



Play in the mineral industry's world of permacrisis



I am struggling to describe the year 2022. While reflecting on the subject, I realized that I didn't want to tell anyone what happened during 2022, but how it felt. In my attempt to do this I came across the word 'permacrisis' (and it has been chosen as The Collins Dictionary's word of the year). Permaccrisis has been described beautifully in the news as 'the dizzying sense of lurching from one unprecedented event to another, as we wonder bleakly what new horrors might be around the corner'. From the energy crisis to soaring commodity prices, from struggling rail infrastructure to the climate crisis (and fossil fuels), to potential wars impacting inflation, it seems like crises might just be the word we are looking for.

However, crisis can also mean change. It could indicate the arrival of a positive shift, it could mean innovation! Progress is driven by crises. We just need enough agility to hold to the paradox that innovation cannot happen without failure; collaboration and growth cannot happen without conflict. We need crises to fuel innovation. Although 2022 had its fair share of disasters, this could open the door for creativity and innovation. We need relationships and collaboration to foster innovation.

The Harvard Study of Adult Development may be the longest study of adult life that's ever been done. This study tracked the lives of 724 men over 75 years, year after year, asking about their work, their home lives, and their health. About 60 of the original 724 men were still alive during 2015. The clearest message from this 75-year study was: Good relationships keep us happier and healthier.

As we close the door on 2022 and walk into 2023, I'm wondering how can I promote innovation? How do I build meaningful relationships to foster collaboration and increase happiness?

Dr Stuart Brown, psychiatrist, clinical researcher, and founder of the National Institute for Play notes that play is the single most important factor in determining our success and happiness. It has a profound impact on how we parent, educate, innovate, and our productivity.

Dr Brown has conducted over 6000 interviews with people to obtain their 'play histories' and found that the ability to play is critical not only to being happy, but also to sustaining social relationships and being a creative, innovative person. He emphasizes that play has many social interaction benefits and is actually the foundation of all personal relationships (Play: How it Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination, and Invigorates the Soul, 2009).

It is very important to note that the opposite of play is NOT work, but really depression. Play sets the stage for socialization, nourishing the roots of trust, empathy, caring, and sharing. Adults who do not regularly activate their play nature may experience their lives as tinged with depression, and may lack the optimism, adaptability, and resiliency to perform well in their work and family lives.

So, as we say goodbye to 2022 and open the door to all the possibilities that 2023 holds, I want to ask, how will you measure your life and the impact you have on your environment? How will you build relationships and nourish trust and empathy? I want to encourage everyone to slow down, play more, give yourself freedom from time constraints, diminish your consciousness of self, focus on the power of relationships, and make the next year your most creative year yet!

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