

Leisure Education,  
Community Development  
and Populations  
with Special Needs

**Edited by**  
**A. Sivan and H. Ruskin**



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# **Leisure Education, Community Development and Populations with Special Needs**

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## **Dedication**

This book is dedicated to

Mordechay (Motti) Bar-Lev

Professor of Education at the Bar Ilan University of Israel.

A man of vision in the area of leisure and education.

A colleague, outstanding teacher and mentor.

His 'footprints' and contribution will always leave a lasting  
impression in the field of leisure education.

# Leisure Education, Community Development and Populations with Special Needs

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*Edited by*

**A. Sivan**

*Department of Education Studies  
Hong Kong Baptist University  
Hong Kong*

and

**H. Ruskin**

*Cossell Center for Physical Education, Leisure and Health Promotion  
Hebrew University of Jerusalem  
Israel*

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CAB International  
Wallingford  
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CABI Publishing  
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Suite 3203  
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USA

Tel: +44 (0)1491 832111  
Fax: +44 (0)1491 833508  
Email: [cabi@cabi.org](mailto:cabi@cabi.org)  
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Email: [cabi-nao@cabi.org](mailto:cabi-nao@cabi.org)

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# About the Editors

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## **Atara Sivan, PhD**

Atara Sivan is Associate Professor and Course Leader of the Postgraduate Diploma in Education Course in the Department of Education Studies at the Hong Kong Baptist University. She is also a Board Member of the World Leisure and Recreation Association and an Executive Committee member of its Commission on Education. She completed her BA and MA degrees in Education and Sociology at Bar-Ilan University in Israel and her PhD in Education at the University of Hong Kong. She taught at the School of Education at Bar Ilan and Haifa Universities in Israel and coordinated informal and social education in the Israeli Ministry of Education. Her main areas of academic endeavour are leisure education and research, teaching and learning approaches and methods, and action research in education. She has been investigating the area of leisure education in Hong Kong for the last few years and serves as academic adviser and consultant for educational programmes. She has published widely in the fields of leisure and education and served as a keynote speaker in numerous international conferences.

## **Hillel Ruskin, PhD**

Hillel Ruskin is Professor, Chairman of the Cosell Center of Physical Education, Leisure and Health Promotion and Director of the Graduate Program of Physical Education in Public Health of the Faculty of Medicine, Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He is also the chairperson of the Israel



Leisure and Recreation Association, Chairman of the Commission on Education and Board member of the World Leisure and Recreation Association. Professor Ruskin attended the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (BA) and New York University (MA, PhD). He has written more than 200 articles and publications in the fields of leisure, recreation and health promotion. His favourite area of academic endeavour is industrial recreation and curricula development in leisure education. He is the editor of the book *Leisure, Toward a Theory and Policy*, London: Associated University Presses (Fairleigh Dickenson University Press, 1984) and the writer of a recent guide on the wise use of leisure time in Israel. Since 1998, he has been the Commissioner of Leisure Education of the School System in Israel.

The two editors also edited the book *Leisure Education Towards the 21st Century* (1995), Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

# Contributors

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**Arnold H. Grossman**, PhD, ACSW, Department of Health Studies, School of Education, New York University, 35 West 4th Street – Suite 1200, New York, NY 10012–1172, USA

AHW is a professor in the Department of Health Studies, School of Education, New York University (in New York City). He currently serves as Project Director and Co-Investigator of ‘Victimization and Mental Health Among High-Risk Youths,’ which is funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (of the United States). For 6 years, he was the project director of the NYU AIDS/SIDA Mental Hygiene Project, which was funded by the New York City Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Alcoholism Services. His teaching, research and writing focus on people who experience stigmatization, marginalization and social exclusion. Dr Grossman is the Secretary Treasurer of the World Leisure and Recreation Association (WLRA), and he is Chairperson of the WLRA Scholarship Committee. He was Founding Chairperson of WLRA’s AIDS/SIDA Task Force and was Founding Co-Chairperson of its Commission on Access and Inclusion. He is an active member of WLRA’s Commission on Education.

**Michael J. Leitner**, PhD, Recreation and Parks Management, California State University, Chico, CA 95929–0560, USA

MJL is a professor in the Department of Recreation and Parks Management at California State University, Chico. He received his MA and PhD degrees in Recreation and Leisure Studies from the University of Maryland. He has written extensively in the areas of leisure and aging and leisure education,

including the textbooks *Leisure in Later Life* (2nd edn) and *Leisure Enhancement* (2nd edn), published in 1996, and the paperback *How to Improve Your Life Through Leisure*, published in 1994. Prof. Leitner has most recently been involved in research in Israel on the effects of intergenerational recreational activities on the attitudes of Arabs and Jews toward each other.

**Joseph Levy**, BA, BPHE, MSW, PhD, Wellness Centre, 274 Vanier College, York University, 4700 Keele Street, North York, Ontario, Canada

JL is a full Professor in the School of Social Work, Atkinson College, York University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. His PhD in Health Planning is from the University of Waterloo and his MSW (Master of Social Work) is from Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. His main areas of research, writing and consulting are in the health and wellness areas as they relate to empowering individuals, groups, communities and nations to adopt proactive and systemic 'community' strategies in the delivery of equitable and democratic human services. He is the author of numerous books, articles and major reports. Over the past 30 years his research has been supported by grants from both the public and private sectors. Presently he is Director of the Wellness Centre for Service, Research and Education at York University, which is in the forefront of designing interactive multimedia platforms that integrate the telephone, Internet and cable TV in a format that will democratize the entire health care system.

**Debra Markus**, MPH, Cosell Center for Physical Education, Leisure and Health Promotion, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Givat Ram Campus, Jerusalem 91904, Israel

DM is at present Projects Director at the Cosell Center for Physical Education, Leisure and Health Promotion, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel. She has an MPH majoring in physical education. She has been coordinator for the International Masters Degree Program for Public Health. She has books published on track and field athletics, fitness training for all ages as well as academic articles on dance and sport. She has recently become involved in special studies, research, surveys and written articles on the elderly after having worked in the geriatric hospital wards, nursing homes and rest homes and created a sports club for pensioners at the Hebrew University. She has presented papers in International Conferences on the Elderly, Leisure, Physical Activity and Health.

**Wolfgang Nahrstedt**, PhD, AG 10, Freizeitpädagogig, Universität Bielefeld, Universitätsstraße 25, AG10, D-33615 Bielefeld, Germany

WM is Professor at the University of Bielefeld. Main fields: freetime (leisure) education, cultural work, tourism science. Guest lecturer at the University of

Illinois, USA (1976–1980), at the Technical University Chemnitz-Zwickau, Saxonia (1990–1995), at the University of Potsdam (1991–1996), within the European Erasmus Programme at universities and colleges (1990–1998), at WICE (1998). Chairman of the Institute for Freetime Science and Cultural Work (IFKA) and the Centre for Tourism (ZET), Bielefeld (1982ff.), President of the European Leisure and Recreation Association (ELRA) (1996ff.), Chairman of the Commission Freetime Education of the German Association of Education Science (DefE) (1978–1998), Member of the World Leisure and Recreation Association (WLRA). USA/Canada research projects on freetime, tourism and thermalism development. Research approach; experimental innovation research (e.g. tourism development in new German states, in Poland; guest animation in spas; health tourism as a new perspective for European spas, strategies to identify and attract new national and international target groups for tourism destinations). Publications within Europe and internationally. Co-editor of IFKA-books (1984ff.), Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Freetime Education* (1979–1994) (now: *Spectrum Freetime Forum for Science, Politics and Practical Development*).

**Sam Raz**, PhD, Variety Center, 17 Diskin Street, Jerusalem 96440, Israel

SR has for more than 35 years been involved as a consultant and academician in the planning, development, management and evaluation of hospitals, outpatient facilities and other medical care systems. He has received numerous academic awards, directed nationwide research projects in the USA and has been awarded teaching fellowships in various subjects in the medical care field. Dr Raz has lectured extensively in his field and related subjects in the USA, Canada, South America, Europe and Israel. Since 1987 he has held the post of Director General of the Jerusalem Variety Center, The National Center for the Advancement of Children with Special Needs, the largest outpatient child development centre in Israel. His responsibilities include: planning, management, evaluation, designing and development of programmes for disabled children and adolescents, involving diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, enrichment and follow-up for 11 major areas of mental and/or physical disabilities. These are being done in association with the Ministries of Health, Education, Human Services and the Hadassah Teaching Hospital and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

**Hillel Ruskin**, BA, MA, PhD, Cosell Center for Physical Education, Leisure and Health Promotion, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Givat Ram Campus, Jerusalem 91904, Israel

HR is the chairman of the Cosell Center of Physical Education, Leisure and Health Promotion and director of the Graduate Program of Physical Education in Public Health of the Faculty of Medicine, Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He is also the chairperson of the Israel Leisure and Recreation

Association, Chairman of the Commission on Education and Board member of the World Leisure and Recreation Association. He attended the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (BA) and New York University (MA, PhD). He has written more than 200 publications in the fields of leisure, recreation and health promotion and has served as a keynote speaker in numerous international conferences. His favourite academic area is curricula development in his fields of endeavour. Since 1998, he has been the Commissioner of Leisure Education of the School System in Israel.

**Elisheva Sadan**, DSc in Urban Planning, MA and BA in Social Work, School of Social Work, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Mount Scopus, Jerusalem

ES is the Head of The Undergraduate Program at the Paul Baerwald School of Social Work, at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. She lectures on Community Organization and Empowerment Practice. She has written a book titled *Empowerment and Community Planning: the Theory and Practice of People-focused Social Solutions* (1997). Her research interests are social change and professional practice.

**Jay S. Shivers**, PhD, University of Connecticut, Department of Sport, Leisure and Exercise Sciences, Sports Center, 2095 Hillside Road, U-110, Room 223, Storrs, CT 06269-1110, USA

JSS has been a recreationist since 1947. He has had professional experience as a programme or functional worker, supervisor, director and administrator in varied phases of recreational service. He has been a college instructor on professional courses in recreational service education since 1955. During this time he has systematically studied leisure in various cultures. His travels around the world have permitted him to observe different cultures, examine how people behave during their leisure, and gain insight into the value that people place upon their leisure. Dr Shivers has an MA and Directorate from New York University in Therapeutic Recreational Service and earned his doctorate in Education from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1958. Currently he is a Senior Professor in the Department of Sport, Leisure, and Exercise Sciences, Neag School of Education, University of Connecticut. Dr Shivers has written 24 books, 70 articles, and numerous studies, reports, plans, and analyses that address topics within the field of recreational service.

**Atara Sivan**, BA, MA, PhD, Department of Education Studies, Hong Kong Baptist University, Kowloon Tong, Kowloon, Hong Kong

AS is Associate Professor and Course Leader of the Postgraduate Diploma in Education Course in the Department of Education Studies at the Hong Kong Baptist University. She is also a Board Member of the World Leisure and Recreation Association and an Executive Committee member of its

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Commission on Education. She completed her BA and MA degrees in Education and Sociology at Bar-Ilan University in Israel and her PhD in Education at the University of Hong Kong. Her main areas of academic endeavour are leisure education and research, teaching and learning approaches and methods, and action research in education. She has been investigating the area of leisure education in Hong Kong for the last few years and serves as academic adviser and consultant for educational programmes. She has published widely in the fields of leisure and education and served as a keynote speaker in numerous international conferences.

**Robert A. Stebbins**, PhD, Department of Sociology, The University of Calgary, 2500 University Drive, N.W., Alberta, Canada

RAS received his PhD in 1964 from the University of Minnesota. He is presently Professor in and former Head of the Department of Sociology at the University of Calgary. He has also taught at Memorial University of Newfoundland and the University of Texas at Arlington. He served as President of the Social Science Federation of Canada in 1991–1992, after having served as President of the Canadian Sociology and Anthropology Association in 1988–1989. His research interests include work, leisure, the work and leisure dimensions of deviance, and the leisure basis of francophone communities outside Quebec. He has published numerous journal articles and book chapters as well as 21 books. Professor Stebbins was elected to the Academy of Leisure Sciences in 1996 and to the Royal Society of Canada in 1999.



# Preface

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The articles presented in this book are the result of three international seminars of the World Leisure and Recreation Association (WLRA) Commission on Education held in the autumn of 1998. The first 'Leisure Education and Community Development' was held concurrently with 'Leisure Education and Populations of Special Needs' in Jerusalem, Israel. The third was 'Leisure Education and Youth at Risk' held in Monterrey, Mexico. Extensive discussions and debate followed the keynote addresses, at the time of the seminars, from which recommendations were made for three International Position Statements. It was as a result of these deliberations that further international communications and responses were encouraged and reactions were considered from WLRA representatives from all over the world. The ideas presented proved to stimulate discussion and recommendations to the international community at large. The scope of the studies presented show the vast range of the population to be considered in this field of research, study and practice. Most of the chapters in this book were presented as keynote addresses at international seminars, additional papers were written specifically for this book and independent referees reviewed all of these articles after the process was completed. The book's contributors come from various continents. The collection of articles sheds more light on the area of leisure education with specific reference to community development and populations with special needs. It is hoped that the book will contribute and provide valuable conceptual and practical frameworks for future initiatives in this area.



## **Acknowledgements**

The manuscript for this book was laid out and compiled by D. Markus.

*Atara Sivan and Hillel Ruskin*

# Introduction

ATARA SIVAN AND HILLEL RUSKIN

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Leisure refers to a specific area of human experience with its own benefits, including freedom of choice, creativity, satisfaction, enjoyment and increased pleasure and happiness. It embraces comprehensive forms of expression or activity whose elements are as often physical in nature as they are intellectual, social, artistic or spiritual.

Leisure is a basic human right, just as education, work and health are rights, and no one should be deprived of this right for reasons of gender, sexual orientation, age, race, religion, creed, health status, handicap or economic condition. Societies are complex and interrelated and leisure cannot be separated from other life goals. To reach a state of physical, mental and social well-being, an individual or group must be able to identify and realize aspirations, satisfy needs and interact positively with the environment. Leisure is therefore seen as a resource for improving the quality of life. However, increased dissatisfaction, stress, boredom, lack of physical activity, lack of creativity and alienation in people's day-to-day lives characterize many societies throughout the world. All these characteristics may be alleviated by leisure behaviour, and leisure behaviour may be moulded by leisure education.

The basic purpose of education is to develop people's values and attitudes and equip them with the knowledge and skills that will enable them to feel more secure and get more enjoyment and satisfaction from life. This implies that not only is education relevant to work and the economy, but that it is equally important for the development of the individual as a fully participating member of society and for improvement of the quality of life.

Thus, leisure education is a lifelong learning process which incorporates

the development of leisure attitudes, values, knowledge, skills and resources (World Leisure, 1998).

## Leisure Education and Community Development

Implementation of leisure education in the community involves the process of community development. Community is defined as a geographical location and an aggregate of interests that have an affinity with the interconnections between them. *Community development* refers to a process using formal, informal and non-formal education as well as leadership to enhance the quality of life of individuals and groups living within the community.

Leisure in the life of people has profoundly affected established institutions. One of the more vitally affected has been the institution of public education. The cumulative effects of social, economic and cultural trends have necessitated the establishment of formal and informal agencies for fostering leisure access. An important contribution that schools may make to the common means of enjoyment is to offer leisure opportunities in an environment where people find it conducive for learning.

Leisure is a highly valued component of community development and an awareness of its advantages and benefits is essential. Leisure literacy should be a societal goal, since community development depends, among other things, on the personal development of its members.

World Leisure (1993) suggests that leisure education for community development should include concepts such as *empowerment* of individuals and groups to enhance the quality of life; *accessibility*, which means to minimize barriers and optimize access to leisure services; *lifelong learning*; *social participation* which creates opportunities to develop social networks needed in the community; *diminishing constraints* which prevent one from fulfilling personal, family and community needs; *inclusivity* – which means recognizing the multicultural, socio-cultural (underprivileged), gender, age, ability and other constituent groups in society; *civic and moral responsibility* which develops a sense of community through responsible leisure behaviour; and *preservation* and conservation of natural resources which should be enhanced.

All these may be reached by strategies such as integration and linkages between leisure education agencies. Community organizations should be encouraged to offer leisure education that fosters continuity and leads to change in the leisure patterns of behaviour. This develops social intervention that meets the needs of people while maintaining the effective involvement of members of the community in planning and programming processes and in taking responsibility for effective outcomes. All these strategies may be implemented through community agencies such as community and adult education centres, youth clubs and movements, environmental and heritage

interpretation centres; parks; playgrounds, sport, cultural and entertainment centres; through written and electronic mass media channels; malls, hotels, coffee houses and other places of public gatherings and entertainment.

## Populations with Special Needs

A community's vision should be inclusive of *all* its individuals, embodying a clear value of commitment to enhance access to leisure opportunities of individuals with special needs. Therefore, it should be recognized that leisure education programmes for people with special needs play important roles in improving the quality of community life. Communities encompass a variety of people, including people with special needs of all ages, such as those with developmental disabilities and impairment of adaptive behaviour at various levels, as well as physical, emotional and social disabilities. These people with special needs must have the legal, moral, ethical and economic public policy support to lead self-determined and authentic life plans within diverse cultural frameworks. Leisure education, for the most part, should centre on facilitating these life plans by the attainment of optimal and meaningful leisure experiences. Therefore, all services, programmes and institutions addressing the needs of people with special needs should be planned, implemented and evaluated in terms of specific belief systems. A fundamental belief supports the idea that all people, regardless of their condition in life, should have the right to develop their human capacities to an optimal degree. This deeply embedded concept is no less valid for persons with disabilities. Increased evidence indicates that people with disabilities can benefit from participation in recreational activities during their leisure. The universality of need for leisure and its positive use demands such opportunities to be made available to all. Through leisure experiences, individuals are enabled to live more satisfying, enjoyable and productive lives than is the case when such opportunities are not accessible (World Leisure 1998).

