

## **Challenge**

Often children struggle in school or at home to follow simple requests and to start work, they struggle to engage with their world. This is because the part of the brain that self-starts and is self-motivated is not engaged. One reason for this is that a child believes that there is no point in trying because they will always fail. This is their own negative working model that has been developed over years that tells them that they are a failure or no good. Challenge games are designed to help children to start to learn that they can be successful. They are simple games, where the child will be put in a slightly challenging position to complete a task that should be relatively simple for them and to let them succeed.

As the sessions progress the challenge gets harder and harder and this is to help stretch the child to help them to start to believe that they can be successful, and so starting an activity or a piece of homework is possible, and that they have developed the skills to stay with the task even when they struggle.

Now this means that in challenge games your therapist will tell you that your child always needs to win, and so you need to LOSE. This can be very hard

for some adults, and is counter intuitive. After all, how will a child learn to lose if they always win? Of course, that is right, they will never learn to be good losers, but the goal of Challenge is not to teach them to lose it is to teach a much more basic skill, for them to engage in the task.

Let's think again where your child's brain is developmentally. Are they at the point where you would usually beat them at everything? If your child never engages in an activity, then they will never learn to win or lose. Once they have engaged and the part of the brain that need to be self-starting has grown then it is time to let them learn to lose, that would be when their brain is about 10 years old.