

Chapter 6

THE SIXTH SACRED RESPONSIBILITY: CREATE AND PLAY

When we engage in what we are naturally suited to do, our work takes on the quality of play and it is play that stimulates creativity.

—Linda Naiman

Fun

Time and time again I see people turn down opportunities to play. It could be to try an instrument, or get out a few crayons and colour, to toss a coin in a cup, or any number of chances at creativity and fun, yet I see people simply refuse to play, and typically it is because they simply cannot bear to get it wrong.

Well, guess what folks, we can't get it wrong!

If we put crayon to paper or hand to instrument we simply cannot get it wrong when we experiment with our creativity. I'm not saying we will create a piece of art that blows us away on the first try, or even after the tenth try for that matter, but unless we start somewhere we will stay stuck in self-imposed limitations where creativity and play are lacking in our lives.

Any kind of expression of play or creativity will have the same effect on us, so make it your own. If it is dance then dance, if it is music then sing or play. If it is sports then move your body, if it is writing then... well you get it. The Sixth Sacred Responsibility comes right after Honour Your Intuition, so we can be completely open to moving within that intuition toward our most natural expression of creativity and play. Getting creative and feeling that creativity as *fun* allows us to feel play manifesting in our life.

I am not saying each one of us has to take up painting or hula-hooping but what I am saying is get creative in any way that makes your heart sing. Start simple and begin to cultivate your creativity. Get creative in the way you plan your day, get creative in the way you make a salad, experiment with moving your body to music in different ways. Get creative by taking a different route to a place you go often. Pluck that crazy chin hair or grow it out! Just be the most playful expression of yourself and take sacred responsibility for your fun.

Being held back by our ego

Like all of the things in life that teach us, the ego has its place, many times as a fast track to teaching us hard lessons. When we come at life from our perfectionist ego, too often we not only burn out, but we risk missing out on the joy of creativity and play. When we are in that part of our ego that demands we know how to master everything, or at least be an expert before we even try it, we miss out on getting things wrong. And getting things wrong at this stage of our game is not only fun but can be

funny as hell. For me, that in itself is worth trying something I know nothing about. I simply do not want to take myself that seriously all of the time especially when I am in a creative mode.

There is a National Institute for Play. Their mandate is “to be committed to bringing the unrealized knowledge, practices and benefits of play into public life. Gathering research from play scientists and practitioners, initiating projects to expand the clinical scientific knowledge of human play and translating this emerging body of knowledge into programs and resources which deliver the transformative power of play to all segments of society.”

Founder, Dr. Stuart Brown has interviewed thousands of people to capture their play profiles. Yes, we all have a play profile! “His cataloguing of their profiles demonstrated the active presence of play in the accomplishments of the very successful. and the negative consequences that accumulate in a play-deprived life.”

“A play deprived life.” When I read this, it really touched my heart. It is our sacred responsibility to play and we will no longer deprive ourselves of it.

NIFP teaches us about seven play types: Attunement play, Body Play & Movement, Object Play, Social Play, Imaginative and Pretend Play, Storytelling-Narrative Play, and Creative Play. We have no excuse to leave play out of our lives with all of these options presented to us by the very playful scientists involved in this research.

Body Play & Movement: The scientists say, “If you don’t understand human movement, you won’t really understand yourself or play.” This speaks directly to the connection of play and our practice of moving our bodies. What may seem to an adult mind as “exercise” can be directly associated to play. So, raise your levels of joy. When you do your physical practice, think of it as play, start to call it play, and most importantly feel it as play.

They go on to tell us, “If you do understand human movement, you will reap the benefits of play in your body, personal life and work situations. Learning to play as an adult through our movement practice, teaches us about gravity, flexibility, adaptability and resilience. Play lights up our brain, setting the stage for learning as well as cultivating our ability to respond to the unexpected.”

Object Play: Everyone loves to play with toys... Even a fiery and fabulous woman over fifty loves a well-made Hula Hoop™. In Object Play we are able to get the benefits of play with more than just toys in the traditional sense. But it is the attitude we have around play that will keep us tuned into object play. Give me a good mixed up sock drawer any rainy day and I am happy as a clam. Don’t even tease me that you have a messy linen closet! Ahhhh... good times.

Social Play: This is play like “Tag” and skipping a jump rope, and the wrestling around of kids and animals at play. This way we activate each other in collaboration and creative response as well as interaction. I think we find tickle fights are in this category, too.

Imaginative and Pretend Play: In a rich practice of pretend play we continually cultivate satisfaction and creativity. The importance of this pattern of play stands out for researchers when we are deprived of it. They have found that understanding and trusting others, as well as developing coping skills, depends on imaginative and pretend play. Knowing this piece of research highlights the importance of taking sacred responsibility for our imagination practices as if our happiness depends on it.

