

# *The Game of Life and How to Play It*

**Florence Scovel Shinn | Summary |**

## **A Battle or A Game**

### **Overview**

"The Game of Life and How to Play It," published in 1925 by Florence Scovel Shinn, presents life not as a battle but as a "game" governed by spiritual laws. The core message is that an individual's thoughts, words, and beliefs directly shape their reality. Success, health, wealth, and perfect self-expression are attainable through understanding and applying these spiritual laws, primarily by training the imagination, mastering the power of the spoken word, practicing non-resistance, cultivating love, and following intuition.

### **Key Themes and Ideas**

#### **1. Life as a Game of Giving and Receiving (Karma)**

Life is presented as a game where "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." This principle, referred to as the law of Karma or "Comeback," dictates that whatever one sends out in word or deed—be it hate, love, criticism, or honesty—will inevitably return. This law operates with "astounding accuracy."

- **Quote:** "Most people consider life a battle ~ but it is not a battle, it is a game. It is a game, however, which cannot be played successfully without the knowledge of spiritual law..."
- **Quote:** "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.' This means that whatever man sends out in word or deed, will return to him; what he gives, he will receive."
- **Quote:** "Man receives only that which he gives. The Game of Life is a game of boomerangs. Man's thoughts, deeds and words return to him sooner or later, with astounding accuracy."

## 2. The Power of Imagination and the Subconscious Mind

The "imaging faculty" or imagination is central to creating one's reality. The mind is divided into conscious, subconscious, and superconscious departments. The subconscious mind, described as "simply power, without direction," executes whatever is deeply felt or clearly imaged. The superconscious mind, or "God Mind within each man," holds the "perfect pattern" or Divine Design for each individual.

- **Quote:** "Keep thy heart (or imagination) with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.' (Prov. 4:23.) This means that what man images, sooner or later externalizes in his affairs."
- **Quote:** "Whatever man feels deeply or images clearly, is impressed upon the subconscious mind, and carried out in minutest detail."
- **Quote:** "The superconscious mind is the God Mind within each man, and is the realm of perfect ideas. In it, is the 'perfect pattern' spoken of by Plato, The Divine Design; for there is a Divine Design for each person."

## 3. The Power of the Spoken Word

Words are described as "a tremendous vibratory force" that continually mould one's body and affairs. Man is constantly making laws for himself through his spoken word. Idle or negative words can bring disaster, while affirmations of truth and prosperity can manifest desired outcomes.

- **Quote:** "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."
- **Quote:** "We know now, that words and thoughts are a tremendous vibratory force, ever moulding man's body and affairs."
- **Quote:** "Any man who does not know the power of the word, is behind the times."

## 4. The Law of Non-resistance

Resistance is equated with "Hell," as it places man in a "state of torment." The principle of non-resistance suggests that by ceasing to resist an adverse situation and instead blessing it, the situation loses its power and dissolves. Fear attracts negative experiences, while fearlessness removes them.

- **Quote:** "Resist not evil. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."
- **Quote:** "Nothing on earth can resist an absolutely non-resistant person."

- **Quote:** "So long as man resists a situation, he will have it with him. If he runs away from it, it will run after him."

## 5. Love as the Fulfilling of the Law

Love is presented as the strongest magnetic force in the universe and "God in manifestation." All sickness and unhappiness are attributed to the "violation of the law of love." Selfless, unconditional love, free from fear and criticism, is the key to attracting perfect relationships, health, and goodwill. Unforgiveness and resentment are major causes of disease and negative external conditions.

- **Quote:** "It is safe to say that all sickness and unhappiness come from the violation of the law of love. A new commandment I give unto you, 'Love one another,' and in the Game of Life, love or good-will takes every trick."
- **Quote:** "Pure, unselfish love draws to itself its own; it does not need to seek or demand."
- **Quote:** "Unforgiveness is the most prolific cause of disease."

## 6. Intuition and Divine Guidance

Man has an "unerring guide" within: intuition. By acknowledging God in all ways, one can receive "definite leads" or "hunches" that direct them toward their highest good. This guidance often comes through unexpected means and should always be followed, even if the reasoning mind resists.

