[00:00:00] Hello, this is Mei coming on here just to give a quick disclaimer. So we had a few technical difficulties for this episode and one of which was my mic. So I apologize for my awful sound quality, but I promise this is an episode you're going to want to listen to. Okay, back to regularly scheduled programming.

Mei: Welcome back to stay tuned, supporting transition aged youth this podcast is brought to you by the Transitions to Adulthood Center for Research at UMass Chan Medical School Department of Psychiatry and in partnership with our research sponsor, the National Institute for Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research.

I'm your host, Mei.

Emily: And I'm your host, Emily. And we have had a lot of technical difficulties today.

Mei: We have had a lot of technical difficulties today. Uh... But [00:01:00] we're here.

Emily: We spent like an hour and a half trying to record a new platform and then it wasn't working. So we're just on Zoom, but it's okay.

Mei: We're here. Good old, good old fashioned Zoom.

Emily: Um,

Mei: you know, this is what happens when you try to do too much.

Emily: We're trying to be all fancy, all high tech, and it just was not in the cards today.

Mei: Not today, at least. Okay, so who are we having on today?

Emily: No one, just us. Just us and Nostalgia.

Mei: Yeah, we're gonna talk about Nostalgia, um, because we got to talking the other week and I think I brought up the fact that I still play Webkinz.

And that, yeah, that sent us down a bit of a rabbit hole of like, oh my god, do you remember Club Penguin? Do you remember Barbie. com? Do [00:02:00] you remember, like, Polly Pockets? Like, all the good things.

Emily: Yeah, so we're talking about all the, like, Amazing computer games that we used to play when we were kids, and how, I mean, I still play some of them too, like, every now and then I'll just, it's like, it's weird because like, you know, um, like Flash or whatever isn't a thing anymore, so I just like Google, I'm like, dress up games, I'll just like games I used to play as a kid.

I used to go on, like, Girls Go Games all the time. The Pixie Hollow game was, like, my favorite.

Mei: So magical.

Emily: Yes, so we're talking about, like, old computer games, and then we were talking about, TV shows and, like, movies and all that stuff, and, I feel like it's such a thing for millennials and, Gen Z, especially, to really, I don't know, we really just like covet all that like nostalgia, you know, every year that we can consume this nostalgia, we like love it.

So we're just thinking [00:03:00] about that and basically it's like a coping mechanism for a lot of people, you know, and like, things are so stressful. It's like you need something to bring you joy.

Mei: Yeah.

And , what better than like, I don't know, going back to when you were a kid, when nothing was all that stressful and like, all you had to worry about was what are you going to feed your club penguin?

Or what outfit? Or like, meet at like, was it the cafe? Yes. Oh my god, yes. Yeah.

Emily: So we did.

Research on it. So we're going to talk like a little bit about that, but we're also just kind of going to talk about it in general. I feel like especially if you are in college or you're starting your first job, you know, just like in this like sort of stage of life, as a young adult, things are new and you're just navigating the world and being an adult so it's like nice to have that little bit of childhood every now and then just to like [00:04:00] it's like grounding you know it is

Mei: totally it's it's absolutely grounding and I don't know.

Even like this, this is a little bit off topic, but I think I was telling you about this last week about during my research for this episode, I went down a whole rabbit hole. Of how, um, like TV shows, for example, these days are a lot more stimulating than they used to be for kids. Yeah, like, high stimulation versus low stimulation shows, it really has to do with, um, the frame rate of modern kids shows and also how fast the images are moving on the screen, essentially.

Um, So, like, for example, kids shows from our childhood, like, I had talked to you about Angelina Ballerina, and, um, what else, like Little Bear and Franklin, [00:05:00] um, Max and Ruby,

Max and Ruby, yes, like, Bernstein Bear, there's so many.

Yes, those were all considered lower stimulation shows because there were less moving images per second versus like nowadays, I believe, there's a show called Cocomelon that's like, has kids addicted to watching the show?