Storytelling-Narrative Play: Storytelling is found early on in childhood development and as adults we begin to enjoy both sides as story-teller and listener. There is lively joy and humor around how stories change in their description and truth as they are repeated. Enter the game broken telephone here! Stories invoke all states of feelings and in many ways, we nurture a story through telling it and it continues to thrive and grow.

Creative Play: This is our access to fantasy-play as well as to spontaneity. Here we plant the seeds for new ideas and fantasize or imagine all the ways they can grow. Use playfulness for innovation and a place to activate our amazing creative ideas.

All in all, find your personal method of play and get into it. Begin by seeing the activities you already love to do as play. If you love the activity, it is not work, so it must be play! Start there and luxuriate in your enjoyment. The research is there, we simply must play.

The link to the NIFP research is in the resources section.

Create and Play and Sacred Sensuality

Sensuality is a gift for the woman in her third act. We have increased our ability to enjoy, to take pleasure in life and be unapologetic in our love for feeling good in our bodies. We have a natural connection as women to flow, to undulation, to curves, and to sway. This is quite different from our dear male counterparts who are gifted with a connection to angles, lines and a slightly more rigid way of moving in their bodies.

Women move in this sensual way by the nature of the female body. Tapping into how good that can feel ignites both play and creativity. Giving ourselves fiery and fabulous permission to feel unapologetically good in our bodies is our absolute right as a physical representation of the Divine Feminine life-force that moves through us. Our breathing practices are directly related to an honouring of this sensual life force within us. It is in the way we breathe, luxuriating in our breath, that invokes our sensual magnetism, activating and attracting creativity and playfulness.

Dr. Penny Kelly confirmed for me what I had already intuitively known and experienced in my life: being in a “turned on state” is one of the *best* ways to tap into higher levels of consciousness. (And, if you are not in the mood for conversations about ‘higher levels of consciousness’ I think we can interchange the words consciousness and creativity without losing the plot).

Our state of being “turned on” feeds our creativity and, in that, our ability to feel free to play. Penny tells us to get ourselves into a turned-on state and she says it with a huge smile on her face. She is fiery, fabulous, over seventy, and is one of my top five examples of women in their third act who mentor other women by living in Sensual, Creative Sacred Responsibility.

She also has observed that we are indeed moving into what she calls *higher frequency zones*. This means we must cultivate new behaviors to benefit fully from the higher frequency zones that are available to us. Most of us would agree that we want to operate from a higher consciousness and that we can access it from many directions. Putting ourselves into a turned-on state, where we are experiencing the pleasures of life fully, will activate our creativity, our ability to enjoy playfulness and light up the sensual nature of a woman of wisdom.

Being in a “turned on” state starts out as a practice, we build the new neural pathways to support this expanded state, and in time it becomes our way of life. And, ladies, once you tap into the pleasure of this sensual resource, there is no going back!

Tips for living in a turned-on state

Whatever floats your boat, ladies. You are the captain of your ship! Each one of us will find our own favorite ways to get us into a turned-on state. Here are a few examples from my own “play” book.

Self-massage with essential oils. Take your time when you massage yourself, this is not a mechanical process. Set the mood and luxuriate in your sensual self-care. Music—find your jam. Make a playlist of songs that make you feel empowered in your sensual, playful flow. Comfort, when you are home take responsibility for your comfort and how good you feel in your body. If it feels good wear it, and rock it! I’m a silk kimono and short shorts kinda gal. Drink out of your “good glasses”, use the good dishes, and luxuriate in your Divine Feminine energy.

“We cannot solve problems with the same thinking we used to create them.” ~ Albert Einstein

This quote is great on many levels, but I have a particular interest in it because I think Mr. Einstein may well have been suggesting sacred responsibility! He says, “same thinking *we* used.” *We used!* That is full and total responsibility for any problems created.

Sigh... it is all so interesting to me. Yep, I confess, good conversations get me in a turned-on state.

The top five women in my life exemplifying this work are in alphabetical order because they are equal in the level of inspiration they provide to women and men world-wide. Learn these women’s names, look them up and get totally turned on by how richly they love life, how inspiring they are, and how much vitality they have.

HeatherAsh Amara, Barbara Marx Hubbard, Jean Huston, Penny Kelly and Sue Regan Kenney.

Now go ahead and write down the name of a woman who inspires you to walk with that sultry, sensual, ignited feeling in your body, mind and heart. Then find another woman to tell about how this woman inspires you to “get it on” in life.