## The Development of Leisure Education Theory

In 1918, the national Education Association of the USA set forth its well-known Cardinal Principals of Secondary Education that listed the seven objectives of education, including the *worthy use of leisure*. Since then, in many statements of education agencies in the USA and other countries, leisure education has become part of educational objectives and policies. With the development of the leisure and recreation movement in North America, more and more publications in this area can be found. Leaders and agencies of the American leisure and recreation movement referred to leisure education from various angles. Brightbill (1966) claims that public education has to bear major

responsibility for the formal aspects of overall leisure education; for it is within the framework of public education that the resources necessary for the task are found and it is designed to solve some of the problems resulting from unplanned community growth. Thus, the school has to develop skills, attitudes and resources that are usable throughout life for the enrichment of leisure. These should be instilled when the children are in their formative years. Jenny (1955) claims that schools have a responsibility for providing a programme for the development of recreative skills, since they recognize the cardinal principle of 'the worthy use of leisure time'. Miller and Robinson (1963) recognize the major role that schools must play in developing recreation, as they are the largest single public agencies in most communities. Thus, they have specific responsibilities to the entire community, and must commit their resources to a programme of education for leisure.

The Ontario Ministry of Education and Recreation (1978, 1980) has produced resource material to help school and community frameworks develop comprehensive leisure education programmes. Through a series of education models and strategies it presents a system which may be applied in many countries. Indeed, the State of Israel has developed a comprehensive school curriculum in leisure education which incorporates the Ontario Model as part of it and has implemented this into its national school system (Ruskin and Sivan, 1995).

There is a logical relationship between recreation and education. They have certain important functions and outcomes in common, such as the provision of opportunity to practice skills and contribution to personal and social growth, good citizenship, physical and creative outcomes. Also, there is extensive cooperation between schools and other public agencies in the organization of community recreation (Kraus, 1964). Moreover, 'education must be planned in the light of recreation needs', asserts Nash (1960), and adds that the school programme has to be adjusted to building recreational skills for life adjustment.

The United Nations published the Convention on the Human Rights of the Child (1989). Article 31 refers to the recognition of the right of 'the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.' It calls upon governments to respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and to encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity. The same Convention also emphasized that governments should make education on all levels available and accessible to all children, and it should be 'directed to the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential', and for the 'preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society'.

In a World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth (1998) among other proposals for action appears the following:

Governments, by providing adequate funding to educational institutions for the establishment of leisure time activities, may accord priority to such activities as elements of educational programmes. In addition, leisure-time activities could be integrated into the regular school curriculum.

The above-mentioned ideas are also found in other writings. The school has been perceived as the major leisure agent. Underlying the responsibility given to schools to educate for leisure is their important role in the socialization process and the perception of leisure education as part of this process (Brightbill and Mobley, 1977; Parker, 1979; Kelly, 1982; Roberts, 1985). Moreover, schools are the primary and the most common institutions of education, and many school experiences have potential for developing individuals' attitudes, habits and skills for use in their leisure time (Mundy and Odum, 1979; Ruskin, 1985). The school plays a significant role in influencing the leisure preferences of students (Sivan, 1984) and their level of satisfaction in their leisure pursuits (Feldman and Gaier, 1980). In addition, the skills learned in school are used in leisure activities (Willits and Willits, 1986).

Different approaches have been suggested for facilitating leisure education in schools. Some are based on incorporating leisure education as an integral part of the school learning experiences (Mundy and Odum, 1979; Groves, 1985). Other approaches emphasize the need for changes in the educational system such as allowing more freedom, enjoyment and intrinsic reward for students (Kelly, 1982; Ruskin, 1984; Roberts, 1985) and providing a balance between academic aspects and social, emotional and personal needs and satisfaction (Feldman and Gaier, 1980; Keng *et al.*, 1984). A variety of strategies within the academic subjects of the curriculum and the extracurricular activities have been outlined for implementing leisure education in schools. These include teaching special courses in areas related to leisure; incorporating leisure education in existing subject areas such as social sciences, literature and languages, arts and crafts, music; and creating social activities for students (Kraus, 1964; Corbin and Tait, 1970; Mundy and Odum, 1979; Ruskin, 1984; McDaniel, 1982). Some of these strategies suggest the involvement of leisure specialists and cooperation with other socializing agents.

## **Leisure Education in the Community**

The early concept of community education was predominantly school based, but over the course of time, community education began to unite the twin processes of community school education (with the school as the central agency) and community development. Community education has become a system that provides for all the educational needs (including leisure education) of all its community members by using the resources in them and helping people to gain power and control over their own lives.

In contrast with community schools, cultural centres and arts centres were, from the beginning, far more committed to education for leisure. The involvement of arts centres in education for leisure, in particular arts education, is a response to two divergent views on culture, namely democratization of culture and cultural democracy.

According to Mundy and Odum (1979), municipal and county recreation and leisure systems, because they are government supported and empowered, through legislative or other sanctioning mechanisms, to serve the population of a community (be it town, city, county, etc.) in relation to their leisure needs, are automatically placed in the most logical, viable position to assume the principal role in educating leisure within a community. Municipal and county agencies will be the primary agents for articulating and interpreting leisure education – its philosophy, goals and objectives, methods and techniques – for the public and to other community agencies and service programmes. Similarly, they should also be the prime moving force, the catalysts and facilitators, in educating the citizenry of a community for leisure.

It must be emphasized that no single profession system, service or organization alone can accomplish the task of education for leisure in order to enhance the quality of life. But we must avoid duplications. While educating for leisure may be one of the principal goals of many systems, as with any other programme, a needs assessment should occur before any system in a particular locality becomes involved in the initiation of efforts to educate for leisure.

Faché (1995) suggests a list of goals for leisure education in leisure systems and community organizations. These goals include extending the range and diversification of the leisure repertoire of the individual, incorporating increased awareness of the variety of leisure opportunities and resources for leisure available in the community. The aims are to strengthen the attitude favouring 'leisuring', the encouragement of social contact and integration in networks of friends, an increase in awareness of leisure constraints and the ability to work around them in order to participate in chosen activities. The objectives also include the enhancement of self-initiative and self-reliance and the increase in the ability and responsibility in time planning.

Verduin and McEven (1984) combine the concepts of *adult education* for leisure in a framework designed to assist adults in creating a better, more meaningful lifestyle. Evidently, adult education is seen as a vital strategy in the development of the individual as well as the community.

Ruskin (1995) claims that the main concern of leisure education is with the quality of life. Central to that concern is a desire to improve the well-being of all people. He suggests a multifaceted approach that includes education, social awareness and political action. These should be implemented in the family, the school and community agencies through school education, the mass media, those who are responsible for conducting leisure activities in the community and through political discussion and action.

## Leisure Education and Therapeutic Recreation

Dattilo and Murphy (1991) suggest a systematic approach to programme planning in leisure education. They approach leisure also as a component of comprehensive leisure service delivery systems in general and therapeutic recreation services in particular. They claim that the majority of leisure education literature and theory is associated with therapeutic recreation and people with special needs. The purpose of therapeutic recreation was also identified by Peterson and Gunn (1984) and the American Therapeutic Recreation Association (1984) as facilitating the development, maintenance and expression of an appropriate leisure lifestyle for special populations. These were considered to be persons with physical, mental, emotional or social limitations. A 'leisure lifestyle' refers to the individual's leisure-related behavioural expressions and their leisure-related attitudes, awareness and activities as part of their total life experiences.

Joswiak (1979) suggests guidelines for the implementation of leisure education programmes for persons with developmental disabilities. These are also applicable for persons with other types of disabilities, as well as for the general public. The underlying assumption is that all people, including those with disabilities, should have opportunities for leisure experiences (Austin, 1989; Halberg, 1989). Joswiak further proposes a leisure education programme emphasizing development of awareness of leisure resources within the home and community. Leitner (1989) illustrates how leisure enhancement and understanding of leisure theory, concepts and philosophy can be applied to one's life in order to enhance social development, improve fitness and health, and reduce stress.

Through education, individuals learn and prepare for expressions of leisure, and they use education to teach themselves further about relative freedom and self-determination related to leisure. A full range of opportunities should be available to everyone, suggests Kelly (1990).

The premise for leisure education may include recognition that free time is often misused and that leisure may be the best context for self-actualization. Howe (1989) suggests that leisure service providers assume the role of leisure educators in their search to develop leisure literacy and self-directed, freely chosen, healthy, intrinsically motivated and pleasurable leisure participation patterns. McDowell (1983) proposes strategies to gain understanding and development of the concept of *leisure wellness*. His strategies include an exploration and self-education of specific areas such as self-identity, social roles, fitness, leisure lifestyle, managing stress, attitudes, affirmation, assertion associated with time and cultural forces.

## About the Book

The discussion above mentions concepts, interpretations and consensus defined in the position papers of two seminars of the Commission on



Education of the World Leisure Association that were held in Jerusalem, Israel, September 1998, on 'Leisure Education and Community Development' and 'Leisure Education and Populations of Special Needs'. These were convened primarily in response to growing expectations around the world regarding the benefits of leisure and how it relates to leisure education and how leisure education affects community development at large and populations with special needs in particular.

The book includes 16 chapters written by academics and practitioners from different disciplines whose common area of practical and academic endeavour is leisure. Several authors contributed two chapters. Each chapter refers to the concept and process of leisure education in relation to community development. Special emphasis is given to populations with special needs within the community. The chapters are arranged in a sequence from general concepts and frameworks of leisure education within the community to models of implementation for different populations and age groups. The book begins with discussions of general aspects of leisure and leisure education and community development, goes through practical and conceptual community-based approaches and ends with specific practical models and recommendations for leisure education for populations with special needs. In that respect, the book can be divided into three sections.

The first section consists of chapters by six authors. *Jay Shivers* refers to the vital importance of educating for leisure and of teaching skills for enabling people to fully enjoy all that is available in the world of leisure. Underlying this concept is the argument that lack of leisure education hampers ability and the potential to fully enjoy and utilize the available leisure possibilities. *Robert Stebbins* defines and describes the term serious leisure, as coined by the author, and distinguishes it from casual leisure. The author further discusses the link between serious leisure and development of the individual and demonstrates it with examples of people engaged in serious leisure and the ways in which this participation contributes to community development through social integration and cultural enrichment. *Atara Sivan* merges the concepts of leisure education and community development by introducing a general framework for leisure education through educational settings within the community. The chapter emphasizes the significant role of schools in educating for leisure within the community and supports it with examples of leisure education curricula. *Joseph Levy* reviews and proposes an authentic wellness leisure education model of quality of life and discusses its major social, political, economic and cultural determinants. Related to the model, which is based on the core principle of human authentic self-determination of a person, the chapter explores the personal strategies and societal responsibilities necessary for ensuring conditions to realize freely chosen quality of life plans. *Arnold Grossman* explores the processes of empowerment, advocacy and mobilization as a means of assisting community members in achieving their rights to leisure education, recreation and access to parks and other open

spaces. Those processes are effective in achieving a redistribution of resources so that all community members could have equal access to services and to live in a clean and healthy community. *Wolfgang Nahrstedt* presents a new role for leisure education in community development. Analysing the changes in society as well as those in the role of leisure education, the author calls for the new role of leisure education to support intercultural perspectives for community development through global edutainment. Underlying the new concept are changes in the foundations of learning and education as well as the trend of globalization. According to this concept, leisure education is implemented through the use of entertainment means, tools and frameworks.

The second section of the book consists of seven chapters by authors who explore, discuss and illustrate specific conceptual and practical models for leisure education within the community with a special emphasis on populations with special needs. *Arnold Grossman* explores the notion of community mobilization that aims at bringing about changes in norms, attitudes and programmes to maximize the leisure education and recreation opportunities of people with special needs. The article further suggests approaches and strategies for contributing to effective community mobilization. *Jay Shivers* emphasizes the importance of providing leisure experiences for persons with disabilities to enable them to live more satisfying, enjoyable and productive lives. The author draws on the concept of equality as well as the contribution of leisure to the development of people. *Michael Leitner* introduces the process of leisure counselling for facilitation of maximal leisure wellbeing of populations with special needs. The author discusses three different types of leisure counselling and examines their appropriateness for different situations and different populations while suggesting specific procedures for implementation. *Robert Stebbins* discusses the concept of serious leisure with special reference to populations with special needs. The author presents different kinds and dimensions of serious leisure education for potential use when working with special populations and suggests that counsellors and volunteers working with special populations should be acquainted with a wide range of serious leisure activities. *Atara Sivan* discusses the role of leisure education in enhancing the quality of life of populations with special needs. Drawing upon the main characteristics of leisure education, the chapter refers specifically to the concept of integration and social interaction through recreational activities. The author further provides examples to illustrate how these concepts can be applied in the community. *Joseph Levy* presents the concept of equality of well being and human authenticity and relates it to the principles of active living for working with people with disabilities. The concept is based on the premise that all human beings, in spite of their differences, are entitled to be considered and respected as equals and have the right to participate in the social, cultural, educational, sport and economic life of a society. *Elisheva Sadan* discusses the relevance of leisure theory for poor people and the vital role of community empowerment as a strategy for leisure education. The

author examines three social groups: poor women, unemployed men and severely physically disabled people, and concludes with recommendations for socially sensitive leisure facilities and leisure educators.

The third section of the book consists of three chapters which present and discuss practical and specific approaches of leisure education for populations with special needs of different age groups. *Sam Raz* explores an intervention model for children with special needs through sports and leisure activities. The author describes the different dimensions of the model and the way it operates, recommending its application for the rehabilitation and lifestyle enrichment of those children. *Hillel Ruskin* focuses on targeted young people. The author reviews the characteristics of youth-at-risk and discusses the vital role of leisure education in laying the foundations for identification, prevention and early intervention processes. He further presents recommendations on leisure education and youth-at-risk. *Debra Markus* refers specifically to the elderly. The author presents a practical approach to implementing leisure education for older people. Following a review of characteristics of the elderly, the author presents intervention programmes, with specific examples of activities to be employed with the elderly for an optimal use of leisure.

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# Educating the Community for Developmental Opportunities in Leisure

1

JAY SHIVERS

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Why should any government be concerned about what people do in their leisure time? Why is it necessary to teach people about leisure, much less be concerned with how individuals use it? After all, leisure belongs to the person who has it, to use or not as he or she sees fit. Why should any government interject itself in a situation over which the individual is, or should be, in full command? The answers to these questions may be summed up by the concept that leisure, like education, is of value to both individuals and the community-at-large because of the opportunities for self-growth and social contributions which can be engaged if there is a foundation for correct choices to be made. Leisure may be used positively for the good of all, or negatively to the detriment of the individual and others. It is, therefore, necessary for government to intervene so that options will be chosen wisely when leisure is available.

When assisting the development of people, it is insufficient to think about and make provision for occupational experiences alone. Life is more than just toil for one's living, other experiences influence the process of education and in turn affect it. This flip side of life, this complement to work experience, is leisure.

Of course, one can assume that leisure is precisely that domain of life with which education is not concerned. Education is appropriate for job preparation, but the essence of leisure is specifically freedom from all limits and regulations imposed by the requirements of the routine work day. Leisure is release from confinement, emancipation into an environment of freedom and personal self-determination.

This position seems to be untenable. Leisure is not separate from life.

What one does in leisure invariably influences the kind of person one will become. There are countless ways of using the time available away from the obligations of work or other social impingements, and a selection must be made among the options. Every decision about how leisure is used is a learning alternative because it provides guidance to the course of total human development.

## **The Importance of Leisure**

A significant portion of most people's time is spent in leisure. Unlike work, there is a general inclination in its favour. It is neither penalty, opprobrium nor an unpleasant requirement. It is typically looked upon as a benign and absolute good. How it is used is also a reliable indicator of personal interests and objectives. For these reasons, leisure is certain to exert a considerable influence on the development of the individual. Therefore, it is appropriate that leisure should be thought of as an educational concern. Personal growth during leisure should not be left to chance, accident or the impulses of momentary temptations. Provision for leisure needs the same intense care and deliberation as does preparation for occupation. In some cases, educational opportunities during leisure are of equal or greater importance to those encountered at work. Under any circumstance, it appears clear that government must include consideration of leisure in the growth of persons.

## **Schools, Leisure and Recreational Service**

The increase of leisure in the life of the average person has profoundly affected established institutions. Perhaps none has been more widely impacted than the institution of public education. The cumulative effects of social, economic and cultural change decidedly reveal the imperative needs for some organized force concerned with how people use their leisure. It has been postulated that one positive use of leisure is in recreational activities and services which offer the delivery of such opportunities. Thus, recreational experience has been recognized as a fundamental human need and one whose satisfaction calls for public (governmental) action.

All of the efforts by public agencies designed to help people lead more satisfying lives through the enhancement of their physical, social, mental and cultural capacities by active or passive participation during their respective leisure time may be deemed services. Services may be performed for monetary return, for altruistic purposes without extrinsic motives, for a combination of these reasons, or out of necessity created by cultural forces requiring such endeavours if the organization of a specific society is to survive.