Yeah. Um, but my point is why I bring this up is because I think, like, in general, computer games were a lot less stimulating back then as well, because maybe we didn't have the technology or, like, research in how to make things addicting, but I feel like that's another reason why they're just relaxing to watch and play.

You

know what I mean?

Emily: Yeah, like, they were just so simple, too, for example, with the dress up game on Barbie. com or whatever. It's like, you're literally just picking out, you have four different shade options for her lipstick and then you're picking that out and then you have like five [00:06:00] hairstyles you know, it's like very simple

and I feel like also, I mean, I don't know if this is like anything with the research but like, maybe like the art style was also just very different, you know, cause it was that more like. It, it looked more like hand drawn type of thing, whereas like, like I, I think about like the old, um, like animated Disney movies, you know, like when we were growing up, like Aladdin or like Mulan, like that art style is very different from like, you know, like Frozen or like, yeah, and like, I don't know if that has anything to do with it, but like.

It just felt simpler, you know?

Mei: No,

I totally agree. I think now everything is like 3D looking, versus our old animated movies and shows where 2D, and you could tell they were like hand drawn images. Yeah, it is interesting thing about because I totally agree like it definitely has a more nostalgic feel for us, but that is also because we grew up with it.

So [00:07:00] it does bring into question like, okay, like the kids of this generation right now. They'll probably look back at like Frozen and like the 3D cartoons, um, and think that's nostalgic for them, because who knows what's coming next, you know? I want to get into like what nostalgia is and why it actually might be beneficial for our mental health and why we may return to these nostalgic shows and games, um, like in a subconscious way, um, because it ends up helping our overall mood and it helps us feel more connected to Society actually is what my research found.

Emily: I had similar stuff too. So you go ahead and then I'll, I'll share.

Mei: Sounds good.

So before I get into it, we do want to let you guys know all the resources we're discussing today are actually going to be linked in our bio. Um, so please feel free to check it out.

[00:08:00] So in my research, I actually came across this peer reviewed study. It's called once upon a game exploring video game nostalgia and its impact on well being.

And I was like, that's exactly what we're looking for right now. Because Emily and I both were like, why is it? That we keep going back to these nostalgic games from the past and why is it that these games help us cope throughout our stressful days and jobs and school and whatnot.

And so what the study was actually saying was nostalgia is a mixed emotion. That features a unique combination of longing for the past, um, so a positive affect, meaning like feelings of happiness and personal meaning and negative affect. So feelings of sadness and regret.

So it mixes like negative and positive emotions together. But overall, people perceive it as it's an overwhelmingly positive emotion, but it [00:09:00] is that tinge of like sadness that makes it nostalgia.

Emily: Right. Right. I think it's funny. I think I had the same article in mine. Oh my gosh. So we might have like overlapping stuff, but that's good that we're like, we'll be on the same page.

Perfect.

Mei: Perfect. Yeah. We can talk about it. Um, so I just thought that was a perfect description.

Emily: Yeah, no, I agree. I think I read that too. And I was like, yeah, like, I know, because like, you know, it's like nostalgia, like, you know what it is. So if you're going to describe it, you would kind of be like, You know, it's nostalgia, but then I like read that description.

I was like, oh, yeah, that's like exactly what it is. Right?

Mei: It's bittersweet. Yeah, um, and then it also is saying, nostalgia is a social emotion as well. Experiencing nostalgia can increase feelings of social connectedness, as well as increase, social behavioral tendencies.

Emily: I had something, , it was like nostalgia can fulfill a [00:10:00] social function and counteract loneliness. So like if you're playing a game from your childhood, like even if it's not with, like it could be like with a friend or a family member, but it could even just be like by yourself, or If it's something that you used to play with, like friends or family, as a child, then like that, even if you're playing it alone now, that still helps counteract that sense of loneliness.

Mei: Yeah, that is interesting. You know, another layer to it is a lot of the games from our childhood were like server games. So you were playing with real people as well.

Emily: That's also a good point because it's like a lot of the games that we played were , you know, it's interactive, but you didn't always know who you were playing with. For like Club Penguin, for example, all these people would be on the server, but you don't know who they are, but you're still playing with other kids, you know?

