

# “Time to Play”



by Dede Lyons



*Dede and Joe Lyons*

**H**ave you scheduled your play dates for this week? I often ask this question to my clients in my Feel Good Express empowerment sessions and workshops. Their answers will give me a good indication of how they take care of themselves and their inner child.

The majority usually respond with, “What do you mean by ‘play date’, I thought that was just for kids?” Then I explain that my definition of a “play date” is very similar. It’s a date with yourself; you plan one of your favorite activities, block out time on your calendar and play like a kid. Then I frequently hear, “Who has time for that? I’m way too busy.”

Planned weekly play times are in the top tier of Feel Good Express tools in my lifestyle program. Making time solely for yourself is all about self-love, self-nurturing and balancing mind, body and spirit. Self-care in this way sends a message to oneself, family and friends that I matter, I value myself, I love myself and I am worthy. Plus, this mini-vacation is an ideal modeling behavior for your children and spouse to observe.

This enjoyable rendezvous with yourself can be anything you like. I recommend something playful and out in nature, which can be so nourishing to your inner child.

It’s so pleasurable to be fun-loving and carefree. That’s why we smile and love watching babies, children and puppies at play. They are very engaged, giggling, smiling, jumping and exuding joy.

Playing fetch on the beach or in a park with your dog would be an ideal play date setting. Years ago when we lived in NYC, with limited daily access to nature during the work week, we had a fun-loving Bichon, Emily, who loved to play “fetch the ball” in our hall most nights after her early evening walks. Living in a high-rise apartment building with long hallways was ideal for the fetch game. The added bonus was my neighbor’s three-year-old daughter, Natalie, running up and down with Emily. I think I had more fun than they did watching them chase that ball. This activity relieved any work-related stress for me, kept me in the here and now and created lots of joy for Emily, Natalie and me.

The goal is to have fun, feel rejuvenated and be lighthearted. I recommend scheduling a minimum of two one-hour activities each week. These dates can be on your own or with a fun-loving friend. Here are some of my favorites: dance class, a beach walk, hiking, kayaking; or listening to the ocean waves and other meditative activities like yoga can be rejuvenating as well. As you can see, Mother Nature offers us the most uplifting and magical experiences.

A few months ago, I began two new weekly movement classes: a Joy Movement dance class on the beach and a Qigong class on a deck overlooking the bay. The positive results were just what the doctor ordered! I can really feel a big shift in my energy level. I feel freer and more open, more grounded and joyful by being outside enjoying the scenery.

Keep in mind that when you nurture yourself and give your body what it needs, you will experience many benefits, especially balance of mind, body and spirit. Plus, your increased vitality and bubbly mood will inspire a positive approach to your day-to-day duties.

When we are playful in the present moment and see the world through a child’s eyes, we truly experience the magic!

*If you would like more information on the Feel Good Express, please email Dede Lyons at [dede@feelgoodexpress.com](mailto:dede@feelgoodexpress.com) or visit her website at [feelgoodexpress.com](http://feelgoodexpress.com). You can also view her “Feel Good Tweet of the Day” on Twitter at [@dedefeelsgood](https://twitter.com/dedefeelsgood).*