Commercial enterprises perform services for profit. Humanitarians

provide services because of their belief in, and the need to promote, human dignity. Certain individuals and organizations are motivated by a blending of humanitarian dedication and economic gain. Only public service, growing out of governmental establishment, performs functions which are thought to be essential for the preservation, stabilization and advancement of the ideological order through the promotion of the public well-being. Services are usually intangible products, the effects of which enable recipients to perform their individual functions better. The improved performance, in turn, either modifies the environment (social or natural), so that particular activities may be engaged in, or mitigates conditions to the extent that the individual is able to achieve some satisfaction or enjoyment as a result of a given experience.

### ***Leisure preparation***

In a few short years automation will almost completely free human beings from physical and mental routinization. Paralleling this robot influence in the commercial and industrial world, harnessed nuclear energy (cold fusion) will make possible the continued manufacture of an abundant supply of material goods and services at a fraction of their present cost. High-speed miniaturized computers may provide the answers to complex problems instantly. In such a technological society the machine can be given nearly all of the functions and responsibilities that have historically constituted human labour. With few exceptions, machines will fabricate, communicate, transport and provide the finished utilities and luxuries that will inevitably improve the world standard of living.

People will be able to devote themselves to leisure pursuits. In a future age of automation and cybernation, leisure experiences may well become the focus of life activity rather than the amenity it is today. Education will have to be directed toward preparation for lifelong leisure and to realize fully and take advantage of this precious freedom from drudging obligation. This concept does not rule out the discipline of learning and practice. It will become the means of self-realization, through leisure.

### ***The school's role***

What is the role of the school in present society? What should the schools be attempting to accomplish? What assignments are not properly delegated to the school? What is the position of the school in relation to the provision of leisure learning and recreational service?

Because the school is concerned with training for all aspects of modern living there has been a widespread inclination to use the school as a common



receptacle. There are few areas of community living in which the school has not been active or in which it has denied assistance when requested. Schools have even assumed responsibilities in civil defence, fire prevention, traffic control, substance abuse prevention and fund-raising for welfare causes. The process of social modification has witnessed an ever-increasing acceptance by the schools of activities for community welfare.

It does not necessarily follow that every educational experience within society devolves upon the school. Other social institutions are also capable of carrying out the educational function. The assignment of a particular task to the school or to another agency should rest upon the educational effectiveness that such an experience would have.

### ***Leisure and recreational experience as educational concerns***

The awareness of extracurricular activity as an effective educational force is indicative of a change which has come about in the basic philosophy of educational practice. Interest and voluntary participation are now recognized as fundamental concomitants of learning. Broadly interpreted, education may be viewed as encompassing leisure opportunity and recreational pursuits. Changes in educational concepts and in school practice in relation to leisure needs indicate an increasing trend for the school to accept some responsibility for developing leisure values and delivery of some recreational services.

### ***Leisure influences on curricula***

The suggestion that leisure learning and recreational service in some of its manifestations is part of education has justified the modification of public school curricula to include many new subjects of instruction. It has also brought about a change in emphasis in subjects which traditionally had been taught either because of their supposed cultural and disciplinary values or as preparation for a vocation. The modern state school curriculum now provides opportunities for appreciation, participation and creative experience in several fields of music, art, dance, crafts and drama. Interest clubs dealing with science, mathematics and other so-called hard core subject fields are also included in this category because of their recreational interest.

Not many years ago, extracurricular activities were ignored in the schools. Later they were condoned, but in condoning them the school accepted no responsibility for their guidance and direction. Today, the schools organize these activities in nearly every area of recreational interest and assume responsibility for leadership in these areas. School administrators take pride in having all, or nearly all, pupils included in these activities.

## Leisure Education Functions

Every school has an obligation to keep the public informed about what it is doing; but beyond that there is also an instructional obligation which focuses on leisure. In this regard, there is an attempt to educate citizens to a variety of activities in which they can engage, not only for public relations purposes, but also in terms of equipping the individual for enjoyable and valuable pursuits during leisure. The enrichment of life, enhancement of personality, enlargement of personal viewpoints, teaching of skills and the guidance of people in selecting the leisure activities that will be reflected in creative achievement are all part of this procedure.

The significant development of appreciation for and participation in worthwhile leisure activities is an instructional goal. An often neglected, but none the less important, contribution that schools may make to the steady utilization of common means of enjoyment is the effort to offer available opportunities in an environment wherein people find it conducive to learn. The entire process can be formal or informal and concomitant with the provision of a well-balanced programme. Something for everybody, rather than the stereotyped and routine acts may be the most effective method by which individuals will be educated to appreciate personal capacity and potential for achievement and the satisfaction that achievement brings.

No single agency can provide all the services necessary to meet the needs of each individual within the community. Even when a public recreational service department is established, the time of operation, personnel and experiences offered simply cannot keep pace with the diverse needs of people. The limitations on any one agency are not insurmountable. Some coordination within the community must be arranged so that all the people are reached. Public recreational agencies must cooperate and coordinate their services with all other agencies so that the most comprehensive programme of leisure services can be offered.

These agencies exist to serve people. They have the specialized personnel, financial resources, physical plants, material or equipment required to supplement and complement the natural and physical resources of other agencies. By judicious counsel, joint planning, adroit scheduling and cooperative attitudes, all agencies within any community may more effectively meet the leisure needs of people and provide satisfying recreational activities. Such efforts may very well offer leisure services of a recreational type to almost all of the people, all of the time, without jurisdictional disputes, duplication of functions or expensive and needless monetary expenditures. Coordination may be the method by which strangulating competition for the same group of participants is decisively eliminated and where each person may be the recipient of a more highly competent and extensive series of services.

### ***Cultural achievement***

At the present time the tremendous drop in working hours which today's machines make possible permits vast opportunities for everyone, during leisure, to select and move toward those ends that seem worthwhile. The selection and method may be wise or foolish, valuable or useless, but it will only be by education that the habits of decision are influenced toward the wise and worthwhile as opposed to the foolish and trivial. Individual satisfaction and self-realization will be a consequence of how well the educational process has taught the person to enjoy and employ leisure in a positive way.

All decisions concerning human behavioural patterns are important. Every alternative relating to the activities in which people engage is an educational selection because it gives guidance and direction to the path of human development. For this reason, leisure opportunities have a marked influence on the maturation and development of personality and character. Being the province of individual choice, leisure activity is an accurate mirror of personal interests and ends.

To the extent that this is a valid statement, then leisure and the experiences undertaken during this free time is a concern of education and the agencies by which education is transmitted. Individual growth through recreational experiences during leisure must not and cannot be left to fortuitous circumstance. Leisure living must be the subject of careful and deliberate planning by those whose professional duty it is to serve the public in an educational capacity.

Heretofore, the total amount of leisure has not only been small in quantity, but it also has been in the possession of few. Now it is an almost universal possession. There are those who question whether people will prove themselves equal to the opportunities which free time bestows upon them by using such leisure for the improvement of the national culture, or whether through its misuse the culture will be profaned. Civilization, according to H.G. Wells, is a race between the forces of education and disaster. Leisure and the countless opportunities it provides can be a most valued component of community development or the converse if the population is not well-educated insofar as leisure arts and skills are concerned.

### ***Democracy and leisure***

Education, as a governmental function, recognizes the essential dignity and worth of the individual. The person is accorded a place commensurate with personal capacity and willingness to serve. Success is determined by one's ability to produce and cooperate with others. Democratic ideals are concerned with the individual's acceptance of the rights of others and in the employment of processes which preclude infringement upon the equitable acts of others.

The rules of the game must be recognized even as society's regulations are recognized. As an individual, the person may select specific recreational experiences, during leisure, and those who will be his or her companions in such a venture, yet full enjoyment of the experience requires submission to the collective choices and to the self-imposed laws. This is the essence of democracy. If it becomes the rule of life in leisure pursuit, it will be difficult to follow another principle in the other areas of living. Leisure opportunity, occurring almost everywhere there is democracy, is in conformity with the democratic ideal and fosters its general acceptance and application.

As the economic, civic and social organization has become more complex, requiring increasing regimentation of people even in a democracy, the freedom which people may still enjoy in leisure stands out in bold relief. The democratic principal of freedom strongly persists in leisure. The same necessity for regimentation in productive industry does not exist in leisure, although there is the ever-present danger that people might unwittingly yield this freedom to self-appointed or elected dictators. Dictators in totalitarian nations have demonstrated how leisure can be organized to serve the will of the dictator and the purpose of the State. The right to pursue happiness in leisure must be considered a basic precept in a democracy. In protecting this principle in leisure, the democratic ideal is sustained.

The concept of freedom in leisure imposes upon society the necessity of educating people for leisure. Democracy has been said to contain the seed of its own destruction. This is certainly true in relation to leisure. Individuals may interpret liberty as license, rather than as freedom with consequent responsibilities. The individual, therefore, may freely neglect to take advantage of leisure for purposes of growth and development; he or she may even use it in vulgarity, mediocrity and debauchery. He or she may destroy body, mind and finer sensibilities by excesses in leisure; or personal powers may be developed and enhanced knowledge, talent and satisfactions may occur by creative utilization of leisure through recreational endeavours.

## **Educational Outcome**

Education must prepare the individual so that an appreciation and a taste for worthwhile leisure activities will be achieved. Individual proclivity for one kind of activity instead of another is generally learned. Activity which is fulfilling for one person may be dissatisfying to someone else, without the same experience in education. Biological factors may have some bearing upon a given predisposition toward a specific form of activity, but the individual's attitude toward and taste for one form of leisure activity as opposed to another is largely acquired. Therefore, learning is of primary significance in defining what activities a person will engage in with a maximum of satisfaction.

No individual was born with a taste for reading good books, skilfully

participating in a variety of motor activities or performing great music. These proficiencies are acquired slowly and usually only with painstaking care. During the learning phase, much support must be rendered to the novice performer, by way of praise, stimulation and prediction of potential ability to compensate for the often painful presentiments when something new or unfamiliar is attempted. With diligence, the practice of new functions becomes pleasurable as increasing skill makes the performance smooth and easy, thus providing satisfaction. The education of people for their intelligent discrimination between valuable and worthless activities is a function of the learning process. In this way community development is fostered during leisure.

## **Conclusions and Principles**

1. Education is a function of the State.
2. All legal subdivisions are agents of the State and as such are responsible for carrying out State educational mandates.
3. Schools are the chief agencies for transmitting the cultural heritage; teaching values that reflect ethical and moral behaviour, differentiating between right and wrong, between valuable and banal, between fact and fiction.
4. Every curricular subject is the basis for potential positive leisure experience.
5. The comprehensive curriculum, at every level, must incorporate knowledge about leisure and apply it to complement any given curricular subject.
6. The schools must promote extracurricular activities based upon curricular subjects, e.g. physical education, home economics, crafts, performing arts, as well as clubs of various types concerned with the sciences, mathematics, language, arts, etc.
7. The school should serve as a community centre throughout the day and operate on a two-staff basis from morning until late night.
8. As a community centre, schools will serve the leisure and recreational needs of participants and offer tactical support on civic affairs, legal questions, family relations, health care, occupational counselling, etc.
9. The worthy use of leisure is a main principal of education, i.e. schools have a professional mandate to teach how leisure can be used by each person.
10. Leisure is opportunity.

# Leisure Education, Serious Leisure and Community Development

2

ROBERT A. STEBBINS

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Recognition of the link between community development and leisure studies seems to be of relatively recent origin. Only 2 years ago, Pedlar (1996) could recommend rethinking the concept of community development and incorporating the ideas of recreation and leisure as central aspects of the public good. She argued further that the field of leisure and recreation should develop reflective practitioners, who identify with the interests of the communities in which they work. In fact, the public good and well-being of the community are closely tied to the welfare of its individual members, where individuality and personal diversity are respected, but none the less balanced against the needs and preferences of the collective.

This chapter explores the leisure–community development link, noting where it is valid and where it is not, and noting how different kinds of leisure are tied to different kinds of development. For no one has yet examined the diversity of this area. Instead, specialists here seem content to be guided by a single, simplistic presupposition: leisure and recreation are unitary, undifferentiated phenomena that contribute to community development. Before turning to this question, however, it is necessary to consider the concept of community development itself.

## Community Development

After reviewing the pertinent literature, Pedlar (1996) concluded that the idea of development of a community assumes participation by its members in an activity resulting in improvement of one or more of its identifiable aspects.

Following Ploch (1976, p. 8) she says that 'normally such action leads to the strengthening of the community's pattern of human and institutional inter-relationships'. The emphasis in this literature is typically on process, especially self-determination, enhancement of human existence and collective interdependence. Here the role of the leisure professional is muted somewhat; he or she serves most effectively as an advisor for and catalyst of self-determination.

Education plays a key role in all this. It helps individuals to develop themselves and, by extension, helps communities develop as well. Through education, individuals become empowered, acquiring the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to pursue and achieve their own goals. The result is social transformation or significant positive individual and communal change. The role of the leisure professional in this process is to provide the aforementioned skills and knowledge. Hutchison and Nogradi (1996) paint a similar picture of community development, arguing further that it can be realized through leisure and recreation.

## The Leisure Framework

There is agreement in this field, then, that community development can occur when people pursue certain leisure activities. But what does this mean in real life; how in the course of everyday leisure living does development actually take place? This question can be answered in part by separating leisure into two broad categories: serious and casual.

The term serious leisure made its debut in leisure studies circles in 1982. The initial statement (Stebbins, 1982) and several more recent ones centred on the nature of serious leisure, which is now reasonably well expressed in what seems to have become the standard abbreviated definition of this type of activity:

Serious leisure is the systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist or volunteer activity that participants find so substantial and interesting that, in the typical case, they launch themselves on a career centered on acquiring and expressing its special skills, knowledge and experience.

(Stebbins, 1992, p. 3)

Given the widespread tendency to see the idea of career as applying strictly to occupations, it is important to note that, in this definition, the term is used much more broadly, following Goffman's (1961, pp. 127–128) elaboration of the idea of moral career. Broadly conceived, careers are available in all substantial, complicated roles, including especially those in work, leisure, deviance, politics, religion and interpersonal relationships.

To sharpen our understanding of it, serious leisure is commonly contrasted with 'casual' leisure or 'unserious' leisure, the immediately intrinsically rewarding, relatively short-lived pleasurable activity requiring little or no

special training to enjoy it (Stebbins, 1997). Its types include play (including dabbling), relaxation (e.g. sitting, napping, strolling), passive entertainment (e.g. TV, books, recorded music), active entertainment (e.g. games of chance, party games), sociable conversation and sensory stimulation (e.g. sex, eating, drinking). It is considerably less substantial and offers no career of the sort just described for serious leisure. Casual leisure can also be defined residually as all leisure not classifiable as amateur, hobbyist or career volunteering.

Serious leisure is further defined and distinguished from casual leisure by six special qualities (Stebbins, 1992, pp. 6–8), qualities found among amateurs, hobbyists and volunteers alike. One is their occasional need to persevere, as when confronting danger or managing stage fright or embarrassment. Serious leisure research shows, however, that positive feelings about the leisure activity come, to some extent, from sticking with it through thick and thin, from conquering such adversity. A second quality is, as already indicated, that of finding a career in the endeavour, shaped as it is by its own special contingencies, turning points and stages of achievement or involvement.

Careers in serious leisure commonly rest on a third quality: significant personal effort based on specially acquired knowledge, training or skill, and, indeed, all three at times. Examples include such valued acquisitions as showmanship, athletic prowess, scientific knowledge and long experience in a role. Fourth, eight durable benefits, or outcomes, of serious leisure have so far been identified, mostly from research on amateurs: self-actualization, self-enrichment, self-expression, regeneration or renewal of self, feelings of accomplishment, enhancement of self-image, social interaction and belongingness, and lasting physical products of the activity (e.g. a painting, scientific paper, piece of furniture). A further benefit – self-gratification or pure fun, which is considerably more evanescent than the preceding eight – is the one most often shared with casual leisure.

A fifth quality of serious leisure is the unique ethos that grows up around each instance of it, a central component of which is the special social world within which participants there realize their interests. David Unruh (1980, p. 277) defines the social world as:

amorphous, diffuse constellations of actors, organizations, events, and practices which have coalesced into spheres of interest and involvement for participants [and in which] it is likely that a powerful centralized authority structure does not exist. Another key component of the ethos of any particular pursuit is its subculture, which interrelates the diffuse and amorphous constellations by means of such elements as special norms, values, beliefs, moral principles, and performance standards.

Every social world contains four types of members: strangers, tourists, regulars and insiders (Unruh, 1979, 1980). The strangers are intermediaries who normally participate little in the leisure activity itself, but who none the less do something important to make it possible, for example, by managing



municipal parks (in amateur baseball), minting coins (in hobbyist coin collecting) and organizing the work of teachers' aids (in career volunteering). Tourists are temporary participants in a social world; they have come on the scene momentarily for entertainment, diversion or profit. Most amateur and hobbyist activities have publics of some kind, which are, at bottom, constituted of tourists. The clients of many volunteers can be similarly classified. The regulars routinely participate in the social world; in serious leisure, they are the amateurs, hobbyists and volunteers themselves. The insiders are those among them who show exceptional devotion to the social world they share, to maintaining it, to advancing it. In the studies of amateurs, such people have been analysed as devotees and contrasted with participants or regulars (Stebbins, 1992, pp. 46–48).

The sixth quality revolves around the preceding five: participants in serious leisure tend to identify strongly with their chosen pursuits. In contrast, casual leisure, although hardly humiliating or despicable, is none the less too fleeting, mundane and commonplace for most people to find a distinctive identity within it.

