

preserving true play in a screen filled world

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JACK HIROSE CONFERENCES ON *Developmental & Emotional Challenges* *with Children & Adolescents*

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Part 1

Why Play?

PLAY IS THE LEADING EDGE OF DEVELOPMENT

Play is where ...



- o a child processes their world
- o a child's tentative self can safely emerge
- o curiosity and creativity are born
- o the brain's problem solving networks are programmed
- o a child is most receptive to learning
- o emotion can be expressed without repercussion

emotions get stirred up



and emotions need to come out



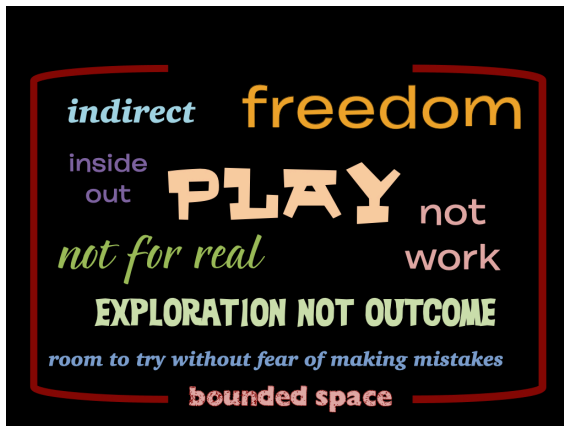
what is needed ...

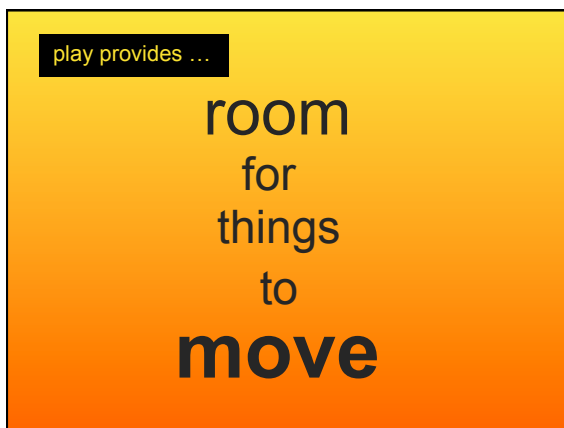
*emotional
safety*

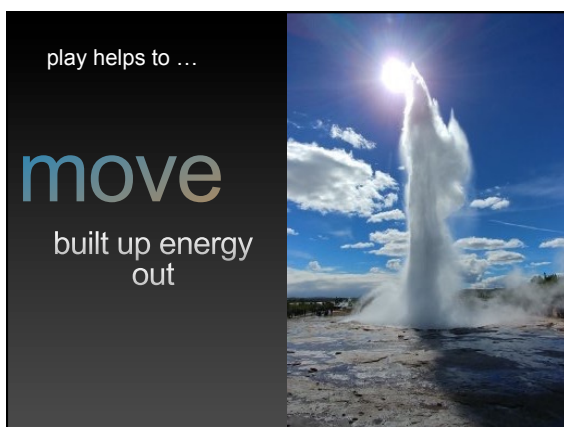












play provides ...

a release

an outlet

expression without
repercussion

play helps to ...

move
attacking
energy out



play provides ...

a **release** for the
frustration in the
system that has
built up and turned
foul

music
 
art

writing

physical activity
  
humour

play provides ...

a **release** for the frustration in the system that has built up and turned foul

... before it leaks out other places

music

art

writing

physical activity

humour

play helps to ...

move

us closer to our feelings

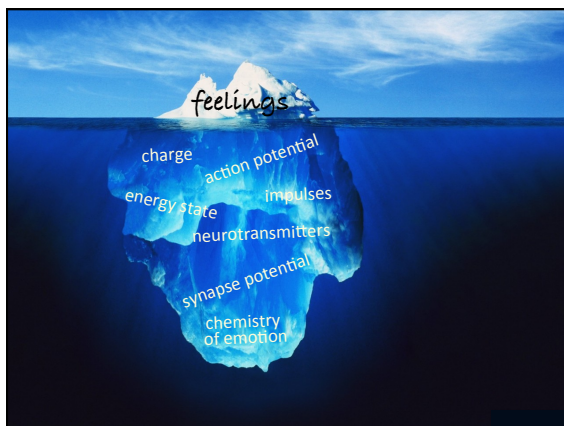
how?

