
DEEP FUN

Deep FUN is a mental, spiritual, physical and social discipline developed by Bernie DeKoven., the Guru of [Glee](#), for those engaged in following a [Playful Path](#).

The practice of **Deep FUN** increases your capacity to have fun and your ability to get others to have fun with you.

To master **Deep FUN**, you practice "fun awareness" - playing oddly funny [games](#) that make you laugh so hard you forget yourself - while, at the same time, learning to take fun very seriously, in deed.

In learning to do both - being silly while taking your fun and [the people you're having fun with](#) seriously - you create a dialogue between [Serious and Silly](#). As the dialogue becomes more fun, you become more whole.

You develop strength and insight, increased abilities to cope and endure, and an almost mystical healing power that reaches from [the inner playground](#) to [the workplace](#), from [family](#) to [society](#) at large, and to the health of your very [body](#).

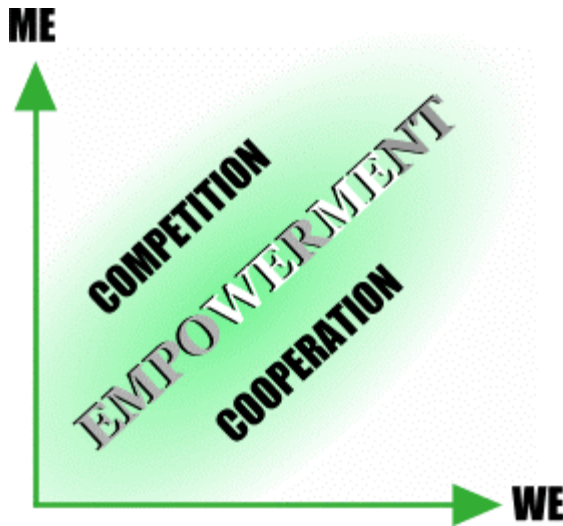
Deep FUN groups explore the mature, grown-up fun, achieved in the fullness of adult powers, focusing their growing awareness on the experience of [CoLiberation](#).

Deep FUN Retreats bring greater wholeness to self, family, community, world. Once you learn **Deep FUN**, the games you play will again become what they have always been intended to be: tools for exploring, extending and sharing your capacity for fun.

Deep FUN retreats explore the following experiences:

Flow

There are many characteristic experiences that are associated with fun: the sense of timelessness, of being at one (with mind and mountain), of exhilaration, focus, immediacy. And all of these are characteristic of what we, regardless of activity, call "fun."



According to Dr. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's well-documented observations and research, and his wide-scale gathering of personal observations, there is pretty much universal agreement that when there *isn't* a high correlation between the challenge (the height of the mountain, depth of the dive) and the ability to meet that challenge, fun is something we're definitely not having. The main dialog (dynamic), according to Mihaly "just call me Mike" Csikszentmihalyi, is between Challenge and Ability. When the challenge is greater than our abilities, we become anxious and potentially dead. When the challenge is significantly less than that

of which we are worthy, we become bored, and potentially dead.

Maintaining the dynamic balance between abilities and challenge is key to the fun experience in work. That is, keeping it dynamic. Making it possible for anyone to find exactly the right amount of challenge needed to engage exactly those abilities needed to access flow. Which means that when work is fun we have created complex, but negotiable challenges, challenges that allow the individual to engage or disengage, to work harder or work safer.

So, there we have it: Fun defined as Flow, which is defined as a function of the relationship between Challenge and Ability. (see [this](#) and [this](#) for more about the attributes of Flow)

Complexity

In my interpretation of Mike's Flow model, every line is a vector (an arrow). This is my way of symbolizing what Mike calls the tendency towards "Complexity" - to increase the challenge, increase the range of abilities, risk even deeper heights of anxiety, broader depths of boredom, to access an ever more profound state of Flow.

Deep Fun Sampler

The first time you jump into a swimming pool, for example, you're probably already too anxious to experience anything flowlike. Especially when you don't know how deep or how cold the water will be. And even more especially when you don't know how to swim.

You go to the shallowest end. Gently, you let yourself in (at the lower end of your abilities). Next thing you know, you're merrily splishing and splashing, trying to impossibly run from one side to the other, and flow is definitely what you are in.

Until you just get tired of it all. There's still both splish and splash, but you're bored. And it's not so fun. The very same water. And yet, no flow.

Until some chemically-encoded perversity takes hold, and you decide to get your head wet. Instant anxiety, and yet, a whole new world of challenge.

And so on, and so on, challenge by challenge, stroke by stroke, between boredom and anxiety, you wiggle your way into the deeper and colder and more swiftly flowing waters, where the challenges become profound and the demand absolute. And so you grow, from wader to diver, from mystery to mastery, learning, extending your abilities. As you challenge yourself more, you grow more, evolving ever more complex sets of skills and sensitivities, becoming an ever more complete human being.