## **Serious Leisure and Community Development**

Using the scenario of the Information Age as backdrop, Reid (1995) argues that leisure can no longer be viewed solely as idle, casual, frivolous and self-indulgent. Rather it must now also be viewed as purposeful, in particular, as activity leading to individual as well as community development. These two together, he says, compose the foundation for participative citizenship, wherein citizens contribute in positive ways to the functioning of their community. Reid identifies serious leisure as the kind of activity that will form the central part of this foundation:

Much of work today is only useful in that it provides a means to a livelihood. New forms of individual and community contribution will become possible once the market is no longer the only mechanism for judging contribution. Many activities which are now done on a voluntary basis could be enhanced so that the community and those in need benefit. To do so requires new forms of social organization which place greater worth on those services. This is the essence of Stebbins' notion of serious leisure.

(Reid, 1995, pp. 112–113)

Reid goes on to note that this need for new social organization is an especially important legacy of the post-materialist society in which many people now live.

How does serious leisure contribute to community development in everyday life? Hoggett and Bishop (1985) offer a simple three-part typology for analysing the links with the local community found among many of the

amateur and hobbyist groups they studied, links that constitute what the authors call the group's environment. First, these groups feel a responsibility toward their community, which is sometimes reciprocated. For example, a drama group may tune one performance to a country-wide drama contest and another to the local liberal association. A few football clubs were sensitive to the difficult balance between retaining all local players and maintaining their edge by importing a good player from outside (Hoggett and Bishop, 1985, p. 36).

Second, Hoggett and Bishop found that some of their groups had ties with related professionals. Stebbins has also explored this link in art, science, sport and entertainment through the concept of the professional-amateur-public (P-A-P) system of relations and relationships. The various contributions amateurs make to the professions of which they are marginally a part is summarized by Stebbins (1992, pp. 38–41). For example, the two often serve the same publics. Moreover, a monetary and organizational relationship is frequently established when professionals educate, train, direct, coach, advise, organize and even perform with amateurs, and when amateurs come to comprise their public.

Third, Hoggett and Bishop (1985) found a link between the public sector and the hobbyist and amateur groups they studied. The latter sometimes provided facilities (e.g. playing fields, performance space, meeting rooms) and personnel capable of managing them. Some of these groups received government grants to help them reach their goals, an indirect acknowledgement perhaps of their contribution to the development of the community.

The links between career volunteering and the community are even more extensive. The taxonomy developed by Stebbins (1998a, pp. 74–80) consists of 16 types of organizational volunteering; it shows the great range and complexity of these links. Career volunteers provide a great variety of services in education, science, civic affairs (advocacy projects, professional and labour organizations), spiritual development, health, economic development, religion, politics, government (programmes and services), human relationships, recreation and the arts. Some of these volunteers work in the fields of safety or the physical environment, while others prefer to provide support services or the human necessities (e.g. food, clothing, shelter). Although much of career volunteering appears to be connected in some way with an organization of some sort, the scope of this leisure is possibly even broader, perhaps including the kinds of helping devoted individuals do for social movements or for neighbours and family.<sup>1</sup> Still, the definition of serious leisure restricts attention everywhere to volunteering in which the participant can find a career, in which there is more or less continuous and substantial helping, rather than one-off donations of money, organs, services and the like (Stebbins, 1996).

In short, career volunteers, even while they are reaping a range of powerful personal rewards from their activities, are also making significant contributions

to community and society, exemplified by their work in important public services and major public events (e.g. fairs, festivals, sports events). The larger collectivity benefits substantially from their application of assiduously acquired skills, knowledge and experience, while they benefit personally from the acquisition and expression of these skills and from the expressions of appreciation received from the recipients of the volunteered service. This broad, social utility of volunteers is part of the serious leisure perspective as applied to them and their activities. But a note of caution: in promoting the principle of leisure volunteering as an important personal and social resource, it is crucial to ensure that the connotation of frivolity so commonly associated with the word 'leisure' does not subvert the thinking of either the people who volunteer or the people who employ them. The *serious* leisure designation may be advantageous here.

## Types of Volunteers

Volunteers, however, are not all of a kind. Community development depends on three types, but only the first two see themselves as involved in leisure. *Key volunteers* are highly committed community servants, working in one or two enduring, official, responsible posts within one or more grassroots groups or organizations. Key volunteers are distinguished from the broader category of *serious leisure volunteers* by the central role they play in their collectivities and hence in community development. Serious leisure volunteers, key or otherwise, often serve with *casual leisure volunteers*, whose activities are highly diverse (e.g. cleaning up hiking trails, cooking hot dogs at a church picnic, taking tickets at the door for a performance by the local community theatre). The third type is *voluntary giving*, the magnanimous donation of blood, money, clothing and the like. These acts of kindness, although not normally experienced as leisure by the donor, can nevertheless be a prominent force in community development.

Key volunteers are the movers in the world of community development, for it is they who run the grassroots groups and organizations on which such change is founded. Smith (1997) defines these entities as local, formal and semiformal collectivities which are commonly composed purely of volunteers and which differ significantly from volunteer programmes, since these are created and run by work organizations. President, vice-president, treasurer and secretary are the most common posts in the grassroots groups and organizations, but chairing an important committee or directing a major programme, for example, can also contribute greatly to the maintenance and development of the local community. These positions are not remunerated in the typical case, although in exceptional circumstances (and they becoming rare), a president or director may receive a minor honorarium. The organizations, which are usually small or medium-sized, are legally chartered, whereas the groups

are not, even though they have existed long enough on the local scene to have become highly visible. It is probably true that most volunteer-based community development collectives are organizations as described here, since the informal groups tend to form primarily for non-instrumental reasons as clubs and friendship groups.

Key volunteers are further distinguished from other types of volunteers by at least four criteria. First, presidents, treasurers and the like have complex and extensive responsibilities, the execution of which affects in important ways the functioning of their group or organization. Second, such positions are enduring. Officers are usually elected for a year, and chairs and directors may serve even longer terms. Third, the success of the groups and organizations in which they serve contributes significantly to the maintenance and development of the local community. Fourth, key volunteers have a high degree of commitment to their collectivities and through them, research clearly shows (Stebbins, 1998b), to these two community goals.

## **Contributions to the Community**

Many of the contributions that amateurs, hobbyists and career volunteers make to self and community have been described elsewhere (Stebbins, unpublished observations). A few examples must suffice here. Thus serious leisure participants contribute significantly to self and community by participating in the social worlds associated with their chosen forms of serious leisure. There each type of member (stranger, tourist, regular, insider) finds a distinctive sense of belonging and involvement, while making his or her special contribution to that kind of leisure and, through it, to the community. This sense stands out in relief in the author's studies in this field. It is also evident in Mittelstaedt's (1995) detailed description of the types of participants inhabiting the bustling social world of American Civil War reenactments. Here each type gains immense satisfaction from his or her own special involvements.

Additionally, to the extent it is pursued with other people, serious leisure can contribute significantly to communal and even societal integration. For instance, Thompson (1992) found that the members of a women's tennis association in Australia, who met weekly for matches, came from a range of different social classes and age groups. In a similar vein, as part of the observational component of a study of francophone volunteers, the author sat on the board of directors of a French-language community organization composed of a realtor, teacher, banker, homemaker, data analyst, business executive, high school student and himself, a sociologist and university professor. There was also a nearly equal representation of both sexes who, together, ranged in age from 16 to around 65. Likewise, Parker (1994) describes how certain kinds of volunteers, when they exercise their citizenship rights by

taking an active part in running the society in which they live, contribute to communal integration at the same time.

Furthermore, many serious leisure groups have a far-reaching salutary effect on the general welfare of the community. Put more concisely, they benefit their publics in such important ways as performing with a community orchestra or hosting a star night through the local astronomical society. The latter event is open to anyone interested in observing the evening sky with the portable telescopes of the society's amateur members. Finnegan (1989) describes the complex, positive effect on the different music publics of entire local amateur-professional-hobbyist music scene of the English new town of Milton Keynes.

Finally, note that contributing to the success of a collective project and to the maintenance and development of the group, be it an organization, informal group or the wider community, constitute two substantial rewards available to those who go in for serious leisure (on the rewards of serious leisure; Stebbins, unpublished observations). Further, this happy juxtaposition of personal reward and community contribution in the same action turns out to be the central mechanism linking serious leisure and participative citizenship in the process of community development. In fact, this link has already been observed, albeit in far more general terms, by Reid (1997) (see earlier in this chapter), Parker (1994) and Mason-Millet (1996). The latter discusses several career volunteer projects, which over the years, have resulted in community development, projects that she says can be understood as leisure activities.<sup>2</sup>

## Conclusions

What remains to be done is to systematically explore all the contributions that the various forms of serious leisure can make to collective life. This is no easy task, to be sure. Yet in this regard, the study of citizen participation in planning for healthy communities (career volunteering) conducted by Arai and Pedlar (1997) could serve as a useful model. Guided by a qualitative exploratory research design, they interviewed a representative sample of participants in a healthy communities project. Participation observation is also likely to be an indispensable part of these explorations, for the community contributions of particular serious leisure projects may not always be recognized and expressed by amateur, hobbyist and volunteer respondents in interviews held with them.

## Notes

1 I am indebted to Stanley Parker for calling my attention to this possibility.

- 2 Mason-Millet, apparently unaware of the limited literature on volunteering as leisure, organizes her discussion around what she sees as the novel idea that, when done as participative citizenship, volunteering is in reality leisure.

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# Community Development through Leisure Education: Conceptual Approaches

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ATARA SIVAN

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## Introduction

One of the features common to both leisure and community is that they each serve as sources of meaning in people's lives. The meanings attached to both terms derive from a wide spectrum of values, attitudes, feelings, thoughts and aspirations that may vary between individuals and societies. Education has long been recognized as an important process aiming at the development of individuals and society. This has been implemented in a variety of formal and informal settings and frameworks. The growing awareness of the benefits of leisure and the need to enhance people's quality of life ties up leisure with education. In a wider context, the recognition of human rights and the commitment to the idea that people can take control of their lives serve as the foundation for community development. The present chapter merges the concepts of leisure education and community development by introducing a general framework of education for leisure through educational settings within the community. The chapter examines the principles underlying the process of leisure education and those of community development and draws upon them to develop the suggested framework for educating for leisure. Illustrations are provided from two studies which have been recently conducted among administrators, teachers and students on leisure education and the role of schools.

## Leisure Education and Community Development: an Integration

Leisure education is looked upon as an educational process by which individuals learn to deal with important aspects of their free time. With the



growing recognition of the importance of leisure to the development of individuals and society, the most general aim of leisure education has been recognized as the enhancement of the quality of individuals' lives. Being a developmental process, leisure education is part of socialization. The concept of leisure education has been evolving in several disciplines representing a variety of meanings of leisure. In the late 1970s, the need to educate for leisure was explored by Brightbill and Mobley (1977), arguing that while entering the leisure-centred society, it is essential to prepare individuals to live a satisfying and meaningful life in leisure. In their views, the process of leisure education includes values, interests, appreciations and skills and it is aimed at the different needs of the individual. Through this process people get to know themselves better, their abilities, talents and interests and they become more directed in their learning and behaviour towards society. Besides its individual goal, leisure education aims at shaping the environment so as to enable people to use their leisure in a creative and rewarding way without depending on organized resources. The authors further maintain that learning the wise and beneficial use of leisure does not mean sacrificing individual autonomy.

Similar concepts appear in the work by Mundy and Odum (1979) which regards leisure education as a developmental process aimed at enhancing the individual's quality of life. They presented a list of operational definitions implying that leisure education is an ongoing process which enables people to understand the role of leisure in their lives and to learn the ways through which they can fulfil their needs in their leisure involvement.

Hayes (1977) has discussed models for leisure education from a leisure counselling point of view. According to this approach, leisure education is a developmental, remedial, preventive and therapeutic process. It includes a variety of aspects such as: personal values, individual goals and objectives, self-confidence and self-esteem skills, knowledge and competencies, and successful experiences.

The above views have been translated into practice in the production of resources for educators concerning the implementation of leisure education. In a resource for educators created by Cherry and Woodburn (1978), leisure education has been defined as an ongoing process that can enable people to discover the meaning of leisure, their leisure potential, the way of making leisure part of their lifestyles and the development of skills necessary for their own leisure fulfilment. Through the process of leisure education, individuals increase their knowledge and understanding of the nature and significance of leisure in their lives, they develop their personal resources and skills, and become more aware of their personal values and attitudes towards different dimensions of leisure.

In a comprehensive review of professional literature on leisure education, Berner *et al.* (1984) have presented a list of definitions of leisure education, which included two additional dimensions. These are the development of a

sense of freedom and enjoyment, which positively influence people's lives, and the development of positive leisure lifestyles.

More recently, the concept of leisure education has been examined in relation to programme planning, to the role that different agencies play in this process and to the benefit of the process for populations with special needs. Quite a number of models and frameworks have been suggested for using leisure education for people with disabilities (Fine *et al.*, 1985; Falvey, 1986; Joswiak, 1989). Dattilo and Williams (1991) have presented leisure education as a dynamic process, which includes the aspects of human rights and self-determination, and involves a combination of core and balance approach. They asserted that through leisure education people learn that 'they have the power to improve their lives through leisure participation that is rewarding and fulfilling' (Dattilo and Williams, 1991, p. 8).

Community development has been defined differently by various scholars and practitioners. However, the common feature in most of the definitions is their view of it as a process through which people of the community plan and undertake actions to improve their communities. Some of the main principles of community development, which appear in many definitions, are empowerment and self-determination, collective action and human rights (Kenny, 1994; Rubin and Rubin, 1986; Maser, 1997). Due to its concern with changing attitudes and practices, promoting receptivity to change and developing people's capacity to judge the effects of their activities, the process of community development has been viewed as an educational one (United Nations, 1971).

According to Kenny (1994) the process of community development consists of six elements which can occur simultaneously. The six elements are information, authenticity, vision, pragmatism, strategy and transformation. Although these elements overlap, they are characterized by certain features. Information relates to understanding the way in which the society functions, authenticity refers to the individual input and vision refers to the consideration of alternative ways to go about things. Pragmatism emphasizes the actual facts in terms of process and practices, strategy deals with setting the plans for changes and transformation happens when there are changes to the existing structures. An additional element is evaluation, where the changes are critically evaluated.

Most of the principles of leisure education link strongly with the basic principles of community development. Although the emphasis in the process of leisure education is on development of the individual and expression of self-fulfilment and enjoyment, it also touches upon the benefits of the community and society as a whole. Many scholars, who have pointed out the importance of individual values, also referred to the importance of certain social values to be developed through the process. These aspects link strongly to the process of community development in which the collective action serves as a bridge between personal and collective aspects of the community (Rubin and Rubin, 1986).

The above perceptions of leisure education and community development point to the similarities between these two processes. Both are educational and are concerned with human rights, self-determination and empowerment. Since leisure is perceived as a common need for all individuals and since the community comprises individuals, society's responsibility to assist individuals to meet their leisure needs can be viewed as an important aspect of community development.

One possible linkage between the two processes can be illustrated with regard to the above six elements of community development presented by Kenny (1994). These elements can be applied to the process of leisure education and serve as basic guidelines for implementation of this process. When examined in light of the process of leisure education, the elements and their related actions can be presented as follows:

Information: supply information about places that are available for recreation activities.

Authenticity: provide people with the opportunities to identify what their leisure needs are.

Vision: help people to discover what leisure means to them and understand the importance of leisure in their society.

Pragmatism: help people to identify their own skills and abilities that they can use in their leisure.

Strategy: help people to choose leisure activities that meet their own needs.

Transformation: facilitate people's observation of changes in their lifestyles as a result of their leisure involvement.

Evaluation: encourage people to reflect on their leisure involvement and its effect on their lives.

In addition to the definitions and elements of the two processes, some of the suggested strategies for community development are also those recommended for leisure education. Drawing on the benefits of experiential education, Denise and Haris (1989) have suggested the use of this approach for community development. The same approach is highly recommended for leisure education. When undertaken as part of the school curriculum, such an approach allows students to become directly involved through doing and to better reflect on those experiences undertaken outside the formal classroom learning. Similarly, different strategies recommended for leisure education such as facilitation and community involvement (Sivan, 1996) play a significant role in the process of community development.

## **Leisure Education Within School Contexts of the Community**

Schools have been perceived as major socialization agents in the community. The role that school should play in the process of leisure education has long

been advocated. The reasons for such advocacy lie in the formal place of school among other institutions in the community, the educational aims of schooling and the potential that school holds for undertaking the process of leisure education.

Schools are the primary and the most common educational institutions in all societies. As part of their process of teaching and educating, school systems can contribute to various important aspects of individuals' lives including their leisure. As for the educational aims of school, the preparation for leisure has been an evolving issue in different countries. Thus, for example, a leisure education curriculum for schools has been developed recently in Israel (Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport, 1995). In Hong Kong, a recent document on the school curriculum has emphasized the significant role that school should play in helping students to use their leisure wisely for their personal development as well as for the development of their community (Curriculum Development Council, 1993).

The suggested framework for leisure education within school contexts in the community should carefully translate the aim of leisure education into operational objectives linked to the educational objectives of the school system. Furthermore, it should be tied to the cultural context of society to allow continuity and cooperation with other agents such as the family and the community. Also, both the cognitive and affective domains of development should be considered. The objectives could be divided into three main groups. One comprises knowledge, understanding and awareness, the second embraces behaviour, habits and skills, and the third includes values and attitudes.

