

FINDING THE FUN

A SIMPLE 5-STEP PROCESS



Debbie Amos
Pep & Verve Coaching
www.pepandverve.com.au

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Debbie Amos

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Pep and Verve Coaching

Phone: 0424 327 748

Email: debbieamos@pepandverve.com

Website: www.pepandverve.com

*"We don't stop playing because we grow old,
We grow old because we stop playing.
(George Bernard Shaw)"*

A moment of awareness of my body... "Wow, I feel so heavy and depleted".
A moment of awareness of my emotions..."Wow, I feel so overwhelmed and stressed."
A moment of awareness of my thoughts..."Wow, I'm taking everything soooooo seriously."
A moment of awareness of the impact..."Wow, I feel so stuck and listless and un-inspired."

Perhaps this is sounding familiar to you. A busy life, constant influx of information from all directions, demands for our attention, never-ending to-do lists, and a sense that we need to keep pushing in order to achieve, all of which can actually undermine that very achievement.

And what's one of the first things we lose connection with?
Our sense of Fun / Lightness / Playfulness.

It's a strong pattern I've been noticing in many of my clients and to such a profound degree that they often lose touch with how to even connect with this sense of fun, or what it is that ignites this joy within them. Reclaiming this lost resource, is one of the keys to alleviating all of the suffering I mentioned above: the sensation of heaviness, the sense of being stuck / listless / uninspired, and the feeling of overwhelm and stress.

Have you ever been on an amazing holiday where you had an absolute blast? If you take a moment now to envision that, the place, the people, the sounds, the colours, the sensations... how did you feel? I'm betting that words like light, peaceful, happy, playful, calm, relaxed, energised, excited come to mind. And what an antidote this is to any sense of striving / push / heaviness! I'm also betting, that some of those feelings carried forward into your daily life upon your return (at least momentarily). Imagine how fabulous it would be if we could be connecting with those feelings on a daily basis rather than waiting until we desperately needed a holiday.

*"Instead of wondering when your next vacation is,
maybe you should set up a life you don't need to escape from"
(Seth Godin)"*

In this mini eBook, I'll take you through 5 simple steps to help you reconnect to your sense of fun and what ignites your joy.

BENEFITS OF FINDING THE FUN...

Studies with both children and adults have shown there are many benefits to increasing play and fun in your life such as...

- Improving focus
- Improving memory
- Improving creativity
- Improving quality of sleep
- Increasing Serotonin production
- Decreasing stress
- Deepening relationships
- Increasing motivation
- Increasing innovation & problem solving



SO WHAT IS 'FUN'?

Here are a few definitions for you from the Oxford Dictionary:

Fun: Enjoyment, amusement, or light-hearted pleasure.

Joy: A feeling of great pleasure and happiness.

Play: Engage in activity for enjoyment and recreation rather than a serious or practical purpose.

What does the word 'Fun' conjure up for you?
How do you know that you're experiencing Fun?

Take a moment now to journal about this, and consider all of your senses: visualisations, sounds, thoughts, emotions, tastes, sensations.

Perhaps it's a sensation like lightness or ease. Perhaps it's a thought like "I'm really enjoying myself" or "I'm relaxed". Perhaps it's an emotion like joy. Perhaps it's a behaviour like laughing.

*"Do not take life too seriously,
You'll never get out of it alive."
(Albert Hubbard)*

5 STEPS TO FINDING THE FUN...

Follow these 5 simple steps and you'll be Finding the Fun in no time...

Step 1: Connect with your Inner Child

Children tend to naturally connect with a sense of play and fun without all the limits that we've learnt to put on ourselves as adults. Think back to when you were a kid.

- What ignited your joy?
- How did you play and experience fun?
- What did you get excited about?
- What did you like to create?

Step 2: 101 Ways (worksheet attached)

- 1) Write down 101 ways that you connect with fun / play / lightness.

Try not to overthink it. Just because something makes its way onto this list doesn't mean you suddenly have to start doing it. This exercise intentionally uses such a high number to help you connect in with things you may never have previously considered, as your conscious mind will likely start to run out of ideas early on.

