Stuart Brown, M.D. (founder of the National Institute for Play) and Christopher Vaughan (journalist) wrote in their book *Play*: “…the opposite of play is not work – the opposite of play is depression.” Although this is not a formal definition of depressive disorders as diagnosed by mental health professionals, the statement speaks to the importance of play in lifting our mood and leads to a discussion of how play offers variety and challenges which can foster creativity and innovation. The authors go on to say, “*Play is called recreation because it makes us new again, it recreates us and our world.*” One of the distinctive properties of play is that play is “apparently purposeless (done for its own sake).”

Reflect on joyful activities you engaged in as a child and find ways to incorporate similar or new forms of play into your week. **Play may seem purposeless, but it can lead to greater purposefulness.** After playing, you might return to your daily tasks with a greater focus that increases your productivity at work. You may feel refreshed and bring more positive energy to your social interactions, which enhances the closeness in your relationships.

*With play,*
*the possibilities are endless...*

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