Yeah. Even if you're not actually like talking to them or like sitting next to them, it's like still social in a way.[00:11:00]

Mei: I wonder sometimes most of the time I'd say I played those games alone, but you were interacting with real people. And so I wonder if that also brings on that sort of social connectedness you were talking about that nostalgia brings on that it reminds you of the people you would play with and like that social interaction. So even though we didn't know who we were playing with, we were still playing with other people. And that makes us feel like, um, more sociable and connected.

Emily: Yeah, exactly. And even if it wasn't a game where it's like with other people, a lot of the games that we played, everyone knew about them.

Everyone was also playing them. So I was thinking of in elementary school, everyone would play, like, PopTropica, and so then, you would go to school, and, like, people would be talking about it, and, like, talking about, like, the different levels or whatever, and, like, if they had beat it and you're giving each other tips and stuff, you're not actually playing with them, but everybody knows what you're talking about, so it's, like, a shared experience ? So I feel like that's also part of it.

Mei: And it's [00:12:00] also interesting how, when we were kids, we would talk about , um, like tips and tricks and , oh, what were we doing last night in the world? But nowadays, like when we do talk about it, it's more of a conversation of like, we don't even have to go into much detail about it.

We just say Club Penguin and we already know what's going on, you know?

Emily: Like, Yeah, exactly. I know, I was like, when we were first talking about this, um, episode, I was like, listing off, like, I wrote a bunch of different games that I could think of, and like, I'll, like, list them off now, because, like, when I was first, like, typing them out, we were like, oh my god, like, I had, like, Webkinz, Pixie Hollow, um, Disney Channel Games, PopTropica, Barbie and Polly Pocket, um, My Scene, Girls Go Games, and then I had like other stuff like Animal Crossing and like Nintendogs pokemon, Sims.

Kind of going along with that, some of the stuff that I have written down from, I think, that same article. [00:13:00] Um, so, like, when you play, like, these older games, or, like, you know, watch. TV shows or movies or whatever. It's like helping you, um, sort of recreate those happy memories from your childhood,

which like, it's like they described it as like, it's allowing you to relive those experiences and transport back to what maybe thought of as like a simpler time.

And it like specified as like whether or not that's actually accurate, like it still feels like a simpler time. So like, even if you were like, say you're like playing it, On the computer, like in the computer room, on the computer, like 2008, parents are downstairs fighting, getting divorced because of the recession, but you're playing like, you know, Webkinz or something, and then you play Webkinz as an adult, and you're like, oh my god, simpler times.

Mei: I've seen, I've seen the memes, I've seen the memes, like me not a care in the world playing Just Dance upstairs as my parents are [00:14:00] like arguing over bills downstairs, and I'm like la dee da dee da, like, I wonder if they'll get me Just Dance 3 for Christmas.

Emily: Yeah, and like, yeah, so that kind of goes along with like the whole nostalgia thing and like, um, just like using it as like a coping mechanism and like something that I also thought was interesting was like, it, it said in the article like people tend to seek out nostalgic experiences as like a sort of coping mechanism.

Um, but the like flip side of that is that they can eventually become less effective. It's like it is said, like sometimes people feel like guilty about it or like it becomes like habitual and then it sort of like loses that effect over time. Say you're like playing The Sims every day or whatever, and then like over time it's like no longer nostalgic.

It's like just part of like your life now. So it's like kind of like two sides of one coin where it's like you kind of have to have a give and take. Where you're not playing it like so much that it sort of like loses [00:15:00] that nostalgic effect. But you're still using it sort of as a coping mechanism when things are stressful and it can be beneficial.

But just not, like, all the time, you know?

Mei: I guess too much of a good thing really applies to everything in life.

 Like, what do you mean? I can't just play Webkinz all day long and all my problems will be fixed.