CoLiberation

CoLiberation. You want for me what I want for me. Your courage encourages me. Your happiness delights me. Your health heals me.

I like you most when you do.

This is very nice.

This is really what draws a free people to seek their freedom together. This is why kids play together. This is what makes it so much fun to play well together. This is what makes people enjoy it so profoundly when they get to work well together.

I also call it a "Well-Played Game." And by game well-played I mean something just as CoLiberating as the symphony well-played, the ballet well-danced, the play well-acted. As making something together can be, making plans, making dinner, making love.

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CoLiberation is not the opposite of codependence. CoLiberation is why we become that way. Why we seek each other out in the first place. What we have to give each other when we are at our best.

CoLiberation: what happens when we work extraordinarily well together. Like on a basketball team or in an orchestra, when we actually experience ourselves sharing in something bigger than any one present. This is what I call the experience of the Big WE. It's a corollary to the Big ME experience of self-transcendence. If the Big ME is the "peak experience," coliberation, the Big WE, is like becoming a whole mountain range.

I know I've experienced it in games and sports and the performing arts. And, what makes me especially hopeful, I've also experienced it in business meetings.

The central experience that led me to write my book [*The Well-Played Game*](#) was, in fact, a game of ping pong between my friend Bill and myself. Let me describe it to you, thereby exemplifying the selfsame example of the kind of experience I hope you will share with us:

"My good friend Bill was and is so much better of a player than I that there was actually no reason for us to try to play a 'real' game. Playing for points was clearly pointless. So, we decided to just see how long we could keep a volley going. It was a perfect challenge for each of us. For Bill, just getting the ball to hit my paddle was an exercise worthy of his years of pongish mastery. After half the night of this, we managed to sustain an almost infinite volley. We actually lost count."

That's all that I ask. Some description of a shared transcendence that made you feel just about as big, ME-wise and WE-wise, as you can get. Larger than life. Enlarged by each other's largesse. Beyond time.

I've been calling these kinds of relationships "CoLiberating." It's cute, because it almost sounds like something beyond "collaborating." But "liberating" is only part of the truth. Yes, in deed, those moments in which we have actually managed to free each other from whatever constraints we usually impose on each other, these are truly and actually what you would call CoLiberating. But there is something beyond coliberation, beyond the event itself. Some coincidence of selves that undefines the limits of our capabilities. A coincidence having almost nothing to do with the meeting, and everything to do with the human spirit. Shared moments of unusual clarity, vivid communication. Spontaneous combustions of understanding.

I was given the last word in an article in the recent issue of [*Fast Company*](#). It was my last word, too. A word I actually made up. A word I coined so I could describe to people what a "good meeting" is like. CoLiberation.

It's almost silly even to have a word like this. All liberation is co-liberation. You just can't liberate yourself by yourself. You can't be free if you're the only one. You can mediate, but you can't separate. You can become one only if you become one with.

Deep Fun Sampler

But as long as there is such a word as codependence, and it makes something clear, well, then, we need a word like coliberation, to make something else clear.

Just as we now understand how we can sicken a relationship by becoming too dependent on each other, how mutually sickening things like alcoholism and racism and spousal abuse can become; and we now need to rediscover how we can heal a relationship by setting each other free, how mutually healing things like love and teamwork can become.

In the relationship between ME and WE, one doesn't threaten to become the other. One *is* the other.



Sometimes WE are really wonderfully fun to be part of. Truly empowering. Truly mutually fun.

You make a joke with a stranger, and suddenly you find yourself being very clever, extraordinarily clever, in fact. You're saying things you clearly wouldn't ordinarily be saying. You're acting in a way you wouldn't ordinarily.

Or you're just talking a walk with someone and you and the world feel suddenly brighter-intellectually, physically, environmentally.

For some reason, in some way, the WE that you are creating and becoming part of is making each of us more fun - smarter, more, more alert, more alive.

