

Play

Happiness is Learned

Happiness is a learned skill. I am learning as my patients have taught me about healing that there is possibly a faster way to reach a pain free state. Anger and pain pathways are [tightly joined](#). It is not possible to achieve success unless you have truly let go of anger. As unrelenting pain is a legitimate reason to be upset it is difficult to process it. Additionally there are often situations or people who injured you that have caused your endless suffering. The thoughts about what was done to you can become intense and overwhelming.

You are Stuck

You are not going to break out of this situation with positive thinking or rational means. Pain and anger circuits are not only permanent, they run deep. You cannot fix them. You cannot calm your mind with your mind but you can effectively calm it with your body. That is why the first step is the [writing](#) down of your angry thoughts and destroying them. It accomplishes the awareness/detachment steps. Then what? The writing releases you temporarily but where do you go? One great choice is play.

Play Pathways are also Permanent

Play will pull you upward out of the [abyss](#). Play requires creativity that will light up an immense part of your brain. Believe it or not those pathways are also permanent even though you may not be connected to them or remember what they are like. As your brain is engaged in this degree of complex, widespread, and stimulating activity the pain pathways will quickly become uninteresting and eventually dormant.

Goal Obsessed

Play is a word that I am personally focusing on. I have been fairly successful at it over the last couple of years but I have recently realized that I have slipped back into my goal-obsessive patterns. As my projects are so huge and will not be realized in my lifetime, where do I stop and get happy? There is only one answer – now!!

Parenting

I historically have endless parenting advice to give to everyone that will listen much to the chagrin of my children. As parenting is truly a humbling experience I have had to give most of it up. But I do see a lot of teens with chronic pain and severe anxiety. They are often very driven.

I still have one strong piece of advice for parents. Forget every word of parenting wisdom and just focus on the word play. Get to know them. Listen. Don't give unasked for advice. Become aware of who he or she is as a person – not your "kid." Take off your "parent" hat and just learn to enjoy them. They are going to figure out their lives in spite of you, not because of you. The word play implies resiliency and creativity. Both are key ingredients in living a productive life. [Parent Effectiveness Training](#)

Where are You Going?

How many things in life are truly worth getting angry about? Why do we let the smallest issues destroy our day? I understand the depth of your anger but what are you going to do about it? Wallow in it or move on? What about just enjoying your day? [It is your first responsibility to you and your family](#). Go have little fun.

[Enjoy Your Day Today](#)

—Dr. David Hanscom