more indirect

makes it possible to access feelings that are too vulnerable to look at directly

our system is at rest and so alarm doesn't get in the way


we can only *feel* that which *moves*



play helps to ...

move



us closer to
our **sadness**





play provides ...



a way to
access the
disappointment,
the **missing,**
the **melancholy**

... so it doesn't
get stuck inside

music  

 **writing**


stories 

art  **movies** 

play helps to ...

move

us closer to
our **caring**



play provides ...

a way to
experience
being cared for
and
caring for another



Part 2

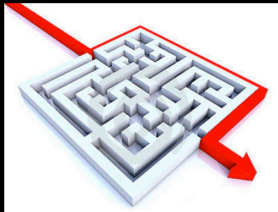
What does technology offer?

what technology offers



technology offers . . .

a shortcut



- ♦ outside in vs inside out
- ♦ information driven not led by curiosity
- ♦ information at fingertips
- ♦ no room for own ideas, thoughts, questions or creative outcomes
- ♦ no room for wonder
- ♦ creates grooves instead of networks
- ♦ shortcut to reward system so can lead to a drive and obsession

technology offers . . .

an escape, a distraction



- ♦ more stimulating than releasing
 - ♦ avoidance of vulnerable feelings
 - ♦ avoidance of futility leading to lack of adaptation and lack of resiliency
- ♦ CAVEAT - even though the intention may be escape, certain offerings allow access to difficult feelings indirectly

technology offers . . .

a connection



- ♦ often limits to a superficial connection
- ♦ loss of appetite for real relationship
- ♦ may lead to a false sense of being known
- ♦ always "on" so no true rest
- ♦ no satiation so can lead to obsessive need to connect



risk of superficial connection

- what happens when the roots don't go deep
- can be less vulnerable, but not as fulfilling



risk of too deep too soon

- roots can't support
- may not be safe
- potential for danger
- risk getting wounded



Part 3

Readiness and Warning Signs



signs of
readiness

WARNING SIGNS

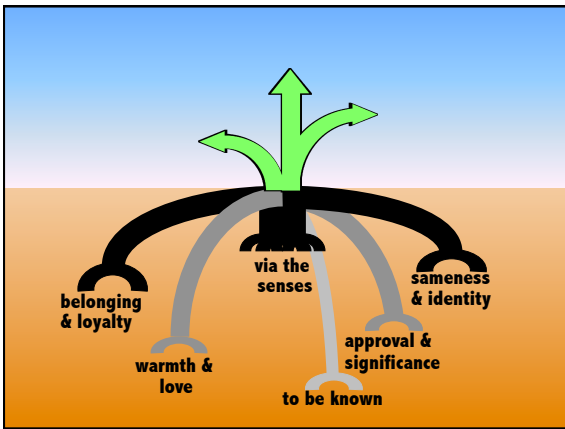


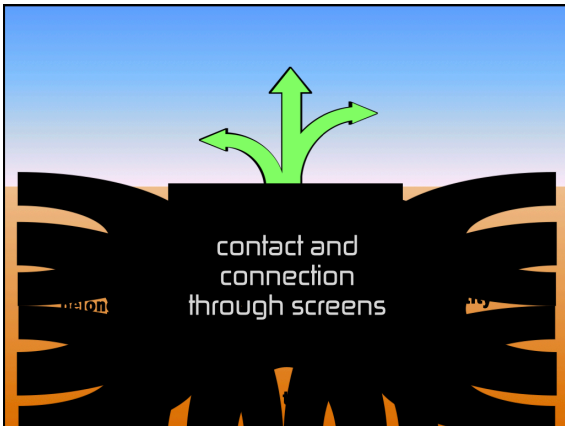
- ❑ child becomes bored quickly and seeks stimulation – not able to be in the present
- ❑ child's use of the device becomes obsessive
- ❑ increased frustration at thwarted contact which comes out as attacking energy
- ❑ avoidance of vulnerable feelings
- ❑ not able to adapt to fatalities

social media

- feeds a hunger, but doesn't satiate
- temptation to escape feeling
- fuels peer orientation
- increases anxiety/alarm
- increases defendedness







what is an adult's role ?