The first group, which relates to knowledge, understanding and awareness, consists of familiarity with a variety of leisure resources and activities as well as with the cultural heritage of society. It includes the development of awareness of the role of leisure in the individual's life and in society as a whole as well as exposure to the way that creativity differs between communities and lifestyles. In order to facilitate the individuals' needs and inclinations in this area, they should also become more familiar with criteria for choosing and evaluating possibilities for their leisure activities. As part of this process, individuals should also be made aware of the hazards of pursuing leisure activities which may be harmful when being overused or abused.

The second group, which refers to behaviour, habits and skills, comprises an experiential learning of a range of leisure activities, suitable for the individual, which could also establish a basis for developing future hobbies. In addition, individuals should learn relaxation techniques for their own health promotion. They should also carry out volunteer and cooperative activities aimed at sharing and helping their community.

The third group, which is concerned with values and attitudes, consists of the affective domain of leisure education and includes taking into consideration the individuals' values and feelings underlying their preference of certain leisure activities to others.

### ***Channels and strategies for leisure education in schools***

Four main areas should be contemplated when implementing leisure education in educational systems. These are: (i) formal frameworks, (ii) informal frameworks, (iii) teaching and learning methods, and (iv) the personnel involved in the process.

Within the formal frameworks of the school context, which mostly refer to classroom learning, it is recommended that leisure should not be taught as a separate subject but should be incorporated into a variety of subjects and learning activities. The underlying rationale is that each subject has the potential to contribute to the achievement of the leisure education objectives. In addition, special supporting activities, through which the students could be exposed to a variety of leisure experiences, should be planned and organized along with the existing study units. These can include field trips, special projects involving the community, talks and other examples of different forms of creativity which exist within the school-related context.

In addition to the existing formal frameworks, most of which are formally assessed, the programme suggests informal frameworks which are based on several important principles that are highly relevant to the process. These include: trial and error, reciprocity, participation based on freedom of choice, structural flexibility, enjoyment and involvement with the community outside school.

When implementing leisure education, students should be given the option of trying various activities without carrying any penalty for bad performance. In order to apply the principle of freedom of choice, a variety of activities should be offered to the students. After trying several activities in a supportive environment, students can make an informed decision as to the activity in which they would like to be engaged. This would tend to increase their commitment to participation.

The principle of reciprocity is similar to some extent to modelling. The teachers or the co-ordinators are the facilitators of the learning experience and as such they share their experience with the students and guide them.

The implementation of leisure education through informal frameworks should be regarded as complementary to its implementation via formal frameworks. Important factors to be emphasized throughout the process are the teaching and learning methods.

Leisure education should be based on experiential and creative learning without the need to measure the achievement of the learners. It should not be confined to the classroom or the school setting and it should involve other agents. The process should reach the family and the community and make use of available resources. Leisure education could be incorporated into ongoing activities which are part of the curriculum such as trips, parties, school breaks and special event days.

With regard to the manpower involved in leisure education, it is desirable

to have teachers and co-ordinators, whose area is highly relevant to leisure education, at the early stages of leisure education. At later stages, the process could include classroom and school co-ordinators, teachers and counsellors. All those involved in the process should play the role of facilitators.

## **Leisure Education Within School-related Contexts of the Community**

It has been recognized (Barbour and Barbour, 1997) that apart from schools, different community agencies also have an impact on the education of children. Learning is done through various channels and in different places such as recreational, aesthetic and religious. While implementing leisure education in school, efforts should be made to support implementation through these agencies within school-related contexts in the community. The following strategies suggested in the *WLRA International Charter for Leisure Education* (1993) could then be adopted:

**Advocacy:** community organizations should be encouraged to include leisure education offerings.

**Continuity and change:** both the continuity of existing leisure patterns and the acquisition of new patterns should be fostered.

**Linkages:** more linkages should be established between schools and other socialization agents within the community as well as recreation services at all levels. These linkages would allow a better supply of leisure experiences, guidance and services to a wide range of people within the community.

**Integration:** the school and the community leisure offering and services should be integrated to expose people to and allow them to participate in a variety of leisure opportunities.

**Facilitation:** existing leisure needs should be facilitated and new experiences, which are beneficial for the individual and the community, should be taught and encouraged.

**Social intervention:** innovative leisure services should be developed to meet the diverse needs of people living in different communities.

**Effective involvement:** community residents should be involved in collective planning and programming processes and in taking responsibilities for effective outcomes.

**Action learning:** community members should be guided to reflect on their own decisions relating to their leisure involvement through a continuous inquiry, which involves planning, action, observation and reflection.

**Networking:** with recent developments in information technology, more efforts should be made to utilize it for reaching out, advocacy and connectivity purposes, especially for those who are unable to get the information through different channels.

## Leisure Education for Community Development: an International and a Local Perspective

The above-suggested framework for leisure education through school and school-related contexts within the community emphasizes the importance of implementing the process through educational settings within the community. Any programme which aims at the development of people of the community should seek their input. The following section presents findings of two studies undertaken to solicit the views of administrators, teachers and students on the process of leisure education in school settings within the community. The first is an international survey on leisure education curricula and the second is a study undertaken in Hong Kong among school teachers and students. Both studies employed a questionnaire as their main tool.

### *An international survey on leisure education*

The first study (Sivan and Ruskin, 1998) was conducted in an attempt to find out what has been done in different countries in terms of leisure education curriculum development within schools. A questionnaire was sent to 25 country representatives. Nineteen have responded, out of which ten were from Europe (Denmark, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, The Netherlands, Portugal, Republic of Ireland, United Kingdom and Yugoslavia); six were from Asia (Australia, Hong Kong, Israel, Japan, Korea and New Zealand); two from North America (Canada and USA); and one from Africa (Republic of Botswana).

Table 3.1 presents the channels for implementing leisure education in schools among different countries who participated in the survey. Of the 15

**Table 3.1.** Channels for implementing leisure education in schools – an international survey.

Channel	No. of countries (%)
Events	12 (80)
Learning through recreation activity	11 (73.3)
Hobbies	11 (73.3)
Activities in school recesses	11 (73.3)
Outing	10 (66.7)
Community involvement	9 (60)
Teaching a leisure subject by different school subjects, as major focus of attention to be studied from various angles	7 (46.7)
Leisure education units	6 (40)
Planned instruction of leisure concepts incorporated into the school programme	5 (33.3)
Integration of leisure education into each and every subject	5 (33.3)
Total	15

countries that responded to this question the majority have used more than one channel. The most popular strategies were those related to recreational and special activities, including special events and social activities, learning through recreation activities, school clubs, social activities, hobbies, outings and community involvement. The less popular channels were those related to the formal study. These were leisure education units, integration of leisure education into each subject and planned instruction of leisure concepts incorporated into the school programme.

### ***A local study conducted in Hong Kong***

A research into the attitudes of school teachers and students towards leisure education and the role of schools was undertaken in Hong Kong (Sivan, 1991). A total of 1187 students and 105 teachers from seven secondary schools geographically distributed around the territory participated in the study. The questionnaire consisted of sets of questions relating to the role of schools as socialization agents in general, the process of leisure education and the role of schools as socialization agents for leisure.

Table 3.2 presents the responses given by teachers and students to different statements concerning the role of schools in preparation for community development. When given the choice, both parties perceived that schools should supply both the knowledge and the practical skills for students' maximum involvement in their community.

When asked about the most successful channels for implementing leisure education, the majority of both teachers and students pointed out the importance of participating in leisure experience. Table 3.3 shows the views of teachers and students. It can be seen clearly that the significance of involving the community has been acknowledged. Both parties regarded the cooperation with

**Table 3.2.** HK teachers' and students' views towards the role of school in preparation for community development.

<i>Secondary schools should supply to their students the following necessary elements for their maximum involvement in their community:</i>	Teachers (%)	Students (%)
Only knowledge	2.9	4.2
Both the knowledge and the practical skills, with an emphasis on knowledge	47.6	27.5
Both the knowledge and the practical skills	41.7	52.3
Both the knowledge and the practical skills, with an emphasis on the practical skills	7.8	13.9
Only the practical skills	0	2.1



**Table 3.3.** HK teachers' and students' views towards the most successful strategies for implementing leisure education.

<i>Leisure education should . . .</i>	Teachers (%)	Students (%)
Be carried out in cooperation with other community agencies	94.9	81.9
Occur through participation in various leisure experiences	91.9	87.6
Include students' involvement in social affairs of the community	87.9	82.2
Take place while combining both academic study in the classroom and participation in various leisure experiences	72.7	72.4
Be taught in the classroom just as any other academic subject	30.7	39.6

other community agencies as well as involvement in social affairs of the community as successful channels for implementing leisure education.

## Concluding Remarks

This chapter has merged the two important processes of leisure education and community development. Both processes, which are similar in terms of their characteristics and basic elements and strategies, are significant for the development of individuals and society. Leisure education can be best utilized for community development if it is implemented in school and school-related contexts in collaboration with other community agencies. The results of the international and local studies shed more light on the actual and the desired ways in which the process is and should be implemented. It is quite encouraging to discover that various strategies are implemented in different countries while utilizing the school system. The positive views of teachers and students towards student involvement in social affairs of the community and community involvement in leisure education, allude to the need to employ such strategies for better utilization of leisure education. It is hoped that more leisure education programmes can be developed and facilitated in different communities around the world in order to contribute to the personal development of people and enhance their quality of life.

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# Leisure Education, Quality of Life and Community Development: Toward a Systemic and Holistic Coping and Resilient Model for the Third Millennium

4

JOSEPH LEVY

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## Introduction

While civilization may have progressed technologically into the cyberspace age, the human body, mind and spirit has not changed much over the last 3 million years. People are still biologically constructed to use the same fight-flight strategies for coping with everyday stresses and hassles. Modern civilizations may have developed sophisticated drugs and other remedial action plans, but the effect of stress, loneliness, fear and abandonment on the human body has not changed for millions of years.

How do we create meaningful and caring communities which will be more responsive and sensitive to the needs of the modern individual, family and community? That is the primordial question facing modern human services as we move into the age of existential crisis (Levy, 1997).

This chapter builds upon the work the author has carried out over the past 30 years in developing a model of quality of life, health, community development, resiliency, coping and stress management, which is built on the notion that humankind has always survived in the social context of the family, neighbourhood, community, nation and universe by finding meaning in life through personal affirmation and universal confirmation. As the old saying goes, 'no man or woman is an island unto itself'. Hence the integrative nature of leisure education, quality of life, health and community development in helping modern society find and introduce meaning into all facets of life.

## **Modern Day Disease: Lack of Personal Affirmation and Universal Confirmation**

It is estimated that well over 75% of all modern day chronic diseases can be attributed to a breakdown in the socioemotional–spiritual composition of the individual interacting with his or her community. It is no longer the plague, the sabre-tooth tiger or malaria that kills us prematurely. It is insecurity, poor self-image, emotional crisis and a myriad of other psychosocial issues that leave the human body open to the ravages of heart disease, cancer, mental illness, alcoholism and highway carnage.

## **A Definition of Community: From Individual Risk Factors to Community Risk Conditions**

Personal affirmation and universal confirmation can only be actualized within the context of a community. We propose the following sociological definition of community based upon the work of Roland L. Warren (1966). ‘We shall consider a community to be that combination of social units and systems which perform the major social functions having locality relevancy’ (Warren, 1996, p. 9). Warren identifies five major functions of community:

- production,
- socialization,
- social control,
- social participation, and
- mutual support.

One of the major paradigm shifts that is associated with the ‘community’ model of health and social services is that we now target the community as the major ‘intervention’ target as opposed to the individual. In short, the community development model recognizes that many of the problems and solutions are community-based as opposed to individual-based. The concept of ‘individual risk factors’ is now extended to ‘community risk conditions’. Rather than doing ‘victim blaming’ and victim fixing, we now also do community blaming and community fixing.

The term ‘risk conditions’ describes general societal and environmental forces or conditions over which persons have little or no individual control and which are known to affect health status. Risk conditions are modifiable only by social reform on a community basis; that is, a change in risk conditions requires some form of organized, collective action leading to, or supporting, public policy change. Risk conditions in contemporary public health literature are also referred to as sociodemographic variables, determinants of health or basic prerequisites to health.

**Risk conditions**

- Poverty,
- low educational/occupational status,
- dangerous, stressful work,
- discrimination (sexism, ageism, racism, etc.),
- low political-economic power,
- large gaps in income/power within a community, region, nation.

(Promoting Heart Health in Canada, 1993)

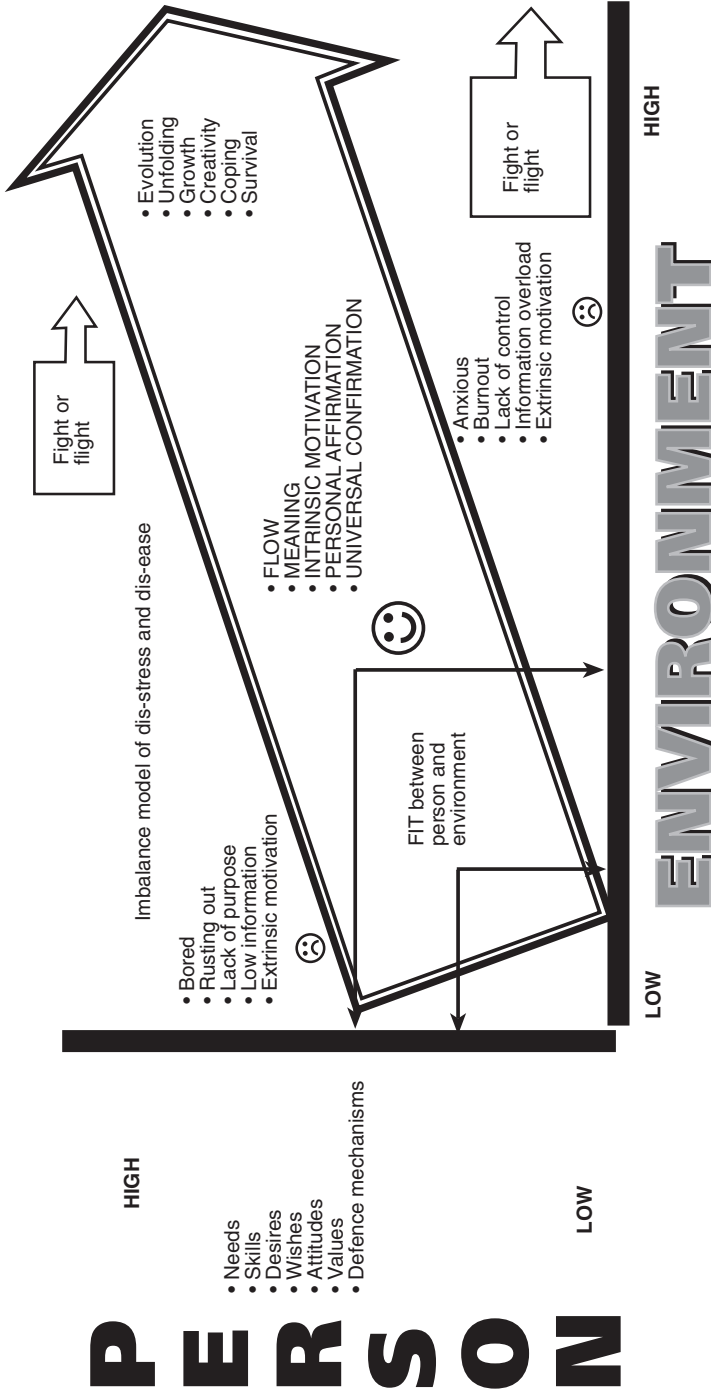
**Coping and Resiliency Through Personal Affirmation and Universal Confirmation**

Coping or resiliency is the capability of individuals, families, groups, communities or nations to find meaning and purpose in their life space which then allows them to successfully navigate both minor and major adversities, hassles, crises and threats to the body, mind and soul. Those individuals who are able to find meaning in life and are able to cope, we describe as being ego-syntonic or hardy and resilient. Those individuals who are unable to cope may engage in inappropriate and ego-dystonic 'fight' or 'flight' responses. The role of community development systems is to provide the opportunity for the evolution of meaning into the lives of its citizens through a growth-enhancing community life.

Today, we have come to realize that one's ability to cope with stress is a complex interaction of both individual and community variables. It is no longer acceptable to deal with these complex health issues in a linear univariable fashion. The 'systems' approach takes an interactive, holistic and multivariable approach to these problems.

Human activities are transforming the global environment at an ever-increasing rate. These changes manifest themselves in many forms including ozone depletion, tropical deforestation, and increased atmospheric concentration of gases that trap heat and may warm the global climate. The atmosphere, oceans and soil base are limited in their capacity to sustain life; the deterioration of resource stocks cannot continue indefinitely without threatening the survival of humanity. In *Methodology for Large Scale Systems* (Sage, 1977:1), Andrew P. Page argues that a 'systematic method of dealing with complex systems has much to offer with respect to ameliorating many problems confronting us today.' Sage's emphasis on 'systems thinking' is a valuable contribution to protecting the global commons, because it offers a broader, more holistic approach to integrating human well-being, institutional renewal, and ecological stewardship.

(Levy *et al.*, 1998, p. 31)



Demands – Requirements – Challenges – Opportunities – Equipment – Socio-cultural attitudes

**Fig. 4.1.** A person × environment community conceptual framework for describing the basic conditions of being humanly authentic effective and healthy in an age of de-humanization, de-communitization and disease. Source: J. Levy (unpublished).