Like, I guess not. I do see that in practice happening. I can see how if you're putting so much of your time into any one thing that society does not deem as

productive, like that could start to take a toll on you. I see why it wouldn't have the same effect and, and you would stop thinking about it as like, Oh, this game I used to play during childhood and start thinking, thinking of it more as like, I'm so compelled to play this game.

Like. Yeah. And it comes, becomes more and more distant from your childhood and more intertwined into your [00:16:00] current life, if that makes sense?

Emily: Yeah, no, and I think that's where, like, the, like, guilt portion comes in, too, where it's, like, and I mean, also, this just goes into, like, our society in general, but that's, like, a whole different topic, but it's, like, you know, if you come home from work or whatever, or from school, you've had a long day of classes, whatever it is, and you're playing this game, it's, like, You might feel that sense of guilt where it's like I should be being productive.

I should be like doing something. I should be doing homework. I should be doing whatever, you know, but it's like, you know, it really is like too much of a good thing. Playing these games or watching these movies, whatever it is, it's like, if you do it in like, short amounts of time, or it's just not becoming like a habitual thing, like they said, then it can be really beneficial, but I can also see how that guilt or that sense of like it not being as nostalgic anymore, how that could come in if it is like a Every single day like you're coming home from work, [00:17:00] coming home from class, and you're logging on to Webkinz, you know?

Mei: Yeah

Emily: Yeah, I can see how it would lose its effect over time.

Mei: Yeah, I think like It becomes less special because the reason these games are so special to us now is that we haven't played them in so long.

And when we do, it's just, it transports you back. But if you're constantly playing these games, then it's just going to feel like a normal thing to you and it loses that, like. Magic. Like, I don't know if you have this experience, but when I think back on my childhood, I just feel like the world looked so much brighter to me.

Like the colors were more vibrant. And like now It's not to say that things look gray and dull, but it's just the world has kind of lost [00:18:00] its magic, a little bit of its magic.

Emily: No, I know exactly what you mean. And I feel like it's also like, it kind of goes into like, um, like imagination, too, you know, like I feel like you sort of lose touch with a lot of your like imagination as you get older.

I feel like that's also kind of part of it where it's like, you know, things look brighter, things were more magical when you were a kid. And now as an adult, it's like, it's harder to find that. And so I think then again, tapping into that nostalgic thing from your childhood can really help sort of like bring back a piece of that.

Even if it's not like to the extent as it was when you were a kid, it's still like, it's a reminder of that.

Mei: . I did want to ask, though, like, part of what the paper was saying was that research has shown nostalgia is connected to a variety of different parts of well being. The paper wasn't saying that it can increase meaning in life, but it did say that it [00:19:00] might play, might. Play a role in improving one's sentiments towards the meaning of life. Yes. So, I, that made me think about like, what, like, in your own experience, like, have you felt that? And then maybe think about like, why that is.

Emily: Yeah, I feel like, Maybe a little bit and it's interesting too because like I saw that also whenever I was reading the article and like, I don't know, I was sort of listing out the different because it was saying like it can help nostalgia can help with like, um, like psychological well being and like social relationships.

Um, autonomy, uh, competence, like optimism, stuff like that. And like, and then I did get to that part where it said like, um, you know, the sense of meaning or whatever. And I was like, I don't know. I was [00:20:00] kind of like, I don't know about that one. Like the other ones, I was like, yeah, yeah, I'm on board. But then that one, for some reason, like stopped me and I was like.

I don't know. Like, I guess I can see how it would. I don't know. I thought that one was interesting too, and I didn't really know what to think about it.

Mei: Yeah. For me, what it made me think of was, for me, getting meaning out of life isn't necessarily from like aspirations or goals, to be honest. Like it's, it's just, for some people, it is for some people. They're like, I want to be a doctor. I want to be a lawyer, like to help people, whatever. where I really draw meaning from is like my friends and family around me and those who I care about, like spending time with them feeling connected to them. Um, that's where I draw

meaning from. And if what they're saying is correct or supported [00:21:00] that playing nostalgic games increases that feeling of social connectedness to your peers, friends and whatnot, then that does make sense to me.