Our Sixth Sacred Practice

We Women share in the protocol practices with reverence for the potent possibilities that lie dormant within us. We accept our practice with open hearts and open minds in the knowing that these tiny acts of self-care grow quickly into a renewed love of our lives. We know in every cell of our gorgeous being that our practices fill us with the vibrancy of universal life-force.

Our Daily Statement

Today I open myself fully to living a sacred life, I call in now the people, places and things that lift me up, light me up and hold me up as the accountable, responsible and authentic woman I am here to be. And so it is.

The Create and Play Imagination Practice

(Imagining/Thoughts)

Everything about our Create and Play practice has to do with flow, movement, spiral, sensuality, and the undulation of the figure 8, infinity.

Settle into a seated position for your Create and Play imagination exercise. Sit cross-legged on the floor or in a chair.

Sit tall and comfortably, balancing the weight of your head for greatest comfort in your neck.

Close your eyes and bring all your awareness to the base of your spine.

Begin to breathe deeply and easily. Feel relaxed yet strong as you sit.

Start to imagine now that your pelvis is a container for a brilliant ball of glowing energy.

It can be any colour and the colour can shift and change as you breathe.

Imagine you are observing this amazing container of energy you have in your body.

You notice how bright it is and how powerful it feels.

Continue breathing deeply.

Now with each inhale imagine you start to pull that energy up your spine.

The power of inhaling through your nostrils pulls this light energy up and around your spine.

Your inhaled draw this light energy up and around your spine spiraling and spiraling.

Imagine you can feel its warmth.

Deepen your imagination and see this light energy split off into two streams that wrap around your spine.

Inhale, pulling the two streams of energy up from the brilliant ball of glowing energy.

Imagine your exhale acts as a gentle exhaust system, exhaling all that no longer serves your greater good.

Inhale and bring that spiral of energy up your spine and all the way out of the crown of your head.

Inhale, bring it up, exhale all that no longer serves you.

Imagine this energy as playful, creative light.

Spiraling and serving you, spiraling and serving you.

Maintain your focus and continue with this imagination practice for a full minute. Then as long as you like. But start with a fully focused minute.

The Create and Play Breathing Practice

(Breathing/Words)

Stand or be seated for this breathing practice.

Level 1: Begin by breathing smooth, even breaths that are full on both the inhale and on the exhale.

Allow yourself to immerse into a hypnotic flow with your breath.

You are breathing as if your life is a sensual experience. Full breaths, in and out.

As you breathe deeply and easily, begin to let your body move with your breath.

Feel the expansion and the contraction as you inhale and exhale.

Breathe as if you are pulling into your body the most sensual music you have ever heard.

Begin to sway slightly, from side to side.

If you are standing, sway with your hips, if you are seated, sway with your chest.

As you breathe and sway, imagine yourself in a blissful flow with your creative life-force.

Go ahead and relax into your breath and into your movement a little more now.

Start to expand your sway and trace the figure 8 with your hips if standing, your chest if sitting.

Breathe and sway in the figure 8 for a minute in one direction, then shift directions for another minute.

Keep swaying in the figure 8 for as long as you feel moved to do so.

When you feel complete, sit or lie down and feel your body's response to your movements. Get still and feel the creative energy continue to flow.

Level 2: Play fabulous music while you do the Create and Play breathing practice.

The Create and Play Physical Practice

(Physical/Actions)

Your physical practice to anchor your Create and Play Sacred Responsibility is a pulse of creative activation at the seat of your pelvic floor.

Using your exhale as your guide, on each exhale begin to lift the muscles of your pelvic floor.

Start by thinking of the Kegel exercise. (Mayo Clinic link to Kegels in the resource section.)

The muscles we are using for this pulse exercise are the same muscles you would engage to stop the flow of urine mid-stream.

Each exhale is connected to a pulse at the pelvic floor. Exhale and squeeze, exhale, squeeze.

Expand your squeeze to a pulse of three beats per exhale. Pulse, pulse, pulse.

Focus on the muscles you are squeezing, imagine with each pulse you ignite a creative spark.

This exercise helps to activate the energies in our bodies that have shifted from the creation of children to the creative expression of our authentic self.

Some of the physical benefits of this pulse exercise include strengthened muscles to support the bladder, providing less incidence of incontinence. Women with a stronger pelvic floor experience higher arousal and greater orgasm health!

Inhale deeply, luxuriously and exhale, lift your pelvic floor up and pulse, pulse relax.

Inhale, exhale, pulse, pulse, relax.

This exercise can be done any time of day. It can be done to increase your energy, your feeling of sensuality and to keep yourself connected to the creative energies that reside in the earthly energy centres in our fabulous body. Boom, chicka boom.