All human efforts at searching for meaning in life, whether personal, vocational or other, are a response to complex person  $\times$  environment responses (Levy, 1991). Summarized in Table 4.1 are a few of the myriad of possible person and community determinants of coping or finding meaning in life.

## Meaning in Life as a Determinant of Coping, Resiliency and Health

I have selected the variable 'meaning in life' as a major determinant of quality of life, coping, resiliency and health, since it relates so well to the concept of community development.

### Importance of Meaning in Difficult Situations

The critical role that meaning plays in all aspects of life has been both existentially and empirically documented (Milkman and Sunderwirth, 1993). Victor Frankl, the concentration camp survivor, who became a very famous psychiatrist in New York, wrote in his optimistic book entitled *Man's Search for Meaning* (1963) that difficult external situations provide people with a unique opportunity and challenge. No stranger to suffering, Frankl carefully documents his own spiritual journey inside a Nazi concentration camp during World War II. For Frankl the important question is how people choose to bear the burden of their suffering. His belief was that finding meaning in life is the primary motivational force of people and he strongly believed that there is nothing that can so effectively help one to survive the worst conditions as the knowledge that there is meaning in one's life. Moreover, in his unique therapy approach called 'logotherapy' or meaning therapy. Frankl suggests to clients that they should not search for an abstract meaning of life but rather for their own specific meaning in their circumstance. According to this approach, each person's life has a unique meaning and life plan and one must question oneself to look for and construct this unique meaning.

**Table 4.1.** Person determinants of quality of life, coping or finding meaning in life.

Personality	Physical/biological	Mindset	Skill level
● Self-concept	● Weight	● Attitudes	● Motoric
● Anxiety level	● Height	● Values	● Cognitive
● Locus of control	● Body type	● Motives	● Musical
● Introvert-extrovert	● Strength	● Traditions	
● Optimism-pessimism	● Age	● Beliefs	
● Impulsive-reflective	● Gender	● Religion	
● Coping style		● Life history	
● Arousal levels		● Life plan	



According to Frankl, difficult and even traumatic situations resulting in suffering can move people along in their quest for meaning if they are able to find meaning in the suffering. The notion that meaning in life can modulate the effects of negative life events and situations has powerful practice and policy implications for community development workers. As I will very shortly demonstrate, the concept of meaning in life, which is at the heart of quality of life, is operationalized through such variables as optimism, joy, perceived control, effectance motivation, intrinsic motivation and a sense of coherence, flow or unity with the universe. Actually, the latest research (Jankey, 1992; Milkman and Sunderwirth, 1992) seems to suggest that it is not necessary to have high levels of control and optimism to have optimal quality of life and health. What is most critical is that one has high meaningfulness in life (intrinsic motivation).

Following a comprehensive review of the literature on quality of life, meaning, coping, resiliency and hardiness as it relates to disease and premature death in modern societies, a very solid pattern was revealed of individuals who were not able to enjoy life, spend time with their family and friends and have a sense of meaning in their community. To be more exact the research has been divided according to the following two categories: *person* factors and *community* factors. In order to stay within the space requirements of this chapter, the community factor has been subdivided into: *familial* and *social support* factors.

Table 4.3 presents those factors within the *person*, which have been reported to contribute toward meaning, healthy coping, resiliency and hardiness. I have taken the liberty of modifying a model recently produced by one of my graduate students in Psychology who carried out a PhD thesis entitled 'Optimism, perceived control, and sense of coherence and their relationship to quality of life' (Jankey, 1992).

As must be obvious from Fig. 4.2, the positive meaning and experience in life, made up of a vibrant, community, family and other support systems (conception) contributed toward the development of very resilient *personality* and *belief* systems, which in turn was a driving force behind a myriad of strong and persistent *quality of life strategies*. Environmental factors which have been

**Table 4.2.** Environmental determinants of meaning in life.

Political	Social	Economic	Cultural	Ecological
Neo-Liberal	Family	Socio-economic status	Sexism	Pollution
Welfare State	Friends	Poverty	Racism	Water
Communitarian	Clubs	Education	Ageism	Soil
Social Democratic	Community	Work	Equity	Sun
		Housing	Justice	
		Transportation	Democracy	
			Universality	

**Table 4.3.** Person factors which contribute to meaning, coping, health, quality of life and hardiness.

Factors	Description
Responsibility and accountability	Assume realistic responsibility and accountability of events in their life
Cognitive problem-solving skills	Able to examine objectively the probability of success and failure
Critical thinking skills	Read, think, analyse, retrieve, compile information
Self-efficacy	Effectancy motivation
Control	Internal locus of control
PMA	Positive mental attitude approach
History of success, joy in life, pleasure, smell the roses	Small successes, incremental strategies, never for a loss of pleasure, intrinsic motivation
Suspension of reality	Detach oneself from bad news
Support seeking	Good source of social support and knows how to plug into energy and sustenance when needed

clearly identified as contributing toward the development of meaning in life are the family, education, religion, work, army and community social support systems.

**Table 4.4.** Family and social support systems contributing to meaning in life, coping, resiliency, quality of life.

Factors
Positive parent–child attachment
Positive parent–child interactions
Effective parenting
Structure and rules in society (family, school, community)
Roles and responsibility for all family members
Good family coping strategies and family hardiness
Parent and care-giver expectations of a positive future for their children
Supportive spouses
Strong, caring, healthy, just and consistent family network
Supportive network beyond the nuclear family
Participation in community (volunteer, coach, church member)
Positive school, army, camp experience (group)
Responsibilities to community outside the home (Boy Scout, Girl Guide, home visitor)

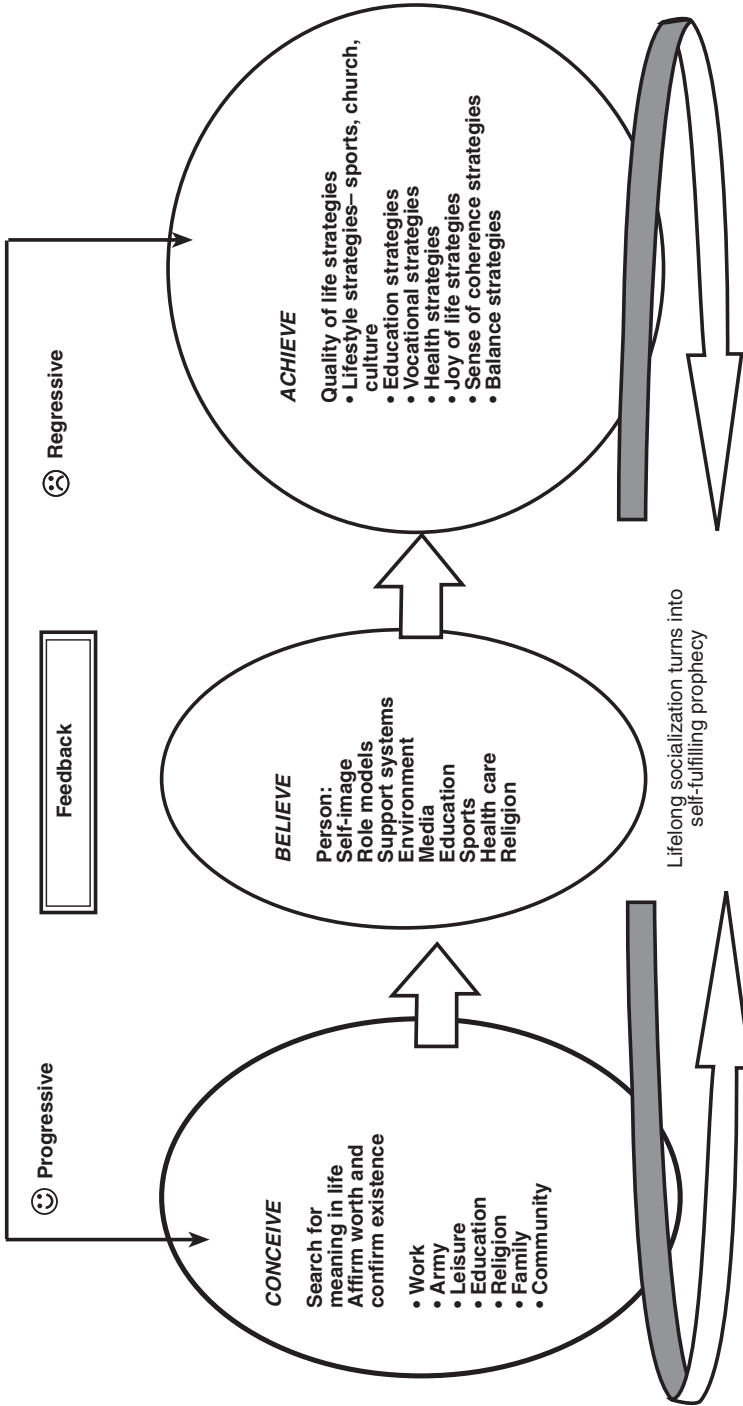


Fig. 4.2. Person factors, environmental factors, meaning in life, quality of life and their feedback.

## The Role Community Workers May Play in Enhancing and Sustaining Meaning in Peoples' Lives

Assuming that indeed meaning in life does cause quality of life to go up, how should community workers, community planners and community policy developers proceed with making peoples' lives more meaningful?

### *Too much physical not enough existential (meaning in life)*

To begin with, there has been a tradition in community recreation and leisure services of paying too much attention to the physical health and not enough attention to the emotional and spiritual health of the clients. Historically, parks and recreation programmes in North America have not addressed the existential needs of clients. Can you imagine what would happen if you asked a 25-year-old unemployed woman, who is also a single parent, who is taking part in a volleyball game, to think about her 'meaning' in life. Historically, community development workers have not seen their role as consciousness-raising catalysts.

Frankl, suggests that workers in all fields, should provide their clients with insight into how they themselves can make their lives meaningful. Although each community member is ultimately responsible for making a meaningful life for themselves – Frankl called this one's quest for meaning – clients may be assisted in this process by learning about some of the things that make one's life more meaningful. This is where social support comes in, and clients should be assisted and encouraged to build and maintain mutually supportive relationships both inside and outside the community centre – the 'buddy' or 'peer' system works very well with all age groups.

The literature also suggests that religiosity or its broader context, spirituality (having faith in something that gives one strength) should also be expressed. An emphasis may be put on helping clients to see and work toward future incremental goals that almost guarantee success.

To underscore the importance of meaning in life, many philosophers, educators, clinicians and health planners have stated eloquently that a life devoid of meaning is a life probably not worth living – thus encourage your clients to find meaning in life by *affirming their worth* as human beings – *mensch* (who am I?) and *confirming their existence* (where am I?) – *menschlichkeit*.

*Presented below are three case studies that have been developed as part of the Health Planning course that Professor Levy teaches at York University.*

### Case 1

Mary McGregor, an 85-year-old woman with arthritis, is confined to her home. Her daughter, Judy, and daughter-in-law, Lynne, visit regularly to provide

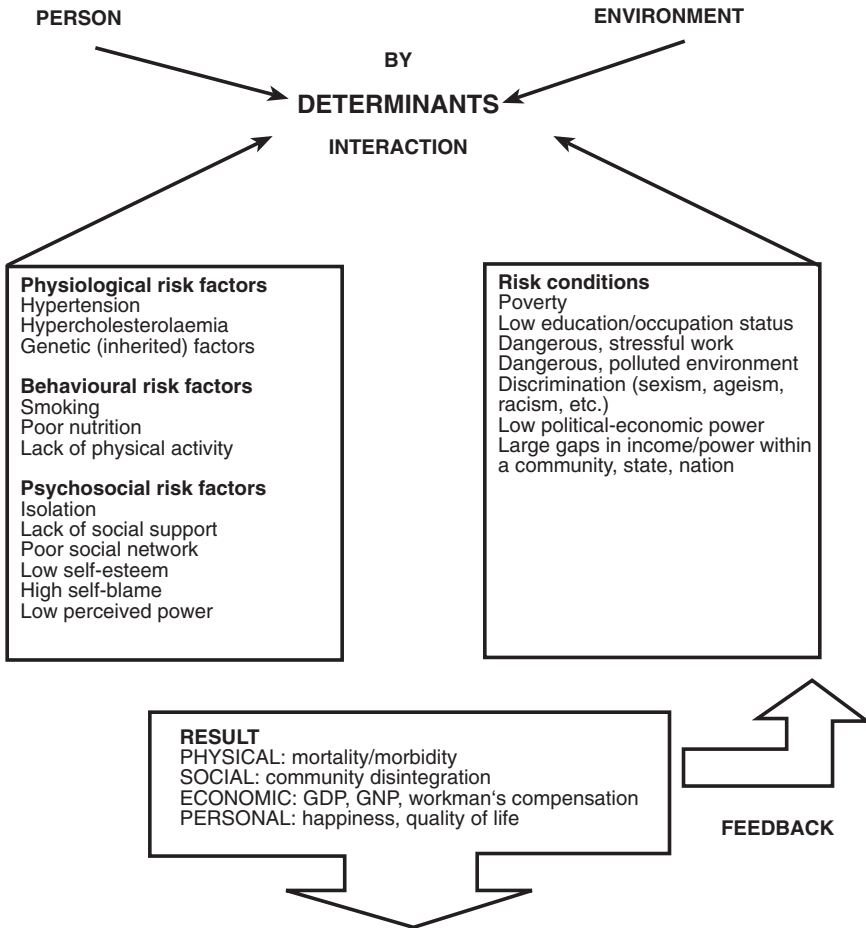
emotional and practical support. These family care-givers have the support of their husbands and children as well as a community outreach service set up to provide light housekeeping, meals-on-wheels, care-giver relief and other appropriate services intended to assist clients and families who wish to have their family members remain in the 'community' in which they have lived all of their adult lives. Judy's neighbours also provide some assistance by mind-ing her children for an hour after school, while she visits or shops for her mother. Lynne attended a discussion at the local Community Multi-service Centre on practical tips for helping seniors with physical and mobility limitation. The family's closeness and commitment and the support from the 'formal' and 'informal' community helps to make this family resilient. The meaning given to every member of this extended family through positive and professional community support and interaction keeps this family and their elderly relatives living in the community where they can continue to enjoy the benefits available to all citizens regardless of age. And this allows Mrs McGregor, her children, grandchildren and friends to function with dignity and respect despite her serious disability.

## Case 2

Bolton and Shellville, Ontario, Canada, were hit hard by cutbacks in cod fishing. For generations, village residents made their livelihood by fishing and working in the canneries. A year after the moratorium was announced, Shelville continued to be plagued by high unemployment and most of its residents were demoralized and depressed. Suicide rates, alcoholism, substance abuse, depression, divorces, spousal abuse, vandalism and other diseases and crimes increased dramatically. In contrast, the residents of Bolton formed a co-op to market products of several new industries that had been developed over the past 20 years as a proactive economic precaution, including some very innovative tourism, cultural and retirement projects. Shortly after the cutbacks, were announced, villagers got together and applied for provincial grants matched by private sector monies, to start a fish farm, a fishing sports hall-of-fame and other innovative projects. While many of the grants were rejected, the few that were approved provided the backbone for a number of new projects. Many of the villagers in Bolton are now employed and, surprisingly, community spirit has never been better. Town hall meetings are taking place regularly, neighbours have shared their tools, boats, houses and even their clothing during a very severe winter. How is it that some 'communities' (villages, towns, cities, countries) are able to draw from deep inside, on their collective resources, strengths and talents and rebuild in the face of adversity, while others fail? How can we nurture and enhance the concept of 'community'-based strategic planning, long-term visions, sacrifice, delay of gratification, meaning, caring and love?

### Case 3

See Fig. 4.3, adapted from a model of interactions used in the Heart Health Inequalities Project (Health Canada, 1993).



**Fig. 4.3.** Adapted from a model of interactions used in the Heart Health Inequalities Project.

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# Mobility for Action: Advocacy and Empowerment for the Right of Leisure, Play and Recreation

5

ARNOLD H. GROSSMAN

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The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations, proclaims that everyone is entitled to leisure and rest, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay. Unfortunately, this right is not experienced by all people in the world. For this situation to change, there must be social transformations that call on individuals to mobilize for action and empower them to advocate for the right of leisure, play and recreation for all. Those who have resources and power must also advocate for social change on behalf of oppressed people who are denied access to recreation, play and leisure opportunities, including children, women, ageing individuals, people with disabilities and chronic illnesses, and those living in poverty. Community development is one approach to creating change and imparting new information, attitudes and skills that help citizens of countries and territories to value leisure, play and recreation. Community development is basically a process of education and citizen participation that is designed to bring about changes in a certain climate or attitudes within a community, to gain access to and utilize resources, and to organize for effective action. Three processes that are efficacious in achieving the goals of community development are empowerment, advocacy and mobilization, as described in the following sections.

## Empowerment

The objective of *empowerment* is to shift the locus of power and resources so that those individuals who were previously excluded from the community's



voices and visions become included. Specifically, empowerment is a process through which people gain the power and resources necessary to shape their own worlds and reach their full human potential. It embraces an alternative definition of power, as suggested by African-American feminists; one that embraces the concepts of self-actualization, self-definition and self-determination. This definition contrasts with the traditional concepts of power that are based on the conceptualization of power over others to achieve personal benefits. From the contemporary perspective, the process of empowerment seeks to give expression to those who are underrepresented in typical societal patterns, including women, people of colour, gay men and women, older individuals, differently abled people, and low-income and non-middle- or non-upper-socioeconomic class persons (Schriver, 1995). The empowerment approach 'presumes that oppressed people and communities yearn for freedom, justice and fulfilment' (Simon, 1994, p. 3). Simon specifies the following five elements of practice in the empowerment tradition. Although they are presented from a social work perspective, they are illuminating for recreation and leisure professionals.

