Entertaining Informally in Your Home

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Informally
IN YOUR HOME

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A Note of Introduction

Today fussy, proper parties are definitely out of style. Truly “smart” people just won’t take the time to spend their precious leisure moments “putting on the dog”. When one studies the kind of home architecture and appliances, and the casual clothing that “sell” and the types of recreation that are popular he soon realizes that simplicity and naturalness are the modern keynote for leisure time living. It suggests a search for an antidote to the strain and tension that involves most of us in this business of “making a living”.

The front doors on most of our homes swing inward. This provides a wonderful opportunity for us to permit selected parts of the exciting outside world to come into our “home base” bringing good times of laughter and fellowship and the stimulus of new ideas and inspiration. To gain such needed and desired expressions requires above all else a charming hostess. Very few women ever acquire all the qualifications for becoming the “perfect hostess” but more homemakers than think so have the means to provide the magic of hospitality in their homes. Much of the secret to successful entertaining lies in the example or pace set by the hostess. If you are genuinely interested in the people that come into your home and reveal a liking for them they in turn will find you interesting and likeable.

Propriety, correctness, tradition, pomposity and expensive trimmings have no place in your concern if your object is to bring enjoyment and relaxed togetherness to all concerned. Guests do not want a harried hostess who is obviously worried about making an impression of correct performance that she can’t be herself. One should attempt then to do nothing more (or less) than her best in bringing each guest to leaving her home with the genuine, heartfelt response, “Thank you for the wonderful time.”

It is to be hoped that this booklet may serve in some small measure to provide some suggestions in planning, preparing and putting on parties in the home and to stimulate assurance, imagination and self evaluation.
To Be or Not To Be

Someone has said that the mark of a successful hostess is when they can make you feel at home even though they wish you were. Though this quip puts an undue emphasis upon the insensitivity of the guest and the stoic tolerance of the hostess it does suggest that entertaining graciously in one’s home is a learned art. To earn the desired compliment “She’s a charming hostess” requires more than the ability to provide fancy foods served correctly amid elaborate decorations in an expensively furnished house. Rather, it is gained only when a genuine atmosphere of relaxed “at homeness” is created by the hospitable manner of the hostess.

Time and again the most enjoyable affairs for both hostess and guest have required the least amount of time and money. Whether the party involves just someone “dropping in” or guests for the weekend the key factor is how you think, feel and act in the situation.

Preparation Pays Off

Although there is no universal formula that fits for everyone there are certain elements basic to operating easily and with confidence as a hostess. Much of the fun of entertaining and of being entertained is placed in jeopardy if the hostess is not ready when the first guests arrive. Here are some pertinent questions which might well be considered before the hour for a planned party approaches:

WHAT ARE MY MAIN REASONS FOR ENTERTAINING?

This appears to be such an obvious question. Someone is to be honored—it is a special day or traditional event—it’s my turn to entertain the club or committee—I want to make new friends or strengthen old ties, be neighborly, help a child develop socially, or pay back a previous invitation. However, there are times when hidden motives that are not quite as noble as those on the surface play a strong part in promoting a decision to entertain. It pays to be emotionally honest in the early stages of planning in order that the best possible selection in guests, food, method of serving and activities can be made.

WHAT KIND OF AFFAIR WOULD BE REALISTIC OR FITTING?

No one can lead guests in a good time when they are trying to conduct a party that does not come naturally. It is not easy to be at one’s best before others when you are trying to lead in something you are not suited for. The ability and experience one has plus items of time schedule, physical limitations of the house, budget, help available, the occasion and the time schedule all enter into the picture. In fact, when one faces his limitations realistically enough beforehand, what appear to be handicaps can often be turned into exciting advantages.

WHOM SHALL I INVITE? (Or Not Invite?)