Emily: Yeah, no, that does make sense. Um, yeah, no, I, I see what you're saying. This is like, different, but like, sort of similar where like, I like, recently, this past summer after years, like, finally got back into reading for fun, which is something that, as a child I was, I read all the time as a child, and, I feel like once I got to maybe high school, I sort of stopped, cause I had you know, I had to read for, like, School and for different classes and like, even into like undergrad uh, you know, once you're, once you're reading for school, then it's like, not, it's hard to read for fun and the summer I started reading for fun again.

And like, I understand what you're saying about the, like, finding meaning when it comes to that. And so then I can also understand like how games would have the [00:22:00] same effect, you know. Because it's like if you didn't have something and I also like the things that you love like in your childhood I feel like sometimes we lose sight of that stuff and like sometimes when you come back to it you realize like that's really what does give you meaning in life you know

Mei: like yeah no but speaking of going back to the things you loved as a kid that in general that principle I think makes so much sense to me.

But it's not something I necessarily practice in my life. Like, I don't know. Have you heard people say, like, if you're unhappy now, if you're struggling to find what you love, if you're struggling with your career goals or path just think about what you loved to do as a kid and never questioned, like, whether it was worth your time.

And, like, go back to those things. Like, for example, I loved, like, drawing and art projects and, like, clay and getting [00:23:00] messy.

Emily: Yeah, yeah, art is a big one for me too.

Mei: Right? I feel like for a lot of kids, they, they were always drawing, coloring, whatever. And, like, nowadays, it's not something I ever, like, sit down and, like, let's color, like, Or let's draw, let's create something.

Cause I'm always like, well, I just got off work. I'm tired. Like, I don't want to draw, like, what's that going to do for me. But honestly, like the, I I've had to draw recently for like little gifts I was making for people. Um, because I don't

want to spend money. I was like, exactly. Like I'll draw you a literal comic book.

I drew someone a comic book recently, and that took a decent amount of time to do, and it just, It was so enjoyable and it was relaxing and it made, I'd say it kind of gave me a little bit of meaning in life to like really do something I loved doing. Um, [00:24:00] but I think that is maybe not realistic advice to like, go do what you love to do as a kid, as your career.

But I do think that it is, um. It does make sense.

Emily: Hobbies are important.

Mei: Hobbies are important. Yes, that's the word, hobby.

Emily: Yeah, no, I completely agree. I feel the same whenever I watch like, um, like certain Disney Channel shows too. Because I feel like, I mean, I would watch them a lot anyway, but it especially reminds me of like, there was one summer when, I don't know, it was probably like 9 or 10 or something, and my sister and I, Like, basically binge watched, like, all of, uh, Wizards of Waverly Place and, like, Suite Life on Deck and, like, shows like that, like, that summer.

And so, like, even though we watched those, like, all the time... As, like, throughout our childhood anyway, anytime I watch those two particular [00:25:00] shows, it reminds me of that summer, so it's like nostalgic, like, extra nostalgic.

Mei: Like, conception. Yeah.

Emily: I'm like, oh my god, summer, you know, you don't have school, you don't, obviously you don't work when you're like 10, you know.

Just like, simpler times. Again, the simpler times, it's like, even if it wasn't, like, it feels like that.

Mei: Yeah, I think the thing that really gets me is like, um, I, I shouldn't say this is an original thought. I saw this online and someone was like, you know, why? Why are we so ashamed to do the things we loved as kids?

Like, as kids, we never questioned whether it was a waste of time or not. We just did it because it was, it was in our nature, you know? Um, and parents encouraged it too, right? They were like, go play, go outside, go bike, go draw,

go do whatever. They signed us up for summer camps if, you know, they could. [00:26:00] I just think, like, where did that support go, of like, do what you genuinely love, even if it is a hobby, like, I don't know, I feel like that disappeared out of my life one day, and maybe that's a reason right now I'm struggling to, like, find things to do outside of work, um, or maybe, like, I'm struggling with the idea of, like, just biting the, what is it saying, biting the bullet, Yeah, bting the bullet and signing up for something because I'm like, that's expensive, like, or like, I don't know, that would take a lot of investment on my part to go get the materials for a project I'd want to do and, um, Like, is it worth my time and effort and money?