1. Collaborative partnerships with clients, client groups, and constituents;
2. A central practice emphasis on the expansion of clients' capacities, strengths, and resources;
3. A dual working focus on individuals and their social and physical environments;
4. The operating assumption that clients are active subjects and claimants;
5. The selective channelling of one's professional energies toward historically disempowered groups and individuals.

(Simon, 1994, p. 24)

The ultimate outcome of empowerment is to foster feelings of efficacy and control so as to bring about change. The process calls for people to actively define their own problem(s) and create plans for change. It asks individuals to accept responsibility for the results. Although it is rooted in an individual's beliefs and behaviours, it encourages those individuals to engage other people, groups, organizations and communities in the change process (Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), 1997).

The community development approach combines the process of empowerment with increasing cooperation and support of key community leaders, an alliance which provides community groups with broad-based support and the authority to generate meaningful change (CSAP, 1997). Leisure and recreation service professionals are among those community leaders who can nourish community development activities. It becomes incumbent on them to educate groups of community members about the potential values of play, recreation and leisure in their lives. The leaders can help community group members to understand the importance of: (i) leisure participation opportunities; (ii) leisure education; (iii) leisure areas and facilities; (iv) partnerships and

collaborations; and (v) community development (Mundy, 1998). Programmes focusing on the leisure education component can be composed of classes, workshops, presentations, publications, media-based education, leisure assessments and leisure counselling. The areas and facilities component can emphasize the value of resources, while providing information on equipment checkouts and rental, a telephone leisure hotline, computer programmes and Internet pages, videotapes (e.g. travel and community activities) and publications (e.g. community resource guide, leisure experience suggestions). The community development component can accentuate the roles of community networks, community organization planning councils and advocacy groups. Ultimately, these various approaches and strategies result in the development of a capacity to: (i) recognize personal, group and community problems with regard to their lack of leisure, recreation and play (Neulinger, 1981); (ii) identify potential solutions; and (iii) mobilize to implement those solutions. In addition to effecting positive changes with regard to the above-listed components, recreation and leisure professionals can become essential sources of influence and assets, and they can greatly enhance a community's ability to achieve its vision (Bracht and Kingsbury, 1990; Kibel and Schneider, n.d.) about the integral roles of leisure, play and recreation in community life. In other words, they have the potential for community advocacy.

## Advocacy

When an individual or community group is in need of assistance and existing institutions are uninterested in providing services, then advocacy may be effective.

*Advocacy* is a process by which professionals pressure societal power structures for new or improved programmes or additional funds, or protest against unwanted developments (Rubin and Rubin, 1992). Borrowed from the legal profession, the term advocacy embraces an active and directive role. Advocates provide leadership in collecting information that argues the correctness of the community group's need(s) and request(s), and also challenge the institutions that are not providing the required services or funds (Zastrow, 1996). Using such strategies as protest, political lobbying and publicity, the objective of advocacy is to change one or more of the service policies or funding streams.

Ethical practice requires that professionals engage in advocacy when the rights of individuals or groups with whom they are working are violated, or when their essential entitlements are denied. Like other human service professionals, recreation and leisure professionals should assume ethical responsibilities in advocating for social change. As stated by the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW Social Work Code of Ethics, 1994), these social changes should be in the best interest of the individual and for the

overall benefit of society, the environment and the global community. Professionals shall advocate for: (i) the elimination of discrimination; (ii) the equal distribution of resources to all persons; (iii) the equal access of all persons to services and opportunities; and (iv) a clean and healthy environment. Additionally, recreation and leisure professionals need to join social workers and others who engage in community practice that is directed toward promoting and expanding social justice (CASW, 1994; Weil, 1996).

Recreation and leisure service professionals should continue to assume ethical responsibilities in advocating on behalf of those groups who do not have the power and resources to do so on their own behalf. There is a global need to advocate for: (i) the elimination of barriers to recreation opportunities based on ethnic, racial, sex and age discrimination; (ii) the equal distribution of recreation and play areas and facilities regardless of a community's socioeconomic status; (iii) the equal access of people with disabilities to all leisure and recreation facilities and services; and (iv) the right to play and recreate in clean and healthy playgrounds, parks, camps, beaches, swimming pools, schools and communities.

Along with other skilled and trained community workers, recreation and leisure professionals should assist in establishing community advocacy groups that promote community-building activities. These groups can find common values such as the well-being of children and the ageing, or environmental protection and maintenance. These advocacy groups can create opportunities to explore ideas for services that meet needs across diverse community groups, not only within homogeneous ones (Weil, 1996). Gardner (1994) recommended the following ten elements for *community building*:

1. Wholeness incorporating diversity;
2. A reasonable base of shared values;
3. Caring, trust and teamwork;
4. Effective internal communication;
5. Participation;
6. Affirmation;
7. Links beyond the community;
8. Development of young people;
9. A forward view;
10. Institutional arrangements for community maintenance.

Gardner suggested actions that can be used to develop each of these elements, which can be incorporated into recreation and leisure services and communities. Recreation and leisure professionals can play an advocacy role in helping these actions be realized.

Engaging in advocacy requires that recreation and leisure professionals obtain knowledge and skills so that they can fulfil a variety of roles in enhancing community life. Among these roles are:

- innovator (e.g. establishing group and community recreation and leisure programmes that address the unfair allotment of resources, reduce inter-group hostilities, and build a supportive environment for vulnerable populations);
- catalyst (e.g. stimulating an awareness of inequities and discrimination, and arousing desires for improvements in funding, facilities and services for recreation and leisure opportunities);
- influencer (e.g. guiding the creation of programmes, support groups and special events from which leaders can emerge, coalition-building can take place and resources can be shared – all of which may lead to protesting, lobbying, testifying and publicity);
- negotiator (e.g. forming discussion groups and forums that allow community members who are excluded from services to communicate their needs and establish the groundwork for negotiations, or to hint at other forms of action that may move ongoing negotiations toward resolution);
- researcher (e.g. seeking and gathering knowledge about the lack of leisure education and opportunities among various community groups and its implications for individual development and quality of life; developing a resource library – including books, videos and computer programs – about leisure awareness, self-awareness in leisure, community leisure opportunities, leisure skills and decision-making in leisure);
- expert (e.g. sharing knowledge through position papers, presentations, testimony, lobbying and committee memberships about the benefits of leisure, play and recreation in promoting physical and mental health; enhancing feelings of self-esteem, competence and self-actualization; and clarifying of individual, family and societal values); and
- partner (e.g. providing support, companionship and leisure education to the community members on behalf of whom one is advocating; using activities that provide recognition, rewards and incentives so that participants come to know the value of the processes as well as the short-term and longer-term benefits).

## **Mobilization**

Both community recreation specialists and direct service recreation and leisure providers engaged in programme development become involved in community mobilization. They work with consumers in assessing needs and strengths, designing recreation activities and leisure opportunities, examining the relevance of services, and implementing mutually planned programmes. These approaches provide the groundwork for empowering and advocacy activities, which often provide a basis for community mobilization.

Mobilization is stimulated by 'click' events (*click* as when a light turns on). The click highlights the persistence of unjust dominance structures ... Mobilization occurs when those who have experienced such clicks join together to take action on their grievances. The experiences that make a person aware of a problem are the trigger events that move people from apathy to action.

(Rubin and Rubin, 1992, p. 191)

Mobilization sometimes involves building a new organization, but more often the mobilizing effort is focused on getting people who are members of existing organizations to participate. It often involves seeking support from other organizations, asking them to recruit their members to the cause. The goal of community mobilization is to change passive supporters into active participants and to motivate community members who would benefit from the proposed social changes to engage in activities that will engender those changes. Some individuals remain passive supporters, hoping to benefit from the work of others. These *free riders* do not become involved until they see that everyone's effort is required for the goals to be accomplished. Others who are victims of the unjust policies and services do not get involved because of culturally imposed beliefs that tell them they cannot succeed or that it is incorrect to participate in collective action. Those leading the mobilization activities have to unshackle these people from their sense of learned inefficacy. However, once mobilization efforts are somewhat successful (i.e. an organization is seen as satisfying felt needs), individuals increase their commitment to it and to working together. Even after an apparent failure, mobilization efforts gain new energy when a 'click' or 'trigger' event transforms personal grievances into collective actions (Rubin and Rubin, 1992, p. 193).

Recreation and leisure professionals must be aware of and use 'click' and 'trigger' events to identify leisure and recreation lacks and to mobilize community members so that they can obtain their universal leisure rights leading to human development and self-actualizing experiences. This role suggests that direct service providers and managers move beyond the walls of their facilities and into the community. They must become involved with community members in confronting and satisfying their complex human needs at the grass-roots level. As Murphy (1975) indicated, this role suggests that recreation and leisure service personnel assume an outreach perspective and become enablers of human development and social change that is directed toward helping people become increasingly able to satisfy their own needs. These encouragers must also recognize the importance of mobilizing community members regarding the physical environment, as many leisure, play and recreation experiences take place in greenbelts, parks and other open spaces. 'Recreation personnel seemingly must become skilled in the *art* of community development in which emphasis is continuously placed upon the overall quality of community life instead of any particular specialization, project, or program' (Murphy, 1975, p. 62).

## Concluding Remarks and Specific Recommendations

Recreation and leisure professionals provide services that promote the physical and mental health of individuals and communities. When effective, these programmes promote and improve the quality of life and help in building resistance to and managing life stressors. Not all community members, however, have equal access to these services and resources or to living in a clean and healthy environment. Therefore, various community development approaches should be employed to assist community members in achieving their rights to leisure education, recreation opportunities, and access to parks and other open spaces. The processes of empowerment, advocacy and mobilization are efficacious in achieving a redistribution of resources so that those individuals and groups normally excluded from community decision-making processes become included. Empowerment and advocacy activities help to build community integration and bring members one step closer to mobilization. A 'click' event helps to remove blinders and convinces people that mass mobilization is required to bring about social change to improve recreation, play and leisure opportunities. While the aim of social change is the community, social transformations in individuals, families, groups and organizations frequently occur first. Although recreation and leisure professionals may work toward the short-term goals of obtaining a neighbourhood park or swimming pool, the overall goal of the community effort is social justice and equality for those who have been disenfranchised. Often, this requires professionals to develop skills in cultural competence in order to build on the strengths of diverse community groups and deal with conflict between groups.

Specific approaches and strategies for empowering community members, advocating on their behalf and mobilizing them to action, are as follows:

- identify the importance of opportunities for self-actualization, self-definition and self-determination to the quality of life;
- explore the importance of opportunities for leisure, play and recreation to self-actualization, self-definition and self-determination;
- recognize that specific groups in various communities (including women, people of colour, gay and lesbian people, older individuals, differently abled people, and persons of low-income socioeconomic status) are routinely denied access to play and recreation opportunities, including parks, beaches and leisure education;
- help community members of groups excluded from community resources to develop visions and give voices to their rights to leisure, play and recreation;
- work with people to create an empowerment process that leads to broad-based community support and calls on them to create plans for change

leading to enhanced open spaces, parks, and leisure and recreation opportunities;

- educate professionals about their ethical responsibilities in advocating for those who are denied essential entitlements, including their rights to leisure, play and recreation education and opportunities;
- organize an advocacy programme that focuses on the equal distribution of recreation resources, equal access to services and opportunities, and a clean and healthy environment;
- establish community advocacy groups that promote community-building activities based on common values that meet needs across diverse community groups; and
- use 'trigger' community events to identify leisure, play and recreation lacks and to mobilize community members to obtain their universal rights to leisure for human development and self-actualizing experiences.

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# Global Edutainment: the New Role of Leisure Education for Community Development

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WOLFGANG NAHRSTEDT

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Leisure has particular relevance to contemporary debate about education as it has increasingly become an important part of social life. Leisure is probably more than ever before a key site and a powerful instrument for social development.

This was stated by Grant Cushman in his 1991 keynote speech 'Perspectives on Leisure and Education' at the WLRA Congress in Sydney, Australia (Cushman, 1993, p. 3). The following theses are derived from this statement.

## Education is a Mirror of Society

If society changes its structure, education follows or – sometimes – goes ahead. With growing differentiation in the structure of society, education also takes on a more complex structure. Special units of education develop, one of which is leisure education. These special units move within the whole structure of the system of education as well as of society; they can demonstrate new trends and may serve to modernize the system of education and, through this, to modernize the community. Having done this, their time is over. The slave has fulfilled his task, the slave may go! As innovative elements of the whole, they may disappear as a specialization, or they could go on to complete identifying new trends. My question is what will be the future role of leisure education?

## Globalization Means a New Challenge for Leisure Education

Leisure education can be defined as 'a lifelong learning process which incorporates the development of leisure attitudes, values, knowledge, skills and resources' (Ruskin and Sivan, 1995, p. 5). It has developed as a new type of education, alternative in its structure, especially in comparison with the dominant school education. Basic elements of leisure education as a new type of education, are symmetric communication, open situations, self-directed learning and fun orientation. Several levels can be differentiated:

- leisure learning as learning in and for leisure;
- leisure as a new social system producing a new type of learning with new goals, contents and methods;
- leisure socialization as a 'hidden' functional leisure education: leisure learning is enforced by the leisure system and produces a new type of (leisure) behaviour;
- leisure education in a narrow sense as intentional process: pedagogues working in leisure facilities had to react to the new rules of leisure learning and had to create leisure education as a new type of education. The pedagogues had to change their role from teachers into learning assistants, learning animators, but also into learning correctors.

My basic assumption is that leisure learning and leisure socialization are growing in influence within society and the education system, so that leisure education in the narrow and distinct meaning, increasingly becomes the model for all special units of education.

Leisure education developed in three historic steps:

1. Leisure education started in the 19th century to integrate the new industrial working class into the new industrial system of high productivity and shortening working hours. Leisure education should qualify leisure as a social right and the way to emancipation and development of the personality.
2. In the second half of the 20th century leisure education became a qualifying element of the growing leisure-based consumer market and the growing possibilities for consumption. Ascetic attitudes in the areas of work and school changed within the area of free-time and leisure into attitudes of consumerism, serious work concentration into fun and leisure orientation.
3. Leisure education has now, at the beginning 21st century, to support developing intercultural perspectives for community development as global edutainment. Globalization leads to intercultural competition (Huntington, 1996) and growing social, political and ecological problems but, on the other hand, it offers new possibilities for work and leisure. Between new problems and new possibilities a way of 'reflexive modernization' must be found (Beck, 1986). Since the 19th century, consumerism and leisure orientation have increasingly become a basic function of the highly indus-

trialized societies. This has gradually influenced and changed the whole education system even in the work and school area. More and more elements of leisure education have been integrated. The basis of learning becomes entertainment, education becomes edutainment, thus changing entertainment and the role of leisure once again. Up to now, leisure had served to emancipate learning from one-sided work orientation, but leisure education supported fun orientation. Globalization demands a new problem orientation also in the leisure field, but based on elements of leisure education.

## **The Service-delivery Society Changes the Education System**

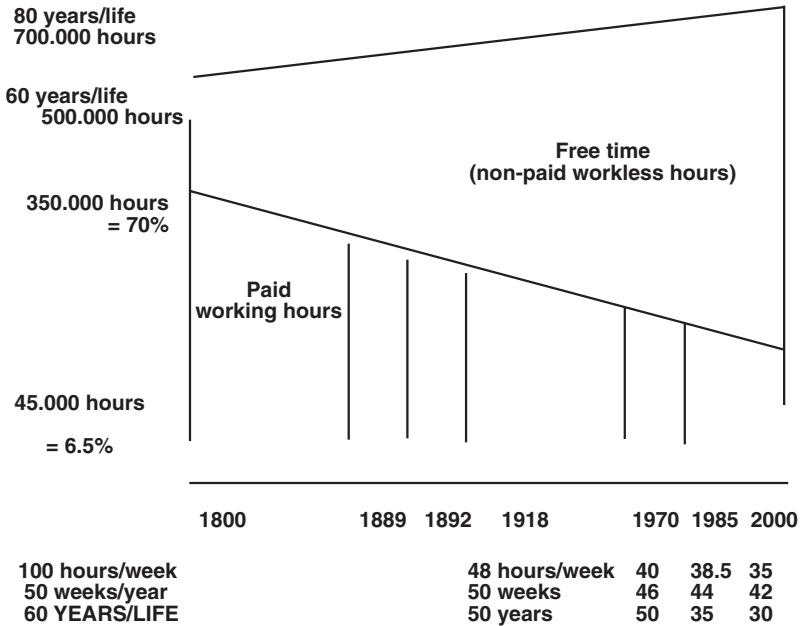
In the process of change from a goods-producing to a service-delivery society, the education system also becomes changed. The service-delivery society is based on a leisure system, but the leisure system also becomes the base of at least parts of the work system, as in the areas of culture, media, tourism, health. Leisure education changes work education and the work ethic! For more than 200 years, industrialization has been changing the nature of work and attitudes towards work. In the year 1800, more than 80% of the population in central Europe was living in the countryside and working in agriculture. Since then, industrial production has expanded, integrating workers from the agrarian and crafts sectors. At the end of the 20th century, less than 8% of the working population still worked in the agrarian sector. But now the service sector is developing and taking over jobs from industry.

