

What is Your Play Personality? Incorporating Play into Everyday!

Name
Date
Event



FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES
UFEXTENSION
INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE



AGENDA:

- Historical Importance of Play
- Developmental Perspective on Play
- What is Your Play Personality?
- Reflection & Conclusion



“Play is
the work
of children.”



Science of Play

- Reduces cortisol
- Releases endorphins
- Improves brain functionality: enhances memory & learning, stimulates brain cell growth, thickens cortical matter, & improves mood
- Improves physical health: prevention/reduction of chronic illness symptoms



Science of Play



- Develops higher-order cognitive skills:
 - literacy
 - executive function
 - motor skills
 - creativity,
 - problem-solving,
 - attention
- Develops “EQ”:
 - empathy,
 - coping skills,
 - optimism,
 - self-esteem,
 - social competence.

National Institute for Play (2023) : nifplay.org

Barros et al., 2019, Gray, 2013; Han et al., 2022, Neal et al 2018

PLAYGROUND
CLOSED

UNTIL FURTHER
NOTICE.





When Life Is ...	Play-Filled	Play-Deprived
Trust	Life is experienced as a playground filled with chances to learn	Life is experienced as a proving ground – and often a battleground
Flexibility	Change brings exploration and new possibilities	Change creates fear and resistance
Optimism	Well-being and pleasure are expected	Discomfort and disappointment are expected
Problem-Solving	Problems are acknowledged and often foster skill development	Problems are hidden, denied, or avoided
Emotional Regulation	Stress is handled with resilience; the response is most often stability	Stress responses are often anger, rage, or withdrawal caused by low self-efficacy
Perseverance	Motivation is sustained from internal drive, mastery is sought	Motivation dissipates; equivocation, procrastination, and apathy arise
Empathy	Others' feelings are recognized; support is often offered	Others' feelings are not recognized; discord occurs
Openness	Life is vital; a strong sense of belonging fosters social cooperation	Life is dull; people become socially withdrawn, often with mild depression
Belonging	Behaviors are altruistic, leading to teamwork, community creation, and participation	Behaviors are callous, uncooperative, bullying, and self-centered

“What I want to encourage you to do is to explore backwards, as far as you can go to the most clear, joyful, playful image that you have...and begin to build how that connects with your life now. You'll be able to enrich your life by prioritizing play and paying attention to it.”

– *Dr. Stuart Brown, TED Radio Hour Interview, 2015*



Types of Play



We are all a child at



**How Do We
Play?**

**Who is most
likely to play?**

**Do we
suppress play
as adults?**

**Do you play
like this?**

Attunement Play



What is Attunement Play?

- The foundational play type
- Serve and return

Adult Comparison

- Foundation of trust and future playfulness
- How we tend to choose our partners and friends

Body and Movement Play



What is Body & Movement Play?

- It's intrinsic!
- Activates brain connected to learning and innovation

Adult Comparison

- Helps us get out of a "funk"
- Activity = most rapid growth of the cerebellum

Object Play



What is Object Play?

- Small motor development
- Learn how items relate to and impact one another

Adult Comparison

- We love manipulating things!
- Able to identify and solve system problems

Social Play



What is Social Play?

- Learn how to relate to others and learn perspective taking
- Another foundational component of trust

Adult Comparison

- Will determine our ability to function productively at work and home
- Parties, food & fun! We need relationships to feel happy

Rough & Tumble Play



What is Rough & Tumble Play?

- Play fighting with a smile!
- Develops a sense of fairness and altruism

Adult Comparison

- Adults deprived of this kind of play tend to have poor control of violent impulses
- Sports = cooperative socialization

Imaginative Play



What is Imaginative Play?

- Strong language development component
- Helps children process stress and the "ways of the world"

Adult Comparison

- Imagination helps to innovate
- Helps us set goals and "reach for the stars"



Celebratory & Ritual Play



What is Celebratory & Ritual Play?

- Embedded in their social play
- Provides the basis for future memories and connection to others

Adult Comparison

- More of an adult oriented play; passed down to children
- Exhibited through culturally based traditions

Storytelling & Narrative Play



What is Storytelling & Narrative Play?

- Helps children understand the world and form opinions
- Adults influence this type of play greatly through interaction and books

Adult Comparison

- We show this through politics, morals, and values
- Provide a historical perspective of family and pleasurable memories

What is Your Play Personality? Screener

- **Instructions:** The Screener contains a collection of 32 statements about your interests, hobbies, and activities you most enjoy. Please mark to which degree the statement does or does not sound like you. Answer according to what reflects your *current preferences* rather than what your preferences were in the past.
- **Scoring:** To score, simply tally up the totals using the key. For example, each question is assigned to a different play personality located in each cell below. Tally up the points (0, 1, 2, 3) for each question number and total together all four items in each of the eight categories. When finished, circle or star your top two highest scores, and your bottom score. Do not yet share what you've discovered until prompted! 😊

Play Personalities

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The Collector



The Competitor



The Creator



The Director



The Explorer



The Joker



The Kinesthete



The Storyteller

Let's Retreat Down Memory Lane...



Reflection & Conclusion



Do you feel what you scored on the screener fits with how you like to play as an adult? Why or why not?

Does your current play personality differ from what you would have said as a child?

How has your play type possibly influenced your education and career path?

What ways could you incorporate more play into your day-to-day based on your play personality?



References

1. National Institute for Play - <https://www.nifplay.org>
2. Barros W, David M, Souza A, Silva M, Matos R. 2019. Can the effects of environmental enrichment modulate BDNF expression in hippocampal plasticity? A systematic review of animal studies. *Synapse*. 73(8):e22103.
3. Gray, 2013 - <https://www.nifplay.org/play-as-preparation-for-learning-and-life/>
4. Han Y, Yuan M, Guo YS, Shen XY, Gao ZK, Bi X. 2022. The role of enriched environment in neural development and repair. *Front Cell Neurosci*. 16:890666.
5. Neal S, Kent M, Bardi M, Lambert KG. 2018. Enriched Environment Exposure Enhances Social Interactions and Oxytocin Responsiveness in Male Long-Evans Rats. *Front Behav Neurosci*. 12:198.