I don't know. It is, though. It fully is. But it's this, like, weird obstacle I can't get over because I feel like there's not just, there's not a lot of support, um, in my life to go after those things.

Emily: No, that is, that is such a good [00:27:00] point, and I completely agree. And I feel like it is, like, That's interesting because it's like where did that support go and it's like maybe it is sort of like as you just get older and like whatever, but I think also a lot of it is like more societal to you know where it's like, you know, I mean basically like once you get to high school it's kind of like you're now preparing for college and then from there, you're preparing for work, you know, like that's sort of the path that you're even if that's not the path that you take like that's what they're trying to like push you towards.

 There was this one article that I found. Okay, well I want to preface also by saying when I was doing my research I made a couple notes because it was like weirdly hard for me to find stuff that I was looking for, but I was thinking about it and I was thinking, I think it's like because, well, I had a couple different points.

So one, I feel like it was hard to find anything about the specific games like we played, like more like Gen Z, um, as kids, [00:28:00] because A lot of the information I was finding was about like retro games from like the 80s or like 90s or like arcades stuff like that and maybe I just like couldn't figure out like good search terms or whatever but I've tried a bunch of different stuff um and like a lot of them were about like You know, I mean, I feel like this is just like with everything, but a lot of articles were written by like older people, like basically complaining about millennials.

Um, like even when I like took out like millennials from my search, I like specifically looked up like Gen Z, it was still all millennials, millennials, you know, like that's like all it was, which, you know, that's a whole different thing.

But, um, but I also was thinking about it and I feel like it's hard to find information about games that like, specifically like girls played and like I feel like a lot of the stuff that I found were I mean, you know in theory at least was more targeted towards boys, you know, so I just like I don't [00:29:00] know there's just interesting because I was like I was trying to find stuff about like You know, webkinz or whatever.

And I was finding all this stuff about like, it was just like, it wasn't the stuff that like I was playing. And so I was like, Oh, whatever. Like, I'm not relating to this. Um, so that was kind of annoying. And like, also I feel like, so the next article I'm going to talk about is interesting because like, I would say like 80 percent of the articles that I found were about Pokemon Go and also like along with that, there wasn't a lot of, like, post pandemic stuff, um, like, it was a lot of, like, I feel like it sort of stopped at, like, Pokemon Go. Anyway, all that to say, the article that I did find about Pokemon Go, it was actually pretty interesting, um, and, like, I feel like that is a good, you know, Example of this stuff because it was kind of like it was in like summer of like, I think it was like 2016, you know, and it was a very like collective thing.

So it's like, you know, for us, at least like we were, you know, later high school. So it's like slightly different, [00:30:00] but also like Pokemon in general is a nostalgic thing for a lot of people. So, I don't know, anyway. I just thought it was interesting, and like, a lot of the stuff it was saying was about how, um, people like, would get into like, this like, flow state.

Which they describe as like, uh, They said it was a perceived balance between challenges and an individual's capabilities. So they described Pokemon Go as like a good example of this because it allowed people to concentrate on and like become immersed in an activity that provided distraction for like unpleasant thoughts.

Um, which is what a lot of nostalgic games are able to do anyway. Um, so I feel like that was just like a really good example of that, you know? I don't know. It's just very interesting to me.

Mei: First of all, I do want to address, like, I'm not even surprised, like, there's the gap in research, not surprising to me at all.

Emily: I was disappointed, not surprised.

Mei: Yeah, yeah. [00:31:00] Disappointed, not surprised. A very familiar feeling as, as a woman. Uh, but we need to do better. We need to do better.

That's for sure. Um, and then the second thing I want to say is, like. Yes, I totally understand what people what they meant by like the flow state of like really getting in, sitting down and like applying yourself to a game, which I think that flow state is also relevant to like sitting down and doing work and sitting down and like studying.

