

# E2E Get My Goat Game



A Game About Recognizing  
Your Frustration and  
Annoyance Triggers

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# E2E Get My Goat Game: A Game About Recognizing Frustration and Annoyance Triggers

My students often have some habits and behaviors that others find irritating, yet they are also often the first to become angry when someone irritates *them*. It's really ironic, right? This activity will allow you to do some informal formative assessment at the start of a unit about managing frustration to see what common triggers the class shares so interventions and coping strategies for management can be taught, as well as which students are irritated easily by a variety of different stimuli.

The scenarios for this game were written specifically to address real issues my teaching partner, Brad, and I observed with our class of intellectually disabled high school students. You may wish to change or add to the scenarios to customize them for your unique group. When I worked with a group with higher intellectual functioning, I would have required different scenarios to ensure relevance.

Kansas SECD Standard(s) Addressed:

Personal Development

II. Self-Management : Understanding and practicing strategies for managing thoughts and behaviors, reflecting on perspectives, and setting and monitoring goals

A. Understand and practice strategies for managing thoughts and behaviors.

Grades 6-8

1. Identify multiple techniques to manage stress and maintain confidence.
3. Recognize effective behavioral responses to strongly emotional situations.
5. Recognize cause/effect relationships.
6. Recognize logical fallacies, bias, hypocrisy, contradiction, distortion, and rationalization.
7. Practice effective communication (for example, listening, reflecting, responding).

Grades 9-12

1. Identify and evaluate techniques to successfully manage emotions, stress and maintain confidence.
2. Analyze accuracy of facts/information/interpretation.
3. Evaluate quality of support for opinions.
4. Evaluate logical and emotional appeals.
5. Analyze cause/effect relationships.
7. Apply effective listening skills in a variety of setting and situations.
8. Recognize barriers to effective listening (for example, environmental distractions, message problems, sender problems, receiver problems).

**Cost:** No cost (uses readily available supplies found in most schools)

**Preparation Time:** Approximately 20 minutes

## Supplies

- Prepared (copied onto paper or card stock and cut apart) E2E Get My Goat Player Cards, 1 sheet per participant, plus 3 more to sheets retain as extras for the reader's spare card deck
- Scissors
- Printed copy of the E2E Get My Goat Common Annoyances Checklist

## Discussion (Anticipatory)

What does it mean if I say that someone “got my goat”? Tell the class about some times when someone has irritated you to the point that you lost control of your feelings or behavior. What did the person do that you found so irritating? What caused you to finally snap? How did you feel after you had lost control? What consequences did YOU encounter after reacting badly (ex. Feeling rotten for the rest of the day, missing out on a fun activity, other people avoided you)? Why is it important to control your own feelings and behavior when someone is being irritating?

\*\*\*It is very important to make sure students understand the difference between a normal level of irritation/annoyance, which is normative, and allowing someone or something to “get their goat,” which is unhealthy and socially inappropriate. For example, it is perfectly normal to feel offended and irritated when someone bumps you hard in the hallway and doesn’t say “excuse me.” Feeling those feelings for a brief moment does NOT mean the person has gotten your goat! However, if you are in a foul mood for the next thirty minutes because of the bump in the hallway, you HAVE allowed that person to get your goat. Make sure kids understand the the difference *before* you play the game.

## Play the E2E Get My Goat Game

**Duration of Game:** Approximately 20 minutes

**Number of Players:** 2-12 players, plus one reader/referee (teacher) to read from the E2E Get My Goat Common Annoyances Checklist

**Objective:** Be the player with the most goat cards at the end of the game to win (because no one was able to “get your goat”)

### Directions for Play:

1. Designate one person to be the reader/referee; this should likely be the teacher. The reader will read each of the statements from the E2E Get My Goat Common Annoyances Checklist and will referee any potential disagreements.
2. Pass out 8 E2E Get My Goat Player cards to each player. The reader should retain a stack of 24 extra cards.
3. The reader will read the first statement out loud to the group.
4. If a player has ever let behavior like the one in the statement cause them to become dysregulated, he should place one of his cards in the center of the table.
5. If one of the players has never become dysregulated from an incident or behavior like the one just read, he may collect the cards that have been placed in the center of the table by other players.
  - a. If more than one person has never become dysregulated from the behavior or event, the cards should be divided equally among those individuals.
  - b. If there isn’t an even number of cards to distribute, ensure that each individual receives at least one card; you may choose to supplement the divided cards with the extra cards retained by the reader, if desired (ex. Three people are set to divide 5 cards, so the reader adds one extra card in order to allow each of the three people to get 2 cards each).
  - c. If there are only one or two extra cards to be divided by a large number of players, the reader may choose to return extra cards to the spare cards deck.
  - d. If every person in the group turns in a card, the reader will collect all the cards and will return them to the extra cards deck.

- e. If no person in the group has ever become dysregulated from an incident like the one read, the reader moves on to the next statement. No one loses or gains a card.
  - f. Decisions about card-awarding are at the discretion of the reader. Arguing or poor sportsmanship will result in a penalty of losing one card, which will be placed in the reader's extra card deck.
6. The players and reader will repeat steps 3-5 for each of the statements on the E2E Get My Goat Common Annoyances Checklist until either all the statements have been read and played or all the players have run out of cards.
  7. The player with the most E2E Get My Goat Player Cards at the end of the game is the winner.