With the shift from the first to the second and from the second to the third economic structure, the highly industrialized societies (especially in Europe) combined a shortening of the working hours with the development of a mass leisure culture (Fig. 6.1). More free time is the basis of the mass leisure culture which creates new jobs. Those jobs that contribute to the leisure service involve a different kind of work and work attitude: a more leisure-oriented work ethic develops. In Germany, 15% of all jobs are in the area of free time and tourism, that is c. 5 million work places. Every seventh worker earns his living in this area and it is expected that this number will grow over the next 10 years.

A more developed leisure culture and a changed work culture influence the education system, therefore the paradigms of education have to be redefined. Leisure education seems to become more and more a new basic paradigm for the whole education system. This assumption will be supported through trends in changes to city infrastructure.

## **Leisure Becomes a Central Factor of Community Development**

The central topic at the 10th ELRA Congress in Dubrovnik, Croatia (29 Sept.–1 Oct. 1997) was the important role of leisure parks and leisure



**Fig. 6.1.** Changes in the time budget of German workers, 1800–2000.

events for community development. Horst W. Opaschowski (1998) announced a ‘future leisure event epoch’. The dense chain of world-wide leisure events in the summer of 1998 from the middle of June until the middle of August, with the soccer World Cup in France (15 June–12 July), the Love Parade in Berlin (11–12 July) and the Tour de France (11 July–2 Aug.), can be regarded as an example of this thesis.

We all participated, via the media, in the soccer World Cup; 2000 million people world-wide, one-quarter of the world’s population, watched the final game. We all learned how quickly nowadays newcomer teams learn to beat yesterday’s world champions. So the media function as institutions of global learning, of global leisure education and global edutainment. Teams learn how to improve their play for the better entertainment of the public and the public learns through leisure entertainment to recognize the improved quality of teams from previously unknown nations. A professor of political science from the Sorbonne University, France, stated, that to win the world championship with the intercultural French team would be important for celebrating the French identity. So leisure events that transport leisure learning as global edutainment, produce leisure socialization, are institutions of global leisure education. They teach a new global identity, how to play together, how to win together, especially as intercultural teams, and also how to lose and not to lose.

The '10th Love Parade' in Berlin, Germany, with an estimated 1 million participants (mostly young men and women between 20 and 30 years of age) is an example of youth participating in leisure events and leisure education, but also demonstrates the relationship between leisure education and the leisure economy. The estimated 1 million young visitors spent between 150 and 200 million DM in the city. This was good for the economy of the city and a major incentive for the organizers. But the economic power was only one side of the social and educational power of the event. The young people learned to express themselves, to make friends, to have influence. They learned to be a new generation with its own culture and power. Leisure education becomes an important way of forming future society.

Fritz Lang, the former French minister of culture was present as a guest and said: 'The "Siegessäule" (monument of victory) now becomes the "Liebessäule" (monument of love)'. He observed the parade with the intention of copying it annually in Paris, every September. But the Love Parade organizers have already had a better idea. They now plan a world-wide techno party every year on the same day in all the major cities of each continent. Berlin will be the pacemaker for the peacemakers, with the love idea as a basic theme for the whole world (*Neue Westfälische*, 14 July 1998). This could promote the global learning of a new intercultural global identity for humankind with love as its base!

Learning is regarded as an essential part of life necessary for adapting individuals to new and changing situations, and development within leisure and tourism makes learning essential in this area. This means that leisure education will have a growing role as edutainment.

Education, however, is the means of enabling, supporting and improving learning. Growing leisure and touristic possibilities in communities, regions and world-wide demand a stronger and more differentiated system of leisure education options. On the other hand leisure and tourism together already represent a new and expanding system for learning, socialization and education. The change from production-oriented communities to more service-oriented inner cities also changes the structure of learning, socialization and education. Leisure education is not just a new part of the education system, as the education system gets more and more transformed and becomes leisure oriented. Again: will leisure education disappear? Or must leisure education develop a new role?

## **From School Education to 'Education Permanente'**

In the 1960s the Faure Commission of UNESCO stated the necessity for '*une education permanente*'. Learning in school was no longer enough: 70% of the capacity for learning from life experiences was not used; 50% of human potential for efficiency and achievement was not activated by education (Dohmen,

1997, p. 24 ff). Demand for further education increased as a reaction to globalization (Schramm, 1996, p. 146) and changes in work practices and in the leisure area. New jobs appeared; changing jobs throughout the lifetime became necessary for a growing number of workers. The relationship between work time and free time became flexible. The need to organize free time and the increase in available options for spending free time and vacations, were additional reasons for '*une education permanente*'.

But permanent education was no longer structured as school education. Further education was carried out in leisure time, on leisure subjects, with a leisure attitude. So developed a leisure-oriented further education and an education-oriented spending of leisure time (Nahrstedt *et al.*, 1994).

Further education was organized in institutions of adult education, but leisure institutions increasingly integrated educational elements. So will leisure parks and leisure events gradually be transformed into new types of leisure-based institutions of learning? Are they the 'post-modern' institutions of leisure education, the institutions of leisure-oriented further education of the 'second modernity' (Beck, 1996), which realize global education by entertainment and are institutions of global edutainment?

Emmanuel Mongon (France) gave a report at the 10th ELRA Congress in Dubrovnik on more than 3000 leisure park projects all over the world. Sigismund von Dobschütz (Germany) described two of these projects: the Ocean Park Bremerhaven and the Space Park in nearby Bremen. It seems as if nearly all communities, regions and countries believe that leisure parks should also be more or less education-oriented. The Ocean Park Bremerhaven informs on all aspects of water and oceans worldwide, while the Bremen Space Park summarizes knowledge of the universe and future plans for space research. Leisure parks and leisure events teach entertaining perspectives for the global future; they are the new institutions for leisure education as global edutainment.

## **Adventure ('*Erlebnis*') as a New Core of Leisure Education**

The more that work and everyday life become rationalized and stressed, the more 'adventure' (*Erlebnis, Abenteuer*) appeals as an alternative. Gerhard Schulze speaks of an 'adventure society' (*Erlebnissesellschaft*; Schulze, 1993; Opaschowski, 1998). Adventures give sense to free time, provide structure to this time, and allow people to meet and communicate. Adventures are key subjects of leisure education. Life in all social areas is influenced by adventures, events and happenings. Gerken and Konitzer even state: "Fun must be!" This is the postmodern device – fun even also at work' (1996, p. 120). The key subject of leisure education becomes a key structure for all types of education, but adventures only maintain value if they stay oriented in a humanistic creative manner towards the process of globalization (Nahrstedt, 1996).

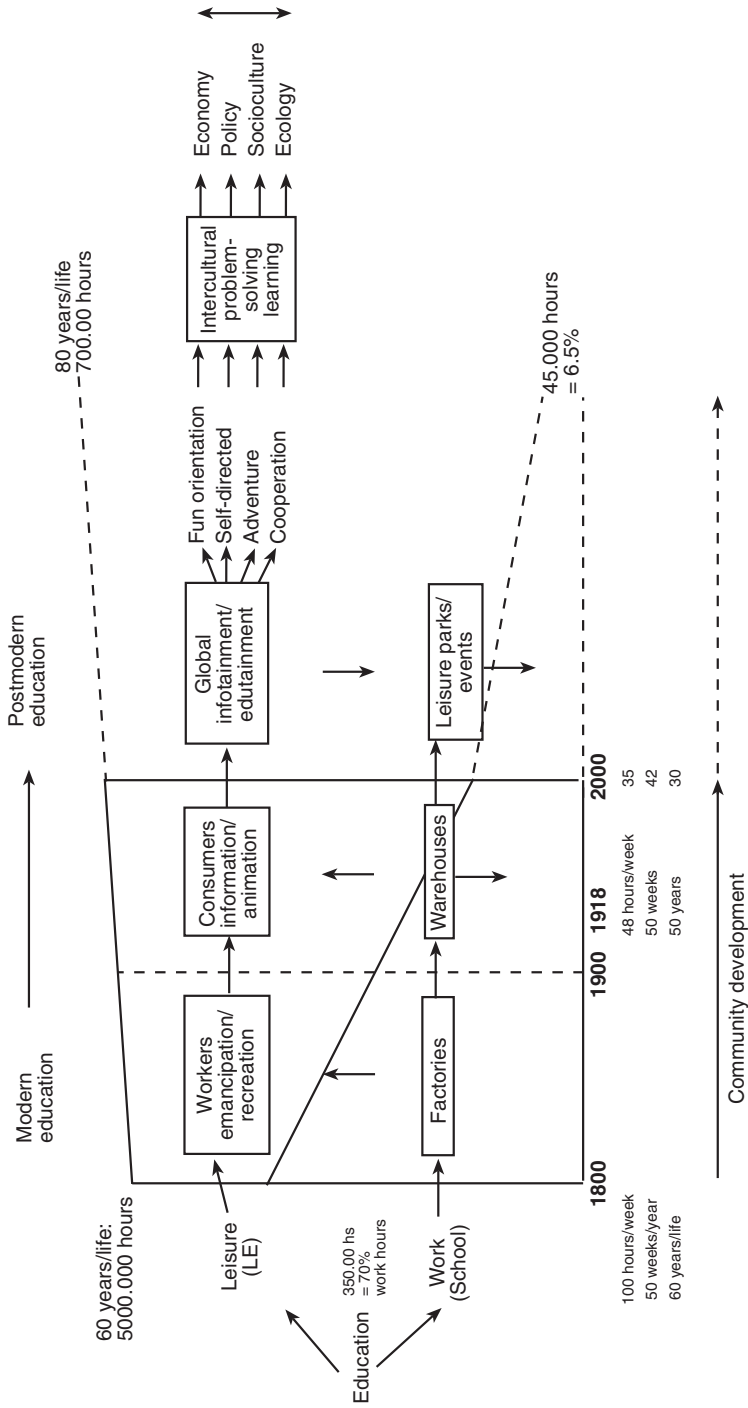


Fig. 6.2. From local leisure education to global edutainment.



## **From Outward-directed to New Inner-directed Learning**

Leisure society changes from being outward-directed to an inner-directed society. David Riesman defined the new leisure society as being outward-directed, with the old work society being inner-directed. Schulze now maintains that the leisure-based and consumption-oriented adventure society needs a new inner direction, with a new structure, through 'adventure rationality'. Work ethic forced one to concentrate lifelong on one goal in one profession in a very ascetic and economical manner to produce one product or products in one profession. The possibilities were limited. Only by inner-directed concentration, could one meet one's goal. In the adventure society the possibilities are unlimited, and inner direction is needed to concentrate on one option for development. Teaching and learning how to do this is a central goal of leisure education and becomes – in an adventure society – more and more a goal of the whole education system. The specific goal can vary depending on what an individual defines as her or his own goal regardless of any social or global relationships. Adventure rationality must therefore work on two levels: the individual and the global. Leisure education as global edutainment must teach that adventures with the goal of individual entertainment must also relate somehow to a global perspective.

## **From '*Education Permanente*' to Lifelong Learning**

The expansion of learning into all areas and times of life demonstrates the change in attitudes in relation to education. 'Fun in learning must be the base of learning accompanying life'. 'Other subjects must be learned in other ways' (Schramm, 1996, p. 148). Self-organized and self-directed learning becomes the norm. Experience in tourism demonstrates that demand for quality and cultural events, even in recreational vacation travelling, is growing. Since the 1950s the intensity of travel has grown rapidly, and with this the number of options for travel experiences. Sightseeing, visiting leisure parks, museums, art exhibitions, open-air concerts, musicals, etc., become essential elements of a journey. Leisure therefore leads to learning; leisure in itself is a leisure educator. Leisure stimulates leisure socialization as a 'hidden' form of leisure education, so leisure becomes more and more an important element of the common socialization process and of the social education system.

## **From Teacher-oriented to Self-directed Learning**

Lifelong learning, often and sometimes mainly carried out in free time, changes the role of the educator. The teacher becomes a leisure entertainer, an edutainer, leisure counsellor, travel guide and animator as self-directed and self-decided learning becomes a new focus of learning not only in and for leisure. But the leisure

pedagogue cannot be just an entertainer; he has to relate leisure entertainment to global problems, questions and perspectives so he must become a global edutainer.

## **From Instruction to Animation**

Leisure education is based on a democratic structure of communication. The pupil and the teacher have the same right in defining goals, subjects and methods of learning, so they have to find a way to agree. This changes the role of the pedagogue and the methods he can use. The pedagogue has to take on the role of a counsellor and animator, less by instruction and lecturing, but more by informing, counselling and animating. Education is transformed into informing, counselling, animation – but also into new forms of educational marketing and of competition for selling basic information, for example on ecological problems and on related necessary changes of consumer behaviour. This structure of leisure education now becomes more and more the basic structure of education in nearly all areas, in further education, in on-the-job training, in universities, and also in schools, kindergartens and families. Leisure education changes the whole system of education. To overcome the danger of losing its own identity or remaining only as leisure entertainment, leisure education has to go on identifying new goals and forms of learning. These are essential for the process of globalization and can be learned especially in the field of free time and leisure.

## **Marketing as a New Leisure Didactic?**

Leisure didactics means a theory of leisure contents and leisure learning: how to learn to choose and use the leisure options available in one's own life. Didactics were developed first for school classes, i.e. for small, familiar groups, which stayed together for years and concentrated in an inner-directed, serious and work-oriented manner on the subject of learning. Marketing, however, has been developed in the commercial sector which is aimed at large target groups composed of strangers for convincing them in a quick, leisure-like and fun way to buy specific products. Nevertheless, didactics and marketing have a common goal; to teach people how to use products and services to improve their life in work and leisure time. Marketing can be seen as a new leisure didactic oriented to great masses of personally unknown (but empirically identified) target groups for learning in a leisure-like and fun way.

## **From Local Leisure Education to Global Edutainment**

With PC and Internet development, a new global education system has arisen that is very much based on leisure learning and edutainment. The Internet is

also used increasingly for leisure purposes, and educational programmes for PCs and on the Internet are structured in leisure-oriented, informal formats. Structures of teaching and learning previously limited to leisure education, have become the basis of the whole system of education worldwide. Leisure education must now be developed further as a leading special unit of education for identifying and adapting new global trends in global edutainment.

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# Community Vision and Resources: 7 Commitment, Capacity and Collective Effort

ARNOLD H. GROSSMAN

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A focus on community is important in understanding contemporary responses and approaches to people with special needs and in identifying the strategies required to make continued progress in meeting their needs for leisure education. People with special needs, the families and groups to which they belong, and the organizations through which we provide recreation and leisure services are essential elements of a community. Although community may mean different things to different people, a number of basic components have been identified. These include such concepts as a collective of people, shared interests, regular interactions through formal and informal organized means, and some degree of mutual identification and belonging among the members (Schriver, 1995). In this chapter we will think about these ideas initially through the perspectives of a community's vision and its resources, important facets of which are embodied in its culture. Then, we will explore the notion of community mobilization; one that is designed to bring about a broad range of positive changes in norms, attitudes and programmes to maximize the leisure education and recreation opportunities of people with special needs.

## Community Vision

A community's vision is reflected in its culture. Learning about the culture of a community is one way to make sense of its response to people with special needs and their impact on individuals, families, groups and organizations. Culture is a factor in structuring the meanings and contexts of a community's

responses to people living with physical, intellectual and emotional disabilities; persons with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)-related disease and other sexually transmitted infections; individuals who may be marginalized because of their age, gender, ethnicity, and/or sexual orientation, and persons oppressed because of their behaviours, e.g. alcohol and other substance abuse. Communities create stigmas about different groups of persons with special needs.

Stigmas reflect the prevailing social and cultural milieu and define what is unacceptable in the society. Stigmatization reflects a marked status, one defined by a physical deformity or by negative moral connotations. It leads to people being assigned a discredited social identity, one that has an underlying moral failing that is sometimes attributed to nature (i.e. biological or genetically determined) and at other times attributed to nurture (i.e. environmental factors in development; Goffman, 1963). When people fail to meet the expectations or norms of a particular community, they are disqualified from full membership and acceptance (Jones *et al.*, 1984). Processes related to prejudice, discrimination, marginalization and oppression are employed to assign blame and to distance people who are assumed to have an underlying 'imperfection' from community life. In the case of multiple stigmas, social distance is added with each successive stigma.

Social identity is derived from being a member of a community group; however, this identity is overshadowed when one is stigmatized. The stigma becomes the focus of attention and prevents normal social functioning. Everything is understood about the person in terms of his/her stigma, which often leads to feelings of isolation, unworthiness, anger or hostility towards others, negative perceptions of self, and withdrawal from social interaction. These effects of stigmatization stem from the internalization of society's stereotypes and social propaganda about people with special needs (Goffman, 1963; Jillings and Alexus, 1991; Levy, 1993).

In contrast with these negative stereotypes, McKnight (1987) posited the ideal community vision. This community is inclusive of all its members and offers experiences in living qualitatively different from those provided by goal-directed organizations or institutions. McKnight sees community and formal organizations as antithetical. He puts forward the idea that association through community is based on 'consent,' while stating that institutions exist to 'control' people. Whether these organizations exist for those who have been excluded from the community (in the traditional sense of being housed in a separate facility) or those who are marginalized by equivalent delivery systems (without walls), according to McKnight, they are based on a community vision that is not inclusive. These organizations do allow us to know about all of us. