**Telling our Stories: Practicing Forward, Capturing Change**

**Practicing Forward: Imagination Improves Outcomes Podcast Three**

**Rev. Gina Gilland Campbell May 6, 2020**

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**Writing exercises for exploring notions of play**

* Set aside at least 5 minutes for this exercise, using pencil/pen and paper for the greatest brain integration.
  + Remember your play as a child in as much detail as possible. Where did you play? Did you have playmates, did you play alone, or both? How did you play? Can you see, hear, smell, touch, taste anything about your play? Write in as much detail as possible.
  + What do you notice? Notice not only what you have written; notice also the affect that accompanies the remembering.
* Often people I engage in this exercise describe their childhood play with great particularity. It touches something deep and essential in their being. What would you notice that seems intensely “like you” in describing your childhoodplay?

**An** exercise to explore play in a family systems way.

* This exercise offers each of us a quick and yet eye-opening way to think about how our families thought about, enjoyed, or shaped our sense of play. I learned this technique from a full-day workshop offered by Julia Cameron, author of *The Artist’s Way* and other books about writing and creativity. I spent an entire day playing with lists of ten. By days end, I found myself both exhausted and newly free; more myself and more hopeful.
* In my experience, I access new information about almost any topic when I use this technique. This exercise should move quickly, and works best when we allow the ideas to simply flow without overthinking our responses.
* To begin, number 1-10 on a piece of paper. Give your list the heading “Play is….”

And then, as quickly as you can write down 10 words or phrases that complete the sentence; for example, “Play is fun.”

* Number 1-10 again. This time, give your list the heading “My mother thinks play is….” Again, as quickly as you can write down 10 words or phrases that complete the sentence; for example, “My mother thinks play is knitting.”
* Number 1-10 again. This time, give your list the heading “My father thinks play is…”

And once again, as quickly as you can, write down 10 words or phrases that completethe sentence; for example, “My father thinks play is baseball.”

* Those of us raised by grandparents, foster parents, adoptive parents, stepparents – use the person you most consider “mother” and the person you most consider “father”; the persons who most fulfilled the parenting role for us as we were growing up.
* Notice what you notice about your lists. Do the words and phrases suggest anything to you about gifts for welcoming and sustaining good play? Do they suggest any challenges?