### **Challenging a Play**

If a player claims to have never been dysregulated by an incident like the one that has been read in order to gain cards, but another player feels that this is untrue, the other player may challenge. This is the challenge procedure:

1. The player who wishes to challenge will tell the reader "I wish to challenge \_\_\_\_\_. I think that really *does* get her goat!"
2. The reader will ask the challenger to provide an example of a time when he knows that the other person has become upset under circumstances like the one read.
3. The reader/referee will evaluate the challenge for veracity.
4. If the reader/referee determines that the challenger is correct, and the challenged player has become dysregulated under similar circumstances, the challenger then gets the cards that would have been given to the challenged player (even if the challenger placed a card on the table during the reading of the statement).
5. Here's an example. The reader reads the following statement "Someone is clicking a retractable pen repeatedly when I'm trying to take a test." Andy, Mena, and Marianna place a card in the center of the table, indicating they have become dysregulated when someone has engaged in that behavior around them. Jane does NOT play a card. However, Andy remembers that, last week during the Science test, Jane yelled at a classmate to "Stop clicking your stupid pen or I'll break it!" Andy decides to challenge; he relates the incident to the reader/referee, who also remembers the incident. Andy has won the challenge and now gets to collect the cards that Jane would have gotten.
6. If it is determined by the reader/referee that the challenger has challenged another player unfairly, the challenger will give one card from his hand to the person who was unfairly challenged.
7. The reader/referee may also challenge (ex. The teacher knows the student has melted down under similar circumstances), and cards will be placed into the extra card deck.

### **Variation 1: Noncompetitive**

Instead of trying to gain cards and win, simply read the statements and have players turn in a card for each statement with which they agree. You may wish to make additional copies of cards if you choose this variation.

### **Variation 2: No Challenging Plays**

Play the game, but do not include the challenge option for groups where a high level of peer conflict is likely to occur.

### **Variation 3: Problem-Solving**

For more advanced groups (or to play again at the end of a unit about managing frustration and irritation to use the game as a summative assessment), have students take turns coming up with appropriate coping strategies for each of the scenarios, and award cards for appropriate answers.

**Discussion (Reflective)**

Were you surprised by some of the things that have caused you to become upset? Which were the most surprising to you? What did you learn about yourself and your tolerance for frustration and irritation? What are some ideas for ways you can improve your frustration tolerance?

## E2E Get My Goat Common Annoyances Checklist.

Print one copy of this list for the reader/referee.

- You have to wait for a long time in line at Wal-Mart.
- You want to have an argument with someone, and they will not argue with you.
- You go shopping in the crowds on Black Friday.
- Your mom tells you to clean up your messy room right after you already cleaned it.
- You overhear someone making fun of you or saying something unkind about you.
- Your cell phone battery dies in the middle of playing a game.
- You ask to look at someone's new cell phone/ring/etc., but they tell you "no" and won't let you touch it.
- The teacher calls on you, you answer incorrectly, and you hear a few people giggling.
- You break something and try to fix it, but you aren't able to put it back the way it was.
- Someone takes the last of a food item you really wanted in the cafeteria.
- A neighbor's dog keeps on barking and barking for hours when you are trying to sleep.
- Your brother/sister doesn't get in trouble for not doing a chore, but you do.
- You get into an argument with your mom, and she says you are being ungrateful and selfish.
- A classmate keeps on insisting that he's right, even though you KNOW he is wrong about something.
- Someone interrupts you and won't let you speak.
- Someone bumps you really hard in the hallway and doesn't say "excuse me" or even look to see if you are okay.
- Someone really needs to use a Kleenex but just keeps sniffing.
- Your friends go to the movies in a group but do not invite you to come.
- You don't want to get up in the morning to go to school, but your parent makes you do it anyway.
- You work really hard to study and get a bad grade on a test.
- Someone cheats while playing a game with you.
- Someone scratched, bit, or hit you when they felt frustrated or upset, even though it wasn't your fault they were upset.
- A classmate was talking, but the teacher "shhh"ed *you*.
- You see someone else wearing the new jeans you really wanted but your parents wouldn't buy you because they are too expensive.
- The person being naughty is getting all the attention, while you are being good and nobody pays any attention to you.
- Your school picture came out really bad, so you got retakes. The reakes were also really bad.
- You're really tired and want to put your head down, but the teacher keeps telling you to sit up.
- Someone keeps on clicking a retractable pen when you are trying to take a test.
- Classmates won't stop talking when the teacher asks the class to stop talking and pay attention.
- Someone in class is crying or screaming and the teacher can't get them to stop.
- You feel like someone is being bossy.
- You lose a \$20 bill and cannot find it no matter how hard you look for it.

- Someone tells you that you smell bad.
- Someone you used to be really good friends with doesn't want to hang out anymore, and she won't tell you why.
- Someone keeps on standing or sitting too close to you, getting into your personal space.
- You didn't make the team you tried out for or get the part you auditioned for.
- Someone makes a big mess and just leaves it for you to clean up.
- The person you want to be your friend does not want to be friends with you. Instead, he wants to be friends with someone else.
- Someone takes something of yours without asking and will not give it back.
- Someone does something for you that you know you can do for yourself.
- A classmate always has his cell phone out or is on games on his laptop whenever the teacher isn't looking.
- There is a different schedule at school and you aren't sure when any of the classes begin or end.
- You told on someone for breaking a rule, and the teacher didn't do anything to the person.
- You keep trying to get the teacher's attention so she can help you with an assignment, but she keeps asking you to wait.
- Someone is farting or burping and thinks it's funny.
- Someone keeps on hugging you every time they see you, even though you've told them you don't like it and want them to stop.
- You got someone a present you spent a lot of time choosing, and they just set it aside and didn't really seem to like it.
- Someone is talking to you like you are stupid and don't know anything.

# E2E Get My Goat Game Cards

Print 1 sheet per participant on paper or card stock, plus 3 extra sheets; cut apart cards before activity.