Um, and it's hard for me to get into that flow state because I think the nature of the content, like social media and stuff has shortened my attention.

Um, but I do remember like just getting lost in a video game when I was a kid, and that's just, I don't know, like, I do play Webkinz still, [00:32:00] but it's definitely harder for me to like sit down and play for hours like I used to and get super, yeah, into it, but the other thing too, is like Pokemon go, I also partook in this wave.

I know there's still lots of people who play, which is amazing, but it was so interesting cause it brought like my whole grade together. Like everyone is playing Pokemon go and it was a social event. And I think it was so revolutionary because there hasn't really been like in person. Active gaming, like, like, I mean, physically active gaming like that.

There's like, you can game with other people in the same room, but it's not like as interactive. And maybe VR kind of encapsulates that idea as well. But it's just different because you're not like immersed in another world. Like, you still can't really see other people in VR. Like, it made me feel like.[00:33:00]

I don't know if anyone will relate to this, but it made me feel like I was outside again, like a little kid hunting for bugs with my friends. Like I used to hunt for bugs and worms with my friends and like, it just. It brought that, like, playful aspect out again, and, um, my friends and I were playing outside as high schoolers, like.

Emily: Yeah, no, you're, like, exactly right, and, like, you're completely touching on, like, what this article is talking about, too, because it was, like, a big part of it, too, was, like, why it was so, such a big phenomenon is, like, what is a form of exercise? You know, like, people were going outside, people were walking, and.

Like it was bringing people together like I completely agree with like it bringing like all your everyone from your grade together, you know, like I remember playing it like in high school and like me and like a friend or like a group of friends like we would be walking, like, just all over our town.

And like, You would pass by other groups of friends, like doing the same [00:34:00] thing. So it was like, everyone is doing it. And it is like that sense of like playing outside, you know? And like, you're getting exercise. So like, you're getting those like endorphins and everything. So like, it is like, actually, like, I feel like.

You know, I mean, it was kind of like annoying when I was doing research because they were all about Pokemon Go. I was like, okay, like give me something else. But like I also understand it because like that really was such a specific phenomenon where it's like you are getting outside, you are playing again, you know?

And it's like you're with friends and you're, I don't know. It was such a like specific... Era, you know, and like it was also interesting because it was like very short lived, you know, like I feel like it really was just like that summer. And again, like, people do still play it but it's like, it's not as intense as it was.

Um, and like I feel like that's also similar to like when I was reading these articles like it was making me think of like, like Animal Crossing on the switch during the pandemic, like that was a huge one too and I was like, you know, not the same in the [00:35:00] sense of like going outside and like interacting with people, but like That was like very nostalgic for people.

Like I played animal crossing when I was a kid, like on my DS and like to get it on the switch, like so exciting. And then it's like, everyone is talking about it for like a couple of months, you know, like that was like the big thing, like during lockdown. These things like bring people together, you know?

Mei: Absolutely. And the other thing I want to point out is, and this, the article that we were first talking about does touch on this is that pretty much more releases than not are all remakes or, um, continuations of older retro games or games from like way back when, like all Nintendo games are really just reusing the same characters in the same universe and just coming up with like a new story or a new world.

But there is that element of like, these are nostalgic characters for a lot of people myself included. And, um. It's telling us [00:36:00] that there there's obviously a market for these nostalgic games like this is a phenomenon that's happening that like people are seeking out characters and, um, the feelings that they got when they were kids playing this, um, and like, I feel like this paper is possibly touching on like, why that is why this market is so big,

Emily: right? Yeah, yeah, no, that's so true. And like, it's also interesting, like, the, I guess difference or like maybe the overlap between like, games that are like specifically marketed as nostalgic, like Animal Crossing, like on the switch, like Pokemon Go, that stuff.

