

**(1) What does it actually mean to play and/or have fun?**

- a. Dr. Edward Hallowell defines play as "any activity in which your brain lights up and you get imaginatively involved"
- b. Dictionary definitions:
  - i. Noun: activity engaged in for enjoyment and recreation, especially by children
  - ii. Verb: engage in activity for enjoyment and recreation rather than a serious or practical purpose
- c. 5 Elements of Play: self-chosen and self-directed, intrinsically motivated, guided by mental rules that leave room for creativity, imaginative (some degree of removal from the immediately present world), conducted in an alert/active and non-stressed frame of mind

**(2) What are the connotations or stories you associate with "play"?**

- a. Feelings of shame, not being deserving of time to "play"
- b. "Quit playing around and do your work."
- c. Play as a reward for work done, not as support to engage the brain and then get work done

**(3) What keeps us from allowing ourselves to engage in play and/or have fun?**

- a. The seemingly endless to-do list
- b. Brain's attraction to and interest in the most urgent deadlines
- c. push ourselves to do "just one more thing"
- d. after this, then that

**(4) Are you open to or resistant to this idea that play/fun is necessary?**

- a. What's behind the resistance?
- b. What allows you to be open to the idea?

**(5) What might the benefits of play/fun be for the ADHD brain/nervous system?**

- a. Science tells us ADHD brains need time every day for unstructured fun regardless of our age – can allow us to be more productive
- b. Allows us to learn about ourselves, increase self-awareness and discovery – what comes naturally, what do we do well, what do we not enjoy
- c. Science tells us that unstructured play is beneficial as is play that involves rules and requires learning skills. The benefits of play include:

social skills  
 fine-motor skills  
 gross-motor skills  
creativity  
 delayed gratification  
 frustration tolerance  
teamwork  
 patience  
 attention and concentration skills  
 learning through failure  
 balance and coordination

cognitive functioning  
 visual perceptual skills  
 numerical reasoning  
 spatial reasoning  
 imagination  
 visual tracking  
 eye-hand coordination  
 self-awareness  
 personal and psychological growth  
short-term memory skills

- d. Relieve stress and reduce pain when endorphins, one of the body's natural feel-good chemicals, are released
- e. Enhance your ability to cope with stress
- f. Enhance brain function when you engage in cognitively challenging games like brain training game apps, puzzles, word games, memory games, or math games
- g. Help you maintain a healthy weight, lower your risk for diseases like coronary heart disease, diabetes, and cancer, and improve lung function
- h. Boost your creativity and stimulate your imagination

- i. Reduce social isolation, mitigate depression, and increase connection, trust, and intimacy, when you engage with others
- j. Provide opportunities to improve your social skills
- k. Make you more attractive to potential romantic partners
- l. Improve overall well-being and life satisfaction

**(6) How do REST and RECHARGE fit into “play and fun?”**

**(7) Are you questioning what you’d even do because you don’t know what you like to do for fun anymore? How can we figure out what we like to do for fun?**

- a. Ideas? (see next page)

**(8) What can we do to “make time” for fun?**