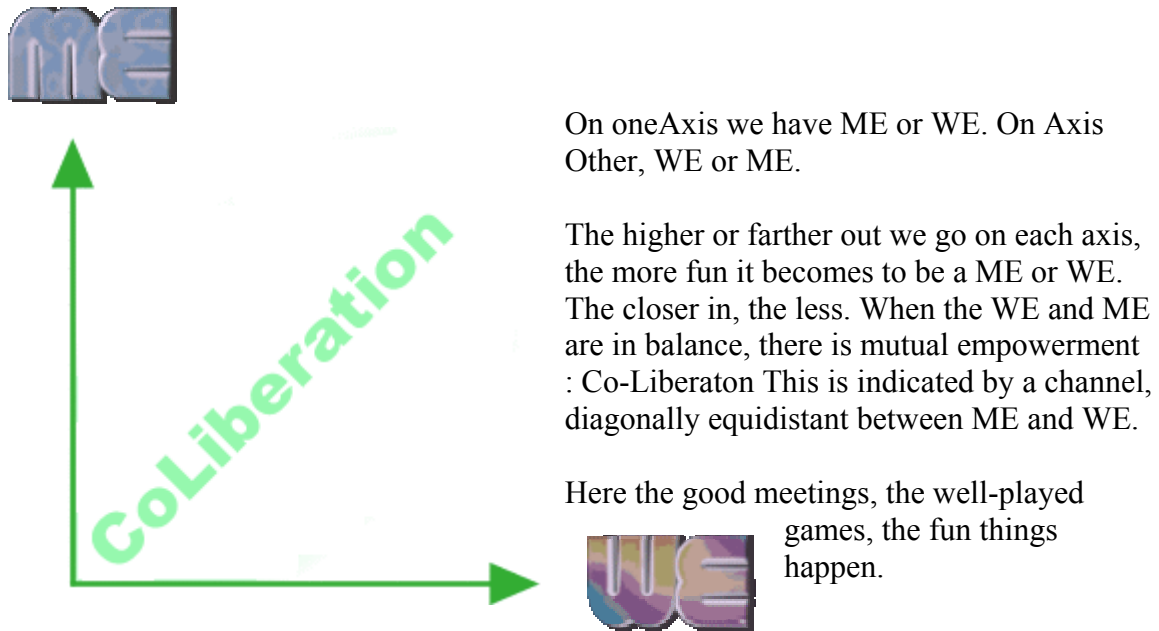
It's the experience of ME empowering the WE empowering the ME. ME *and* the Other freeing each other. Me and the Harmonic creating the music, ME and the Group Mind, the Team Spirit creating each other.

Depending on how we create it, the WE creates us.

For the fun of it, I made an actual graphic, a computer-generated presentation, in fact, that I use in my routine about relationship between ME and WE.

Deep Fun Sampler

Here is what it looks like:



Fun is the background, the context, steady state. Games are the rules that help us move up or down the channel, towards and away from the Bigger ME or the Greater WE.

From: **The Lexifunnicon**

- **afunism** - the belief that nothing's fun
- **Allfun, The** - the mythic Fun One; The All Fun, All the Time
- **Antifun, The** - purported perpetrator of Bad Fun
- **beautifun** - the fun of perceiving beauty
- **biofunology** - the study of the biological origins of fun
- **cofunnication** - shared fun
- **festament** - the sacred obligation of having fun (ee)
- **fested** - going to have fun in a tuxedo (ee)
- **festem** - the high honor attained by attending much fun (ee)
- **festhesia** - the ability to feel fun (ee)
- **festiary** - where the party supplies are kept. (ee)
- **festicate** - to engage in an illicit act of fun (ee)
- **festicle** - someone or something that catalyzes fun (ee)
- **festicum** - a majority gathering of fun havers (ee)
- **festiflu** - a hang over (ee)
- **festify** - to laugh extra loudly for a well told joke and pound on the table (ee)
- **festige** - the lingering 'after shocks' of having too much fun (ee)
- **festigram** - a message of nothing else but laughs (ee)
- **festimas** - the 'roving' holiday, when you need something to celebrate (ee)
- **festimate** - a guess of how many laughs a joke will bring (ee)
- **festimony** - the telling of how much actual fun one is having (ee)
- **festivate** - to sleep through all the fun (ee)
- **festivus** - the Kostanzas (from 'Seinfeld') anti holiday for the restivus (ee)
- **festomer** - a paying for fun customer (ee)
- **festonia** - the republic of fun (ee)

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- **festop** - to stop at a party (ee)
- **festray** - a party animal, to end up at the wrong party (ee)
- **festure** - clothes to have fun in.(ee)
- **forefun** - the fun of getting ready to have fun
- **fun** - its own reward
- **funalog** - something funlike
- **funalysis** - searching for the [primal glee](#)
- **funatic** - can't get enough fun
- **funatomy** - the anatomy of fun's body
- **funburn** - overexposure to fun (ee)
- **function** - when fun is really working for you (jm)
- **fund** - fun money
- **fundable** - the act of giving funds for having fun (sa)
- **fundalini** - the practice of conscious fun
- **fundamental** - fun that wells up from below (cn)
- **foundation** - the place that gives away the fun (sa)
- **funderful** - full of fun (ee)
- **funderous** - the noise of fun (sa)
- **fundo** - a celebration often involving dipping
- **fundown** - when the fun is over (ee)
- **funducation** - leading by fun (c.f. Follow the Leader)
- **fundus** - the part of your brain which is always seeking out the fun in life (jm)
- **funectomy** - taking the fun out of something or someone
- **funema** - fun as a purge for sobriety
- **funeme** - a unit of fun which, when combined with another unit of fun, creates more fun
- **funemia** - lack of fun in the blood
- **funeral** - a once funny story (cn)
- **funerate** - the act of generating fun (sa)

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