

The role of adult playfulness in romantic life

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While play and playfulness have been studied well in children, their structure and consequences are understudied in adults. A new article published in *Social and Personality Psychology Compass* highlights available research on this topic and also examines why playfulness is important in romantic relationships.

The authors note that playfulness encourages the experience of positive emotions and might relate to potential biological processes—such as the activation of hormones and certain brain circuits. It also influences how people communicate and interact with each other, for example by helping to deal with stress, and solving interpersonal tension. These can all impact [relationship satisfaction](#) and trust, ultimately affecting the longevity of relationships.

"Our literature review and studies from our lab show that being playful contributes to most people's love lives," said lead author Kay Brauer, MSc, of Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, in Germany.

"Playful behaviors such as surprising the partner, retelling and reenacting joint experiences with the partner, or jointly forming [new experiences](#) often contribute to the happiness and longevity of relationships."

More information: Kay Brauer et al, Adult playfulness: An update on an understudied individual differences variable and its role in romantic life, *Social and Personality Psychology Compass* (2021). [DOI: 10.1111/spc3.12589](#)

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