



W O N D E R

The Exercise

Take 30 minutes to play in a way that connects you with your inner child.

See "Some Suggestions" below for guidance on what you might do.

Keep In Mind

- You may feel that you don't have time for this kind of thing. Speaking strictly as an adult, you probably don't. This is entirely the point of the exercise.
- When we take time to play, we free up the creative, imaginative, and spontaneous parts of ourselves that get ignored because of our busy, agenda-driven lives.
- The benefit of play? We're reminded that wonder and joy is not a luxury, but an important part of who we are.
- We're not talking about "competitive" play here. You're doing something purely for the immediate enjoyment of it, for its own sake.

Some Suggestions

- Go back to your earliest memory of a joyful, playful time in life. What things do you do now that bring you closest to those feelings from childhood?
- What's the one thing you liked to do as a child? Legos? Painting? Climbing trees? Is there an adult equivalent? Instead of climbing trees, try rock climbing.
- If you are competitive in nature, what would it be like to play where you let go of the performative aspect and simply enjoy the moment?
- There are different kinds of play. Which one feels most like you? (some of them will naturally overlap.)



W O N D E R

Rough and Tumble play is adventurous, messy and unstructured (ex: climbing, wrestling, chasing).

Ritual play has structure and requires strategy (ex: board games, sports).

Object play involves manipulating, designing or building something (ex: Legos, a fort).

Imaginative play uses creativity and fantasy (ex: painting, acting, drawing).

Body play involves physical movement (ex: dance, running, jumping).

Narrative play has to do with storytelling (ex: writing, performing skits).

Reflection

- After your time of play, use some of the following prompts to help process the time spent and get in touch with what stirring up in you:
- What feelings arose as you thought about what you will do and the taking time to do it?
- Why did you choose the specific activity you did?
- Track your feelings throughout the time you played. Did they change? When?
- What happened to your sense of time? Were you checking the clock frequently? Did you lose sense of time at any point?
- What, if anything, felt nourishing about this? What, if anything, felt silly or uncomfortable?
- As you sit with this experience now, do any thoughts, feelings or sensations from your childhood surface?

Resources

http://www.scholarpedia.org/article/Definitions_of_Play

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/14/smarter-living/adults-play-work-life-balance.html>

https://www.ted.com/talks/stuart_brown_play_is_more_than_just_fun/transcript?language=en