnerable.**" try: "**Tell my partner I'm worried instead of becoming irritated.**"
 - Instead of: "**Listen better.**" try: "**Ask two questions before offering a solution.**"
 - Instead of: "**Don't be controlling.**" try: "**Ask what they think before making the decision.**"
 - Instead of: "**Ask for help.**" try: "**Tell my friend I'm having a rough week instead of saying everything is fine.**"
 - Instead of: "**Don't mansplain.**" try: "**Ask whether they want my perspective before I explain.**"
 - Instead of: "**Be less defensive.**" try: "**Say, 'Tell me what I missed,' before explaining my intention.**"
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TRY A DIFFERENT PLAY

Choose one upcoming situation where you can practice.

- Identify a Situation:
- My automatic play will probably be:
- The additional play I want to practice is:
- What could I actually say or do?

Keep it small enough to use.

BUILD REPS

One different response doesn't rewrite a playbook. Repetition does.

Over the next several opportunities, notice: Which **old plays** work well for me? Which plays do I **overuse**? Which situations make me **most rigid**? Which new plays **feel awkward** but useful? What am I **getting better at**? Where do I still **need more range**?

Now consider the larger questions. The kind of man I want to be is? Characteristics I want to keep developing? Something from my old playbook I want to **KEEP**? Something I want to **UPDATE**? Something I want to **USE MORE SELECTIVELY**? Something I may be ready to **RETIRE**? Something **NEW** I want to add?

TEST & LEARN

Notice the play. Review what happened. Try another response. See what changes. Keep what works.

Practice what you're still learning. **The goal isn't to throw away your old playbook.**

It's to have more than one play available when life calls for something different.