

Playful

To be playful is to take many conversations, personal challenges, or turns of fate in the spirit of a game. No one can be playful all the time, but some people can infuse a spirit of play into many aspects of life—their dealings with children, their humor as teachers, their dealings with their spouse. Are you a playful person? Does your playfulness translate into an enjoyment of games?

Examples

1

I write some poems which are playful. When I say 'playful,' here, I mean rich with slack, with room to find out what they themselves are, unhinged from conventional language expectations. Sometimes I write nonsense, in this same spirit of play, and in the spirit of the British nonsense writer, Edward Lear. Sometimes, though, I write nonsense which is threatened by a kind of madness:

Tenr, sine cosine,
Royld, we seed...r'own text.
Pleez, til weak, dray stalls.
Did'cha, n'reen? It seild?

This beginning of a poem is play, I feel. But like much play it contains in itself a reminder of the dangerously volatile in human experience. I am being playful here, wild and playful, but at the same reminding myself that the conventions of language are arbitrary, and the threat of the un-conventional is ever ready to explode.

2

My grand daughter makes me feel playful. When she comes into the house she draws funny caricatures of me. When she stays for the night she still makes me watch the video of Frozen with her. When she goes home with her mom she high fives me. All these spontaneous pleasures make me feel good. When she has gone home my wife and I giggle thinking about her, and wonder what she is doing. In other words, she gets under my skin big time, and I look forward to seeing her the next time. I cannot say the same for many of our guests or even of my friends. They mirror me back, immersed in life and a reasonable man of the house. I miss my grand daughter.