

*You can discover more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation. – Plato*



This past January, several physicians, advanced practice professionals, and their families, joined The Center for Physician Wellbeing team for a CME experience aboard the Disney Dream, a cruise ship to the Bahamas. The theme was **Your Brain on Play**. We explored how play is defined in research and literature; how it builds resilience and acts as a prevention to burnout; how we look when we are really at play; and the value of having play as a life-time mindful living practice. As we played our way through all the learning objectives, one physician shared his “Ah Ha!” moment, which was helpful to the entire group. First, here is the research definition we used from Dr. Stuart Brown: “**Play is something done**

**for its own sake. It’s voluntary, it’s pleasurable, it offers a sense of engagement, it takes you out of time. And the act itself is more important than the outcome.”**

So, our physician, and father of two, shared his new awareness of play born from the definition and our activities together. He explained it as a time that opened his eyes to a new way of being. He explained that he played with his children often, but he had never realized it wasn’t really play, at least not play the way we were defining it. He explained it to the group in our CME class something like this: *What I realize through our play in here and our discussions about what play is and is not, is that I haven’t been **playing** with them. I have been managing their time and influencing their activities through what I perceived to be playful, helpful, organized events. You know, sports, music lessons, board games (which can be play if it meets the definition). This time on the ship has taught me to let them really play, explore, get lost in the moment. Experience the joy of play! And to let myself have that experience as well. I have struggled, as we all have shared, just to let go and be creatively playful. But, I have experienced the difference, and I want my family to play more in this new and freeing way! It has given me energy to think about how it can benefit all of us.*

**Are you recognizing and grabbing those moments when you can live **playfully**?**



Thank you for all that you do!

*Kathy*



**The Center for  
Physician Wellbeing**  
*Honoring the Expertise and Humanity  
of Physicians*

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