When guests are not predetermined for you the selection of guests poses a most important part in planning. Up to this point we have stressed the place of the hostess is the key to success. Without minimizing her place we can still recognize the fact that the combination of individuals who make up the guest group can often make or break a party.
One or two guests who are definitely out of place because of such differences as age, interests, or lack of social ease can cause a situation that will dampen the enthusiasm of everybody. The hostess should anticipate some of these individual peculiarities and try to design the kind of affair that will best suit those who are going to come. She should also try to choose the number of guests that will be best.

WHERE SHALL I HOLD THE AFFAIR?

The theme and occasion, the food and method of serving, the number of guests, the help and facilities available and other practical factors enter in to determine whether the party would be most successful in the living room, recreation room, kitchen or out of doors.

WHAT ABOUT THE REST OF THE FAMILY?

Because we are members of a family unit it is necessary to respect any plans or wishes that the others might have at this time. Some affairs will not be much fun for the children or the husband. Certainly consideration should be given to how the others will be fed or where they can spend the afternoon or evening without anybody being imposed upon. Sometimes previous commitments on the part of other members of the family make it highly impractical for a party to be scheduled either for them or even without them at a particular time.

WHAT WILL I NEED TO BUY AND PREPARE AND WHEN SHALL I DO IT?

When it comes to this point of deciding upon food, type of service, housecleaning to be done, game materials and the multitude of other details in preparation, the worth of careful and realistic planning with plenty of free time to do it can never be overestimated.

The Invitation

The purpose of the invitation is to communicate your wish to share the hospitality of your home. Along with a feeling of warm cordiality your invitation should indicate such pertinent facts as when, where, what kind of party and sometimes what will be expected of them, what to wear or bring and how to get there.

The kind of occasion determines the kind of invitation that should be sent. Most informal invitations are extended by the hostess to the lady guest in person or over the telephone. When it is more convenient or appropriate to write the invitation it helps to build up enthusiasm and anticipation to employ originality and avoid triteness. Invitations should be sent out a minimum of one week beforehand in most instances.

May I Present

The basic rule for simple introductions is very easy to remember in that the name of the one who is being introduced is mentioned first. If Mr. Olson is the one to be introduced the shortest way would be, "Mr. Olson - Mrs. Johnson." If Nora Johnson's attention is elsewhere it would be perfectly proper to say something like this, "Nora, this is Mr. Olson"; and then turning to Mr. Olson say, "Mrs. Johnson."

In a private home, introductions are not supposed to be necessary. Actually, it works out that often it is quite important to make introductions to put guests at ease and to eliminate strangeness. On the positive side of this ruling it gives any guest the right to speak to another guest without an introduction of any kind.

However, in the course of conversation it might help to provide a self introduction. The rule here is to avoid the impersonal use of Mr. or Mrs. and to provide your full
name, "I am Ferdinand Olson". A woman would say, "I am Nora Johnson" and not "Mrs. Sam Johnson". In summary then, you introduce:

A gentleman to a lady or a group—"Mr. Olson - Mrs. Johnson - Mr. Johnson, Mr. Jones, Mrs. Green ..." and so on.

A group to a woman—"Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Green, Mr. Green - Mrs. Johnson".

A child to an adult—"Do you know Jane White? - Mrs. Green".

Your husband or children to all others—"This is my son, Charles."

Yourself to other by your full name—"I am June Holmes." not Mrs. Holmes.

In responding one simply says "How do you do?" or "Pleased to meet you." "Charmed" or "Delighted" are not accepted responses. "I am very happy to meet you." is not regarded as proper but is heard quite commonly at informal gatherings.

The hostess or host should be at the door to greet guests if possible. If the host is not available and the hostess occupied with some other matter between arrivals a chosen friend may be asked to assume the duty of answering the door.

The man always rises when being introduced to a lady or when the group is small and a lady enters the room. Women may stay seated. Boys and men shake hands but with a woman it is optional. When in her own home it is more usual for the woman to shake hands. If the party is large, strangers should be introduced to those making up a small conversational group. This enables him to join them. These guests should feel responsible for introducing him to others until the hostess takes charge again. A guest of honor should be introduced all around by the hostess or one charged with that responsibility.

