



KidsWorld: Inside & Out Psychotherapeutic Board Game

For over 43-years, Art Mones, PhD, ABPP, has been obsessed in his search for the essence of healing. Meeting Richard Schwartz, PhD, in the 1980's went a long way toward his goal, as he saw IFS to be a courageous step towards radical healing. In 2014, Art, who is a Diplomate in Clinical Psychology and Faculty in the Postgraduate Programs in Child-Family and Couples Therapy at the Derner Institute, Adelphi University, wrote his first book, *Transforming Troubled Children, Teens, and Their Families: An Internal Family Systems Model for Healing*, applying IFS to youth and their families. In his book, he brings IFS concepts to the understanding of children and to the interaction among them and their families. We look at "what goes awry and how to bring healing to problem-saturated cycles," he explains.

Very quickly he saw the need of a non-pathologizing, direct channel to kids themselves—applied to the natural habitat of child-therapist healing, via expressive play. Thus, *KidsWorld Board Game* was born. This fun and engaging game, for children ages 5-14, is a therapeutic journey of healing with 264 color-coded cards: *KidsWord Cards* tap into every aspect of a child's life—parents, siblings, school, peer group, legacy burdens and the wider world; *Calm Corner Cards* provide the opportunity for kids to learn and practice mindfulness; and *Fun Corner Cards* is all about having fun! Drawing on the creativity of Self and to just be goofy and laugh, provides release and builds a connection between therapist and child. Shaped in accordance with the age of the child, relying largely on Direct Access, for those under age 7, and increasingly on Insight, as the child matures neurobiologically and emotionally, cards are designed to go to deeper layers of the child's internal experience. Here are some examples:

A boy was acting very “hyper” in school. Tell me what you think was going on inside him. What can he do to calm himself down?

Did you ever say, “I’m fine,” when really you were upset inside? How does this feel in your body?

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The game is very effective in defining trailheads for direct work with parent-child issues, sibling interaction, peer conflict and school struggles. “*KidsWorld* celebrates the Self of the child and focuses on promoting the understanding that symptoms or problems are generated from overworking their very own smart, creative survival strategies or protective parts (managers and firefighters),” Art explains, “and gently and safely allows children to gain access to their exiles and creates pathways for unburdening.” While playing a game, the child experiences unblending so that protective parts can step back and allow Self to be in the lead.

The game has been popular among child and family therapists since its publication in 2014, receiving tremendous feedback on its therapeutic potency. In response, Art published, *A Therapist's Guide to KidsWorld Inside & Out Psychotherapeutic Board Game*, which covers the philosophy and focus of the game and provides many case examples of the myriad child-focused topics covered by it. All are available via the [CSL website](#), through the Publisher, [Stoelting Company](#), as well as on [Amazon.com](#). For more information contact Art at amonesphd@gmail.com.