Include big things and small things. Add the things from your childhood that you remembered in Step 1. Stretch into your future and think of the things you're curious about trying as they seem like they might ignite your joy. Remember that you can include people, places, music, activities, thoughts, quotes, jokes, images, clothes / accessories, and anything else that comes to mind. The trick here is, dare I say it... play and have fun with it!

- 2) Once you've written your 101 list, take a moment to celebrate yourself for doing that exercise as you take a break for a moment.
- 3) Then coming back to the list with fresh eyes, consider when the last time was that you engaged in each activity and how often you tend to engage in it.
- 4) Circle the top 5 or 10 things that would have the most beneficial impact if you started adding them into your life more frequently.
- 5) And RIGHT NOW, make a plan as to how you're going to do that. This might include scheduling time into your calendar, having a conversation with loved ones so that they know your intention and any support you might need from them, gathering together materials you might need, etc.

Step 3: Pleasure Pairing (worksheet attached)

Pleasure Pairing is when we pair something we don't like or that we feel ambivalent about with something that brings us pleasure, thereby making it a lot more fun.

- 1) Identify ten common tasks that you feel you need to do but that you don't particularly enjoy, find boring, etc.
- 2) From your 101 Ways list, identify a number of things that bring you joy that you could pair with those less enjoyable activities.

For example you might pair listening to some of your favourite music with folding the washing. You might pair responding to emails with sitting in a café or a park that you love. You might pair long drives with your favourite genre of ebooks.

- 3) The most important part is... actually execute your plan and notice how much it increases your sense of fun and joy.

Step 4: Conjuring Fun

Research shows that if we conjure up a vivid enough memory of an experience, it's like we're having that experience again in the present. We can use this to our advantage by conjuring memories that connect us with feelings that will serve us such as Fun.

- 1) Think of a memory that deeply ignites your experience of Fun.
- 2) Make that memory as vivid as you possibly can, like as if you are 'turning up the volume' on every aspect: what you see, what you hear, who was there, the colours, the landscape, the weather, the sensations in your body, the emotions you were feeling, what you're telling yourself, every possible detail you can call to mind. Keep 'turning up the volume' making it more and more vivid.
- 3) Now draw your attention in particular to how you are feeling. What sensations do you notice in your body? How would you describe what you're experiencing? Fun? Play? Lightness? Peace? Excitement? Bask in those feelings for as long as you choose, knowing that you can re-experience them anytime you choose by re-activating that memory.

Step 5: Actively Seeking

This step is all about actively looking for ways that you can connect with a little more fun and play moment to moment. We get what we focus on. So if we're focusing on ways to feel more fun and joy, our minds will likely start to filter in more of these opportunities. It's a little like when you decide to buy a particular type of car and you start seeing it everywhere you go. So begin to actively cultivate that with regards to fun and play.

NEXT STEPS...

So to recap, we've explored what your unique definition of Fun is and how you know that you're experiencing it. And then we've explored the Five Steps to 'Finding the Fun':

- 1) Connect with Your Inner Child
- 2) 101 Ways
- 3) Pleasure Pairing
- 4) Conjuring Fun
- 5) Actively Seeking

What is ONE thing you can take and implement immediately to add more fun into your life?

NOTE:

You can add even more power to these exercises by connecting your newfound fun to your core needs and your core values.

Email me at debbieamos@pepandverve.com to arrange a free chat.

101 WAYS WORKSHEET

No.	Ignites Fun / Joy	Last time / Frequency	No.	Ignites Fun / Joy	Last time / Frequency
1			51		
2			52		
3			53		
4			54		
5			55		
6			56		
7			57		
8			58		
9			59		
10			60		
11			61		
12			62		
13			63		
14			64		
15			65		
16			66		
17			67		
18			68		
19			69		
20			70		
21			71		
22			72		
23			73		
24			74		
25			75		
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28			78		
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30			80		
31			81		
32			82		
33			83		
34			84		
35			85		
36			86		
37			87		
38			88		
39			89		
40			90		
41			91		
42			92		
43			93		
44			94		
45			95		
46			96		
47			97		
48			98		
49			99		
50			100		
			101		

PLEASURE PAIRING WORKSHEET

No.	Task that we don't love doing	What we're pleasure pairing
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		