Getting Off to a Good Start

There is no more important time in a party than the first 15 or 20 minutes. The first impressions that are made upon the guests will set the stage and create the mood for what is to follow. The experienced hostess takes great pains to provide the atmosphere that makes those who come into her home sense that different and gala feeling. The hostess in her prettiest, soft glowing candles or indirect lighting, that background of appropriate mood music on records, or a fire crackling in the fireplace are just some of the things that will add up to give your house that party look. Above all, that interminable gap of waiting upon the part of those who come on time with nothing to do until the others arrive should be avoided. If the party will shift into operation with the arrival of the first of the guests the hostess can rest assured that even mediocre ideas later on will prove excellent devices for a good time.

Fellowship of Talk

At some time in a party the dominant note becomes communication by conversation. An experienced and sensitive hostess knows that this phase of participation contains both the possibility of unusual success or dull defeat. While much centers upon the ability of the guests to converse yet she should be aware of important things she can both do and avoid.

SHE SHOULD:

Tactfully break up cliques of old friends.
Spend a few minutes with each guest during the course of the evening.
Give special attention to those who have less in common with the group.
Take it easy when things are going well; keep her plans adjustable.
Be positive in her suggestions when the situation warrants a change.
Draw others into the conversation while holding down the talkative.
Be interesting by being interested in what others have to talk about.
Help keep opinions and personalities separated from facts and issues.

SHE SHOULD NOT:
Center conversation on herself, her family, or house.

Party Games

When folks just “drop in” or a small group is invited in, it often turns out that chatting and chewing is sufficient for the party’s success. However, nothing is more deadening than to expect people to have fun talking when they have nothing to talk about beyond the subject of the weather. Party games, on the other hand, can provide the means to a rich experience of relaxed togetherness. Perhaps the main reason for a certain reluctance of some to play games is that they have been previously subjected to games under poor leadership. In itself a game is a mere tool or device which can be used to irritate and bludgeon or to creatively shape, shape and fashion some good fun.

The main responsibility rests upon the craftsman, the game leader. Just because a hostess had a “whale of a time” playing a particular game at another occasion is no indication that it will successfully work at her party. Of course, the fact that she is enthusiastic about it and wants to share it is an important asset; but in itself such enthusiasm can be dangerous. Careful selection of games, along with proper build-up and atmosphere as a setting for the game, games suited to the room and chair arrangement and the folks playing it, and many other elements are involved in enjoyment through game playing.

Here is one place where the hostess can effectively use others in various ways to help.

Run down her party or food. “Don’t apologize,” said Hubbard, “your friends don’t need it and your enemies won’t believe it.”

Get involved in deep conversation with some to the neglect of others.

Join in gossip, correct others, try to outdo another’s story.

People are not nearly as apt to be unfairly critical about something they had an active and responsible part in. If one or more of the guests are not only good at playing games but leading them, then it might be well to have them work with you in choosing the games that would fit with the general idea of your party and suit the interests and abilities (and maybe even the prejudices) of the folks coming. Here are a few suggestions for a hostess which certainly apply to hostessing generally as well as to game leadership.

—Know your group: be sensitive to their interests and their prejudices.
—Build an atmosphere for play. (by props, theme, physical arrangements, etc.)
—Radiate enthusiasm for games—be contagious.
—Know your game and how to teach it—interpret instead of explain.
—Be adjustable; be ready to capitalize on unexpected happenings.
—Be democratic—lead, don’t impose; play yourself when possible.
—Be a good follower—let others lead whenever practical.
—Know when to stop and move on—stop stop games and party parts at their climax.
—Begin with “defrosters” and mixers and end up with “tapering off” activities or something that will make an easy transition to the next party part.
—After all is over take time to ask why of both that which succeeded and that which failed or didn’t produce up to expectations.

The selection of games included here is in addition to that which can be found in the three Extension bulletins entitled “Games For Small Groups in Small Spaces”, “Let’s Plan a Party” and “The Stunt and Skit Kit”. Additional suggestions for materials will be listed under “Entertainment Idea Sources” in the back of this bulletin.

