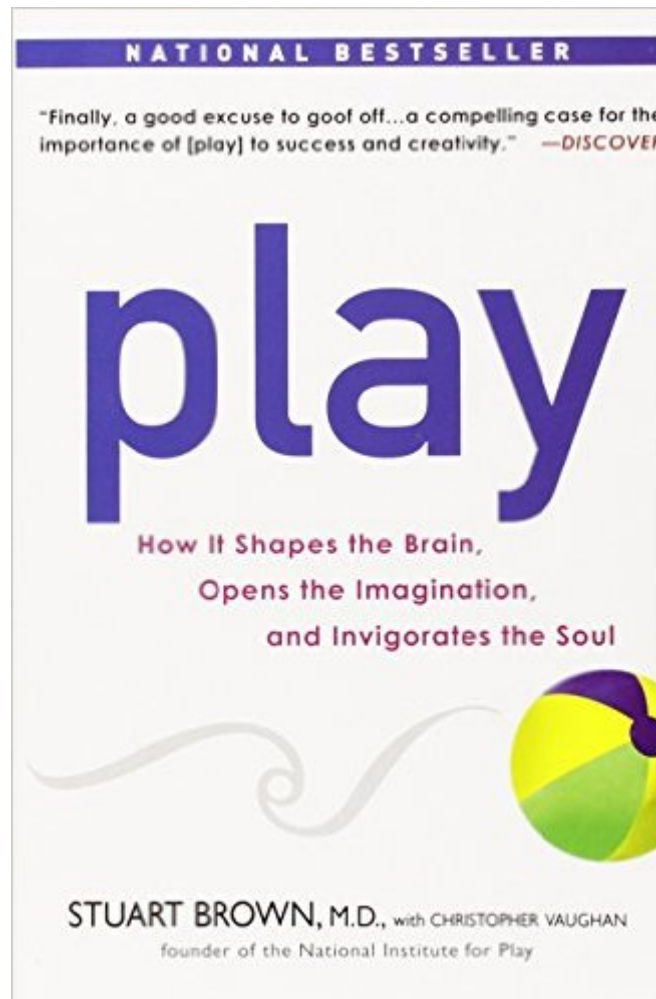


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Play: How It Shapes The Brain, Opens The Imagination, And Invigorates The Soul



Synopsis

Read Stuart Brown's posts on the Penguin Blog. From a leading expert, a groundbreaking book on the science of play, and its essential role in fueling our happiness and intelligence throughout our lives. We've all seen the happiness on the face of a child while playing in the school yard. Or the blissful abandon of a golden retriever racing across a lawn. This is the joy of play. By definition, play is purposeless, all-consuming, and fun. But as Dr. Stuart Brown illustrates, play is anything but trivial. It is a biological drive as integral to our health as sleep or nutrition. We are designed by nature to flourish through play. Dr. Brown has spent his career studying animal behavior and conducting more than six-thousand "play histories" of humans from all walks of life—from serial murderers to Nobel Prize winners. Backed by the latest research, *Play* (20,000 copies in print) explains why play is essential to our social skills, adaptability, intelligence, creativity, ability to problem solve and more. Particularly in tough times, we need to play more than ever, as it's the very means by which we prepare for the unexpected, search out new solutions, and remain optimistic. A fascinating blend of cutting-edge neuroscience, biology, psychology, social science, and inspiring human stories of the transformative power of play, this book proves why play just might be the most important work we can ever do.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I've got some mixed feelings about this one. The basic premise of the book is a very interesting one, as the subtitle says it discusses "how play shapes the brain, open the imagination and invigorates

the soul". The author, Dr. Stuart Brown, is the founder of the National Institute for Play and seems like a prominent researcher in that field. The book is divided into two parts: part one "Why Play?" and part two "Living a Playful Life" and is well written, fluent, and easy to follow. However, the main problem of the book, at least for me, is that most of the information in the book seems like typical common knowledge that I've already saw and read before in other places: newspapers, parenthood magazines, popular TV shows, etc. For example of so called common knowledge I can give the importance of cubs play in the animal kingdom to the development of hunting skills or social status. In addition, as the definition of "play" in the book is an extremely general one, basically almost every day activity, under some assumptions, can be classified as "play". As such the author can interpret almost every behavior as play and arrive to various conclusions. Another problem is that the book feels at times, especially while reading part two, as a regular "live better" or "personal enlightenment" type of reading which describes simplified insights like that it is better if your daily work resembles a play (with the typical examples such as a doctor who started to bake breads as an hobby to eventually quitting his job at the hospital to develop his bread business). I guess we all know it, but I expected the book to present a more scientific insights to that common knowledge, but couldn't find any.

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