And then games that like, You know, we played as a kid and they're nostalgic because, you know, like, like Club Penguin or whatever, you know, but like, there is that overlap there and obviously, it is a market that people have picked up on and like, clearly it is a thing, you know, I mean, there's articles written about, like, why nostalgia is like a coping mechanism [00:37:00] and then, like, if game companies are like marketing these nostalgic games, like, clearly it's a thing, you know, because it makes sense why, like, so many people, like, You know, Millennials, Gen Z, especially, like, why we're so drawn to that stuff and why it is such a good, distraction for daily life, you know?

Mei: And it really does make me think, how can this be used in, different therapy methodologies. Um, like for example, this was like, I don't know what Google was doing. Like they were definitely tracking my, my searches , the cookies were being cookied. Um, and I was scrolling on Instagram and I've been getting this ad for it's a video game therapy group being advertised.

So it's a group of people it's virtual. And, um, it's a therapist run group. Um, so I don't I didn't really look into it. I don't really know how that works. Like if it's really a licensed therapist, I really don't know. I feel like they [00:38:00] can't say it's a licensed therapist if it's not, but it's certainly like a very interesting concept, and I did stop and think, I was like, wait a second, should I join this? Yeah. But it does make me wonder, like, what role is the therapist playing during these gaming sessions?

Like, what's, what's going on in there?

Emily: Yeah, no, I, I'm like, I don't know. There was an article that I had skimmed and I didn't include it and I'm like mad that I didn't now because I don't remember exactly what it said, but it was sort of touching on that, like they had used, you know, they, they were using video games as like a therapeutic tool.

I don't know why I didn't include it. I just like, I don't know. I was looking through so many articles and I was like skimming them. But I do remember that being a part of it and I wish I remember like what the therapist role was because that is such a good point. Like, I feel like it really can be.

Used in that way. And I don't know [00:39:00] exactly how, but I, I can see like that it would be effective, you know? Yeah. Well, I

Mei: bet this is interesting for you to think about because you're actually going to apply this one day that you'll see. And like, it sounds like you, you want to work with kids or like a younger population.

So.

Emily: Yeah. Yeah. I want, I want to work more like, uh, like teenagers and like young adults. But like, again, like that. That's basically what we're talking about here, you know, where it's like these nostalgic games. So yeah, that's like something that would be really interesting to look into more.

Thanks, Instagram.

There's, there's so much more I could say about it, but, you know, it's, it's really interesting, like, I feel like nostalgia in general is such an interesting topic, um, and, so, researchers out there, I would like to see stuff about Pixie Hollow and Barbie and Polly Pocket, I would like to see it.

Mei: I, I just feel like during my research, It was more like anecdotal [00:40:00] evidence than anything, like opinion pieces on like, Club Penguin saved me during 2020 lockdown, and I'm like, no, yeah, that's true.

That they're, they're onto something there. Um, so even if like, the research isn't concrete, I feel like so many people have experienced going back to their childhood favorites and like just experiencing like a breath of fresh air after a long day of something stressful.

Emily: Yeah, very interesting stuff. It's fun to look into. Even more fun to play. I still play The Sims.

Mei: Before we go, we actually do have an opportunity for you guys who are listening. Do you or someone you know have a hard time doing or keeping up with your job due to difficulties, staying organized, remembering things, managing your time, following directions or getting to work on time.

So tools for work success is a research study that may be [00:41:00] able to help! The transitions to adulthood center for research at UMass Chan medical

school is recruiting for a new study, the tools for work success study, part of the 2019 to 2024 learning and working RRTC. The main purpose of this study is to determine which of two approaches is most effective in helping young adults ages 18 to 30 with mental health conditions, develop skills around focus, memory, planning, and time management and problem solving for work. So if you want to learn more, please visit the study page at UMass med. edu slash transitionsacr slash models slash fsst. or you can contact a, member of the study team and we will have their information linked in the description box on our YouTube channel, Spotify, everywhere.

Emily: If you would like to contact us, you can email us at stay tuned at umassmed. edu and check out the transitions ACR website at umassmed. edu slash transitions ACR. [00:42:00] Thanks for being here and be sure to stay tuned for next time.