**INTERRUPTED STORY TELLING**

Have one of the guests tell a story, anecdote or relate an experience. This could be used as a forfeit or penalty payment. The other guests are instructed to ask the story teller as many questions as they please; interrupting at any time. The teller of the story is to try to answer each question yet stick to his subject. The hearers are to try to mislead him with the questions they ask. Sometimes a time limit previously stated is helpful.

**TRANSPORT SCRAMBLE**

All the letters for the word to describe the various methods of transportation are in this combination of letters. Players are to see how quickly they can unscramble them and get them in the right order.

1. Ranit (train) 5. Raletosca (escalator)
2. Cukrt (truck) 6. Lisgeh (sleigh)
3. Ceyible (bicycle) 7. Noace (canoe)
4. Tarwboo (rowboat) 8. Tarf (raft)

**TRIPLETS**

Here are a few famous triplets known to most people. One of the three is listed and the players are to list the other two in the blank spaces to complete the three.

1. (Tom), (Dick) and Harry
2. (Blood), (Sweat) and Tears
3. (Harpo), Chico and (Groucho)
4. (Lock), (Stock) and Barrel
5. (Nina), (Pinta) and Santa Maria
6. (Vim), (Vigor) and Vitality
7. (Atchison), (Topeka) and the Santa Fe
8. (Win), (Place) and Show

**IT'S ALL ENGLISH**

Here's the way the English describe some things for which we in America use another word. Players are to write the American equivalent for the following:

1. Wireless (radio)
2. Lift (elevator)
3. Fortnight (two weeks)
4. Suspenders (men's garters)
5. Goods Train (freight train)
6. Physical Jerks (calethenics)
7. Tram (street car)
8. Queue (waiting line)

**TRAGEDY**

Players are asked to write down a list of things the leader gives them. If they use familiar names and places it often adds to the fun. Here are the things they are to write in order:

1. A girl's name
2. A place
3. Name of person to your right
4. An object
5. Someone's name
6. A place in a near-by town
7. An implement
8. A possession
9. A reason
10. A man's name

After they have completed their list you then tell them that they have just solved an
important murder case. These are the facts and people involved.

1. The unsung heroine
2. The scene of the first attempt to murder the victim
3. One whom the police held as a suspect character
4. The poor, unfortunate victim
5. The place the murder was committed
6. The weapon used
7. The chief clue
8. The hero who solved the crime
9. The established motive
10. The unsung heroine

**IMPRESSIONS**

The guests choose someone well known in the group and a good sport. The other players are then to write down the kind of a particular object this person makes them think of when it is called out. Upon completion of the list the leader should repeat the list and ask one person only what they wrote down for that particular object (unless the group is quite small). Here are some suggestions.

"What kind of (1) Food (2) Flower (3) Sport or Hobby (4) House (5) Car (6) Dog (7) Furniture (8) Body of Water (9) Celebrity (10) Boat . . . . does he make you think of?"

**ADJECTIVES**

The hostess writes out a story related to the theme or idea behind the party. She leaves a blank for each space that would use an adjective. If the group is fairly large have one adjective space for each guest; if they are small in number have two blanks for each guest. Each player is provided with a small slip of paper and told to write any adjective. The leader then walks about the room reading the story. Every time she comes to a blank she halts her reading and points to a different guest who then reads the word he has written down as the one that goes into the blank space. For example the story might start out this way, "It was a ................. and

................. night. Three ................. characters were walking down the ................. alley. Such adjectives as beautiful, smelly, muddy, horrible, growly, etc. would make humorous additions to the story outline.

**I DOOD IT**

The hostess writes out a number of obstacles on individual cards so that each player of a team will have a different obstacle to overcome. An identical set of cards should be made for each team. Also, the team players in this game should not be more than five or six. Here are some suggestions for obstacles.

1. Crook your right elbow—palm downward (left handed persons opposite arm)—place a coin on the elbow. Place the other hand behind your back and hurry to the goal where a pencil and paper is. Without dropping the coin write the word ABRACADABRA with your left hand. If the coin falls off it must be replaced before you go on.