- **Quote:** "In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths."
- **Quote:** "Demand the lead, saying, 'Infinite spirit, reveal to me the way, let me know if there is anything for me to do.' The answer will come through intuition (or hunch) ..."

## 7. Perfect Self-Expression and Divine Design

Each individual has a "Divine Design" or "perfect self-expression" awaiting their recognition. This includes "health, wealth, love and perfect self-expression." The goal is to align with this divine plan, releasing inner genius and fulfilling one's true destiny. This path is one of joy, not labour, and divine supply will always be at hand for its manifestation.

- **Quote:** "There is for each man, perfect self-expression. There is a place which he is to fill and no one else can fill, something which he is to do, which no one else can do; it is his destiny!"
- **Quote:** "The perfect plan includes health, wealth, love and perfect self-expression. This is the square of life, which brings perfect happiness."

## 8. Faith Over Fear

Fear is identified as man's "only enemy" and "inverted faith." It creates distorted mental pictures that manifest as feared outcomes. To play the game successfully, one must "substitute faith for fear" and obliterate all mental pictures of evil by impressing the subconscious with good. Active faith, demonstrated through actions, is crucial for manifestation.

- **Quote:** "Nothing stands between man and his highest ideals and every desire of his heart, but doubt and fear."
- **Quote:** "fear is only inverted faith; it is faith in evil instead of good."
- **Quote:** "Fear is misdirected energy and must be redirected, or transmuted into Faith."

## 9. Forgiveness and Grace

Christianity is founded upon the law of forgiveness, which is a "higher law" than Karma. Through Christ (the Christ within each man), one can be redeemed from Karmic law and the law of cause and effect, entering a state of "grace." This allows for the neutralization of mistakes and freedom from unhappy conditions.

- **Quote:** "Christianity is founded upon the law of forgiveness - Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Karmic law..."
- **Quote:** "We are told that on this plane, man reaps where he has not sown; the gifts of God are simply poured out upon him."

## 10. Casting the Burden (Impressing the Subconscious)

The easiest way to impress the subconscious with good is by "casting the burden" upon the superconscious mind (the Christ within). A burden is an adverse thought or condition rooted in the subconscious. By repeatedly affirming, "I cast this burden on the Christ within, and I go free," one allows the superconscious to dissolve the negative belief, clearing the vision and leading to manifestation of good.

- **Quote:** "The only thing which gives anything weight in nature is the law of gravitation... and that is what Jesus Christ meant when he said: 'My yoke is easy and my burden is light.'"
- **Quote:** "How scientific it then is, to cast the burden upon the superconscious mind (or Christ within) where it is 'made light,' or dissolved into its 'native nothingness.'"

## Practical Applications and Affirmations

- **Prosperity:** Believe God is your unfailing supply. "I have a wonderful work, in a wonderful way, I give wonderful service, for wonderful pay!" Pay bills cheerfully and give with love, knowing money in circulation opens channels for more. Hoarding leads to loss.
- **Health:** All disease has a mental correspondence. To heal the body, "heal the soul" (subconscious mind) by restoring it with right ideas and love. Deny the appearance of disease and affirm perfect health as a divine idea.
- **Relationships:** Practice selfless love, free from jealousy, criticism, and resentment. "Salute the Divinity in you" and others. Bless enemies, and they lose power to harm.
- **Decision Making:** Overcome indecision by affirming, "I am always under direct inspiration; I make right decisions, quickly." Rely on intuition, not psychic readings or horoscopes, which deal with the "Karmic path."
- **Overcoming Obstacles:** Never turn back from a demand made in faith. "Having done all ~ Stand." Demonstrations often come at the eleventh hour when one stops reasoning and lets "Infinite Intelligence" work.
- **Daily Practice:** Start each day with positive affirmations like, "Thy will be done this day! To-day is a day of completion; I give thanks for this perfect day, miracle shall follow miracle and wonders shall never cease." Live fully in the "now," blessing the past and future.
- **Receiving:** Be a "cheerful receiver" as well as a giver. Refusing gifts out of pride blocks channels.
- **Denials and Affirmations:** Use specific statements to release desired outcomes (e.g., "Infinite Spirit, open the way for my right home, my right friend, my right position. I give thanks it now manifests under grace in a perfect way.") Always include "under grace, in a perfect way" to ensure harmonious manifestation. Deny appearances of disease or lack, then affirm the perfect divine idea.

