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Life is a Game

Human lives are riddled with complexities, gears upon gears that malfunction with every loose screw that pops out. They are systematic, repetitive, but still always changing. In terms of society, games and play have always been frowned upon as one grows older. Games are for children and adults must deal with the real world. However, when it comes down to the inner workings of every individual, life itself is, at its core, a game. As Koster states in his article, "*Playing with 'game'*," games and gaming are not necessarily things, but an attitude applied to things. For everything that may not be a bonafide game, by society's definition at least, "...we can choose to approach it with a lusory attitude, thereby turning it into a game..." (Koster). To put it simply, people have always worked through life as they would play a game, by setting goals and achievements, but in order for it to be acknowledged as such, you need the right person.

Playing with things is not childish, it's creative and imaginative. The saying, "life is a game," is not said to make fun of hard work and responsibility. It's telling you to live, work, and learn in a way that's still enjoyable. Koster explains that "We [people] learn to cope with the dangerous, vast, enmeshed gears around us by playing with them..." (Koster). One of the go-to coping methods of dealing with these heavy, large-scale topics is simplification. Taking larger issues piece by piece in simpler formats is a way for people to still experience diverse and

difficult topics, while still enjoying life by taking on a healthy amount of difficulty at once. Play isn't ignorance, it's more often a way to maintain people's mental health. Life is confusing, playing is a way for people to simplify life so they can hopefully understand it.

Life is filled with complex and everchanging rule systems, making the "structured" ways we know akin to the unstructured ways we play. Koster notes how some people believe that playing and gaming is "...freedom, flexibility, lack of rules..." (Koster). However, playing more open, unstructured games is more accurately attributed to a system of several everchanging and interconnected rule systems. For example, many RPGs, Visual Novels, and other story-based games are simplified versions of human adventures and conflicts. Although they are simplified, their worlds and rule systems are complex beyond the comprehension of most players. Watching the rules and longterm storyline change based on the decisions of players is both fascinating and intriguing.

Though treating life like a game can be dangerous if it means you don't take it seriously, having a lusus attitude towards it can help in finding the simplicity and fun in situations that are confusing and scary. Having a lusus attitude towards household chores, parts of school or work, and various other activities isn't as harmful as people often perceive it to be. Games give us a chance to try new things with the chance to retry if things go awry. It gives us a variety of unique moments that life does not, along with the foresight to use those moments to the best of our ability. When it comes down to it, playing games is essentially problem-solving recreationally. Using it in our everyday life simply opens doors to more opportunities.