Styles of Play Adapted From Mihály Csíkszentmihályi

Style	What They Seek	Favored Games	Potential Careers
The Competitor	Meeting goals, developing skills and mastery, overcoming challenges *Common stressors:* Unstructured environments, perfectionism, status-seeking	Solo or team sports, competitive board games (chess), esports, martial arts, marathons, academic or trivia contests	Management, entrepreneurship, law, medicine, tech engineering, finance, politics
The Explorer	Curiosity, novelty, autonomy, variation in tasks *Common stressors:* Routines, difficulty finishing tasks	Strategy games, puzzles, scavenger hunts, scientific building sets, hiking, sailing	Research, academia, innovation, design, consulting, journalism
The Social Player	Collaboration, shared experiences, teamwork, helping and influencing others *Common stressors:* Independent or isolated roles	Cooperative strategy games (bridge, escape rooms, Pandemic), party games, Dungeons & Dragons, team sports, partner dancing, group music, improvisation, debate	Teaching, therapy, leadership, HR, sales, community work, diplomacy
The Storyteller	Creative expression, imagination, narrative, meaning, symbolism *Common stressors:* Structured environments, meeting deadlines	Role-playing games (Dungeons & Dragons, cosplay), story-driven video games, theater, writing, composition, visual arts, filmmaking	Writing, film, art and design, architecture, marketing/branding, religious or philosophical work
The Risktaker	Excitement, unpredictability, rapid decision-making under uncertainty *Common stressors:* Repetitive work, long-term goals	Dice, cards, gambling, esports, extreme sports	Emergency medicine, sales, stock trading, venture capital, entrepreneurship, litigation law, competitive tech, high-stakes negotiation and diplomacy, politics, military, conflict-zone journalism
The Shapeshifter	Deep absorption, new perceptions, self-transcendence, meaning, symbolism, autonomy *Common stressors:* Structured environments, external goals	Dance, surfing, roller coasters, artistic creation, meditation, performance art, virtual reality, extreme sports	Performance arts; therapy; spiritual, religious, and creative careers; human-centered design and engineering; designing experiences that change perception (video games, films, curricula, museums, amusement parks)