2. Take off one shoe and place it on top of your head; as you balance it there hop on the other foot to the goal. Shoe must be replaced if it falls off.

3. Blow a square of tissue paper (slightly creased in the center) from the starting point to the goal.

4. Place a card between your nose and lip and without using your hands travel from the starting point to the goal.

5. Take off shoes and socks; switch socks to opposite feet and put your shoes back on (lacing is not necessary).

6. Go to the goal (and chair there) blow up your balloon and while holding the end, place it under you. Sit down hard enough so that you burst it.

Each card or slip with the obstacle direction is folded and players are instructed not to read them. On the signal those whose folded slips have a number 1 on them open them up, read them and try to overcome their obstacle as quickly as possible. When they
complete their performance they shout "I Dood It". This is the signal for the number 2's in each team to open their instruction slip and start performing. When they finish and say "I Dood It" then the number 3's perform.

**STAMMER JAMMER**

Players are seated so that each is close enough to the next to enable them to pass an object quickly. The leader starts some music and this is the signal for the object to start moving from one player to the next. When the leader stops the music he points to the person holding the object at that moment or calls out his name, and immediately calls out some letter of the alphabet. The guilty player must pass the object to the person on his left, rise and name as many words as possible beginning with that letter while the object is making its way around the circle once. The leader should count the number of words recited and keep score.

**MADMAN ON A HOLIDAY**

Guests are seated so that all can see the center of the circle where the one who is "it" is standing. "It" points to one of the players or calls out his name and makes a motion such as shaking a fist or even sticking out his tongue. The person pointed to then repeats the original action and adds one of his own, followed by pointing to a third person. This person then is required to stand, repeat the first two actions in sequence and add something of his own. Not more than 15 should play this.

**CHAIN REACTION PANTOMIME**

This can be used with any size group. The leader and two or three (depending upon time) others participate. Those selected leave the room and then the leaders tells the activity that he is going to pantomime. One person is called into the room to watch the leader go through his exaggerated and imagined act. Upon completion the next person is brought into the room to watch the version of this unknown action as the other person remembers it. If another person is out then they are invited in to watch the second repeat of the original and then he does it as he remembers. After all have done their pantomime then they are asked to tell what it was they thought they were doing. Then they are told what the original idea was. Here are some pantomime suggestions.

- Washing an Elephant
- Packing Auto for a Trip
- Cleaning out the Refrigerator
- Changing the Baby
- Changing a Flat Tire
- Taking Down the Storm Windows

**FAMILY ANAGRAMS**

Each player sitting in a circle or around the table is given four small squares of paper and a pencil and score sheet. They are instructed to choose a four letter word and write one of each letter of that word on the paper squares. Caution should be given about choosing words that can't be rearranged to make other words as the fun comes in trying to make a number of words out of one. The leader warns them that a time limit is going to be observed with each pass. At the signal each person passes his four squares to the right and receives a new set of four from his left hand neighbor. Everybody then tries to rearrange the letters to make as many different words as possible and enter them on his score sheet before the time is up. This continues until the words have made it once around in the smaller group but not more then eight or ten exchanges in a larger group. At the end of that time leader finds the person who has the most "legal" words. Usually it is more interesting if players are allowed to make both three and four letter words out of their anagram sets instead of just four.
TAIL ON THE DONKEY VARIATIONS

1. Know Your State—Have a map of the state attached on the wall a little below eye level. Slips of paper with the names of selected towns or areas are written upon them are given with a pin to the blindfolded person who must then approach the map and try to pin the slip at the closest point possible to its actual location. Depending upon the theme you could do the same general procedure with pinning the face on a clown, putting the face on a clock, hanging clothes on the line, etc.

2. Crazy House—This would work well (so would the others for that matter) to do it as a relay event and have two wall set ups where the outline of a house is drawn. Two sets of house parts are then cut out—one part being given to each player of each team (windows, door, chimney, smoke, tree, sidewalk, etc.) To add a little of the game of “find the object” to this game why not have one team the cats and the other the dogs and assign one player of one team a dog and the other a cat which will be the last to go into the picture. Then as each player approaches the house outline the other members try to guide him with a “meowing” or “barking” getting louder as he approaches the right spot and softer if he goes beyond it. If the relay element of time is added here so that the final winners are determined by the combination of who is first done as part of the score and so many points for coherence in placing the parts that will make it that much more fun. If two people are used to assist with blindfolds and putting paste on the back of the pieces just before starting that will save time and any lagging in the action. This same idea can be applied to the themes of Building an Automobile or Putting Animals into the Cage.

SONG INTRODUCTIONS

As people come into the play area give them a card and pencil with the instructions that they are to describe a song that would be familiar to all by drawing a picture or a series of pictures. One can do it by drawing a picture for each key word in the title or any other way that he feels will describe it but not make it too obvious. After completing his picture he then moves about the room and tries to guess the song that another person has pictured. If he guesses correctly he finds out that person’s name and writes it on the back of his own card. After a time when the game seems to be approaching its climax of interest and people have had a good chance to mix and get acquainted, stop the game and find out who had guessed the most songs.

IMITATIONS

These can be forfeits for a winner or loser in a previous game or can be done as a kind of charade type game. The leader whispers what the player is to do and then the others try to guess what it is that he is doing. Here are some possibilities depending upon the subjects and the party mood: A cat serenading another cat—a dog guarding a bone—a laughing hyena a lying—a dog doing tricks—a Fuller Brush man at the back door—Johnny Ray singing—man imitates a shapely lady going down the street—a lady imitating a man coming from the other direction—a fly trying to get out of some flypaper.

COPY CAT

Players sit in semi-circles or in long lines (can be used as a relay formation game). Each has a card and a pencil. The first one begins to draw a picture. The one sitting on his or her left draws a line on his own card as soon as he sees anything on the card of the person on the right. This continues all down the line or circle, each one drawing only what he sees on his right hand neighbor’s card. When the picture is completed, let everyone see all the other’s. The chances are the first and last one in line will have very little resemblance.
ELEPHANT, RHINOCEROS AND RABBIT

Players are seated in a circle and the leader explains that the proper placement of the hands to indicate the animal he calls must be made before he counts to five. For elephant the one pointed to must put his two fists together and up to his nose and those on each side of that person must cup their hand at his ear to make big elephant ears. For rabbit the one pointed to puts his fists together but puts them behind him to make a cottontail; the players on either side put their hands to the side of his head and with fore and middle fingers up to make rabbit ears. For rhinoceros the one pointed to grabs his left thumb with his right hand, puts his right thumb to his nose and points the two forefingers up (others fingers down) to make the two horns; those on either side of that player then make a little curled ear on each side by putting up a bent forefinger. If one of the three people involved when the center person calls out one of the animals and counts to five, does not do the right motion or is too late, then they exchange places and become it. For a larger group it is well to have two or three people “it.” This game should be demonstrated a few times before the playing starts in earnest.

STOCK EXCHANGE

Each player makes a large square on his paper and then lines it with five spaces across and five down to make a total of 25 squares. The players take turns choosing and calling out a letter of the alphabet. As each letter is called the players write it in any empty space they choose. The game continues until 25 letters (some duplicates of course) have been given. The object is to try to make as many three, four and five letter words as possible across, down or diagonally. Score points: 5 for five letter words, 4 for four letter words and 3 for three letter words. Once entered letters cannot be changed to another square and proper names should be disqualified.

FRENCH CAN CAN

Two chairs or goals are placed within the circle of players and several tin cans are placed around inside the circle. Two persons are chosen from the group and blindfolded. One is assigned one goal and told that he must put any tin cans that he finds under his goal: the other is to place any cans that he can find or steal on top of his goal (or chair seat). The one who accumulates a certain number of cans at his goal wins. Those sitting around the outside circle are to keep any cans that get kicked or roll from getting out of bounds and also to indicate to the blindfolded players when they are going out of the circle. Blindfolded players are allowed to take only one can at a time to their goal and they may steal cans from the other person’s goal.

CAT AND MOUSE

Equipment needed for this game includes a pan cover, string, corks (or cotton wads) for each player and one or two dice. A cork tied firmly to about 18 inches of string serves as a mouse. Each one puts his mouse in the center of the play area and gets a good hold on his string except the one who is taking a turn as the cat. That person holds the pan cover a few inches above the mice with one hand and holds the dice in the other. One number or combination of numbers is agreed upon as the signal when the cat can clamp the cover on the spot and try to catch as many mice as possible. The other players try to pull their cork away before the cover catches them. The “cat” player gets a certain number of points for every mouse he catches. Except when the cover is clamped down on the wrong number. Other players who pull their “mouse” away when a wrong number is rolled are penalized by subtracting a certain number of points. After a player rolls the
right number the cover and dice go to the next person and so on until all have a turn. Dice should be rolled so that all players can plainly see them when they stop.

Games for Showers

Most shower parties seem to limit themselves to food, table decorations, conversation and the presentation of gifts to the one being honored. Such affairs are usually for new brides, expectant mothers, young couples and occasionally the new clergyman.

A little thought would soon reveal other people who deserve the expression of your affection and interest in them. How about the new mother when she comes home from the hospital with gifts just for her, or the teacher who has served the children in your community for such a long time, or the elderly couple that lives down the way with just the big house left and memories of days gone by? There are a great many deserving people who could sure use a “vote of appreciation.”

And how about including the men folks in the party and the planning when the kind of shower and the time make it plausible if not traditional? In many instances it will pay for the hostess to have a few games ready to help dispel the reserve, hold up a sag or cover up a seam that shows in the party planning. Many games used at other occasions will fit in beautifully if they are given a new twist or title to fit the theme, such as “Picture Biography” and “Drawing in the Dark,” “Telegram” and many others (described in the “Games For Small Groups” bulletin and other sources). Here are a few more.

TREASURE HUNT

As is usually done, divide the guests into groups that must go around the neighborhood from clue to clue (or confine the hunting to the house) until they wind up back home. Just make sure that the individual or couple to be honored is the last to get back. Have all the other guests in a darkened room with the shower gifts all ready so that when the honored guests come in and the lights are turned on the surprise element is more than just the others shouting “Surprise!”

BABY FEEDING CONTEST

Players can be divided into groups or contestants can be chosen to act as teams of a mother and a baby.

LIQUID CONTEST

Supply each of the mothers with bowl of water, a teaspoon, a bottle and a nipple. At a signal the mothers are to fill the bottle to a certain point using the teaspoon. Then they quickly attach the nipple and start to feed the baby who has been steadily howling all this time. The babies race to see who can finish the contents of the bottle first while the mother’s sing some lullaby such as “Rock-a-bye Baby” or “Too-ra-loo-ra-li.”

SOLIDS CONTEST

The mother and the baby are both blindfolded and sit facing one another. At the signal each mother starts to feed her baby with a spoon from the contents of her dish.

Food and Refreshment

Someone put it this way:

“The query of time came to me—
Where lies the charm of a cup of tea?
I puzzled my brain, but naught did gain.
Then suddenly it came to me.

Here lies the charm of a cup of tea,
It warms the heart—it loosens the tongue
And deepens the smile of old and young.
“Tis not in the cup, ’tis not in the bowl,
But lies in the sociable flow of the soul.”
Hospitality and food must go as partners in the hostess’ plan and performance. Through the years inviting others in to one’s home to “break bread together” has been one of the supreme gestures of friendship. Therefore, it is the kind and thoughtful hostess who makes an effort to find out any special likes or dislikes that her guests might have and not make any special mention of it when they partake.

Because it is almost impossible for a homemaker to play the role of a cook and waitress along with that of a hostess at the same time it is important that she realistically plan for the what and how of serving so that she will have the most time possible for being a hostess in person with her guests. Informal entertaining allows one to choose, prepare and serve a type of food fare that is attractive, tasty, different and adequate without running over on your time, energy and food money budgets. And because it is casual and convenient to guests allowing for easy conversation and a genuine naturalness the food becomes another means to the “socialable flow of the soul” one with another to create the kind of a time for our modern way of living that is more than a leisure time luxury—but a basic necessity to sane and mature living.
Entertainment Idea Sources

“Etiquette” Emily Post; Funk and Wagnall’s Co. (1945 Ed.)
“Vogue’s Book of Etiquette” Fenwick; Simon and Schuster (1948 ed.)
“How To Entertain At Home” Mager; A Fawcett Book (No. 162)
“Entertaining Is Fun” Draper; Doubleday, Doran & Co. (1941)
“Gay Parties for All Occasions” Harbin; Abingdon—Cokesbury
“Party Games For All” Mason and Mitchell; Everyday Handbook Series
“Sunset Host and Hostess Book”—Lane Publishing Co.
“The Home Book of Party Games” Meyer; The New Home Library
“Games and Stunts” Young & Gardner; J. P. Lippincott Co.
“Children’s Games From Many Lands” Millen, ed.; Friendship Press
“Hoyle’s Rules of Games” Morehead and Mott-Smith; A Signet Key Book
“The Fun Encyclopedia” Harbin; Abingdon—Cokesbury

National Recreation Association Booklets: 315 Fourth Ave., N. Y.
“Games For Children”
“Parties From A—Z”
“Parties Plus” (Stunts and Entertainment)
“Parties Plus” (Party Planning)
“Parties For Special Days”
“The Barn Dance Returns”
“Gay Nineties”

“The Hospitality of Your Home”
“Games To Play”
“Let’s Have a Party”
“Parties For Youngsters”
“Hostess Handbook of Party Foods”
“Parties To Give”
“Breaking The News”
“Showers”

Good Housekeeping Booklets: Hearst Corp.
“Book of Buffet Suppers”
“Book of Flower Arrangements”
“How To Decorate A Table”
“Barbecue Cook Book”
Entertaining Informally

“Highlights of Bridal Etiquette”
“Wedding Anniversaries”
“Parties For Brides”
“A-Hunting We Will Go”
“Blessed Event Parties”
“Check List For Brides”
“Screwball Parties”
“Food For Fun”

McCall's—“Children's Playtime Book,” “Children's Annual” 220 Park Ave., N. Y.
“Here's An Idea” Service, 300 Howard Street, Framingham, Mass.
(A free monthly leaflet with how to make party decorations pictures and directions)

“Phun-Phax” Pacific Crafters, Box 2007; Stockton, Cal.

S. D. State College Extension Service Recreation Bulletins:
“Let's Plan a Party”
“Games For Small Groups in Small Spaces”
“The Stunt and Skit Kit”
Check Your Hostess Rating

(Mark 5 for yes, 3 for sometimes and 0 for no)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Times</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you plan your parties at least a week ahead of time?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you set the stage with an appropriate atmosphere (centerpiece, soft music, candlelight, etc.)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do your parties have an original touch in invitations, decorations, themes, food and games?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is everything (that can be) ready before the guests arrive?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are you at the door to greet the first guests with a warm hello?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you find it easy to see that everyone is introduced?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you find time to talk to everyone at least a few minutes?</td>
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<tr>
<td>When another is talking, do you hear what he is saying instead of your mind drifting?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Can you redirect conversation when someone dominates or the discussion is verging on an argument?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you avoid talking about yourself or apologizing for your shortcomings?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are you easy with your guests instead of trying to be a &quot;party general&quot; giving directions and commands?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are you able to take a spilling or breaking accident without getting flustered or even inwardly upset?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are you able to use others who volunteer when you need help without being apologetic or embarrassed?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel a satisfaction greater than fatigue or worry after you have entertained?</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total... | | | |

Grand Total... | | | |

If you have a grand total of 50 or more, chances are that people like both you and the times they have in your home.