to be a BUFFER in our screen filled world
until our children are mature enough to handle it

"we must give our children
a chance to mature
so that they can
become the masters
of these new tools,
not their slaves."

from Hold on to your kids

Part 4



Preserving Play

The trouble with play

is that it is not demanding
and requires a SPACE FREE of
attachment-preoccupations
stimulation
& outcome-based activities

PRESERVE

1
READ THE NEEDS
& TAKE THE LEAD

what do you see?
developmental
readiness
warning signs




2
COME ALONGSIDE
& ADD IN

collecting
times of connection
food and eating
nature and animals
structures & rituals

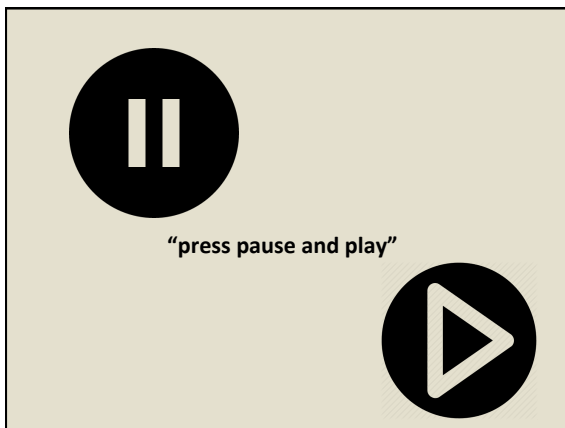
PLAY

structures and rituals



sit down for a meal
morning tea – collecting time
games night or pizza night or movie night
collect with after school snack and opportunity to release frustration
keeping devices away from the table where you eat and the room where you sleep







play is the
VEHICLE
that
TRANSPORTS
& DELIVERS
our children
(and ourselves)
to emotional
health and
well-being



... and we are the MIDWIVES to that process

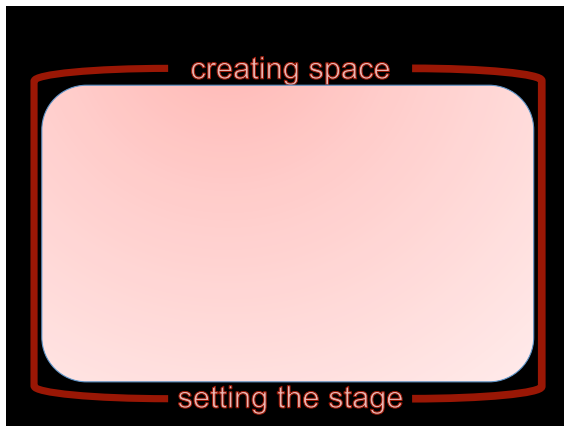
“We become the
ANSWER
a child needs when we
take care of a child's
ATTACHMENT to us
as well as
PROTECT
the space needed for
TRUE PLAY”

Dr. Gordon Neufeld

what
gets in the way

dismissed as frivolous
stuck in work or alarm mode
agendas and expectations
the lure of distractions
the demands of technology





we need to
move
to more ...

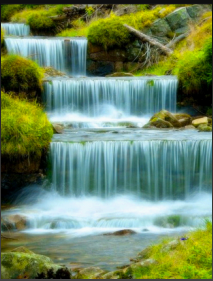


- play-based
- nature-based
- movement-based
- experiential
- relational

... kinds of activities to engage and bring our children to rest

we need to
reclaim
our children

- find the lead
- help them to lean on us
- matchmaking to others
- bringing in mentors/ elders
- arranging service for younger students/animals



... through cascading care



for more ...

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