## Conclusion

Shinn's philosophy emphasizes that individuals are powerful creators of their reality through their thoughts, words, and beliefs. By aligning with spiritual laws—particularly love, faith, non-resistance, and the power of the word—one can overcome challenges, fulfil their divine destiny, and manifest a life of health, wealth, love, and perfect self-expression. The "Game of Life" is ultimately about renewing the mind to bring "heaven upon earth."

## Glossary of Key Terms

**Active Faith:** Demonstrating belief through actions, even when there are no visible signs of the desired outcome. It is the "bridge" to manifestation.

**Affirmations:** Positive statements made to impress the subconscious mind with truth and desirable outcomes, often repeated aloud with conviction.

**Carnal Mind (Mortal Mind):** The human, reasoning mind that perceives life based on appearances, including limitations, sickness, and poverty.

**Casting the Burden:** The act of releasing adverse thoughts or conditions (burdens) onto the Christ within (superconscious mind) to dissolve them and free oneself.

**Christ within:** The superconscious mind, or God Mind, within each individual; the source of perfect ideas, intuition, and divine power. It represents Truth Made Manifest.

**Conscious Mind:** The rational, thinking part of the mind that processes daily experiences and impressions.

**Denials:** Statements made to negate false beliefs or appearances of evil, sickness, or lack in consciousness.

**Divine Design:** The perfect pattern or blueprint for each individual's life, including perfect health, wealth, love, and self-expression, registered in Divine Mind.

**Divine Mind:** The Superconscious Mind, the realm of perfect ideas and the source of all good.

**Divine Selection:** The right outcome or manifestation that is aligned with one's highest good and the divine plan, ensuring perfect satisfaction and bringing good to all involved.

**Fear (Inverted Faith):** Misdirected energy or faith in evil instead of good, which creates mental pictures of undesirable outcomes that then tend to manifest.

**Fourth Dimensional World (World of the Wondrous):** A spiritual realm beyond the material world, where perfection, completion, life, and joy exist, and where the "Divine Design" is already manifest.

**Imaging Faculty (Imagination):** "The Scissors of the Mind"; the creative faculty through which man pictures things, causing them to manifest in his outer world.

**Infinite Intelligence:** God, the Universal Spirit, ever ready to carry out man's demands and the source of all supply and guidance.

**Intuition (In-tuition):** Man's "unerring guide," a spiritual faculty that provides direct leads or "hunches" from Infinite Intelligence, indicating the right path or action.

**Karma (Comeback):** The law of cause and effect, where man receives back what he sends out in thought, word, or deed.

**Law of Forgiveness (Law of Grace):** A higher spiritual law that transcends the law of Karma, freeing man from the consequences of past mistakes through spiritual understanding and the Christ within.

**Law of Non-resistance:** The principle that resisting evil or adverse situations gives them power. By refusing to resist and instead blessing the situation or seeing its good, it dissipates.

**Law of Prosperity:** The spiritual law that states God is man's supply, and man can release abundance through his spoken word and perfect faith.

**Perfect Self-Expression:** The unique destiny and purpose for each individual, the place they are meant to fill and the work they are meant to do.

**Spoken Word:** Words are vibratory forces that create and manifest reality. Careful and intentional use of words is crucial for shaping one's life.

**Subconscious Mind:** Pure power without direction, it faithfully carries out whatever is deeply felt or clearly imaged by the conscious mind. It has no power of induction and does not recognize jokes.

**Superconscious Mind:** See "Christ within" and "Divine Mind."

**Transmutation:** The process of changing something from one form into another, as when failure is "baptized" into success through non-resistance and the spoken word.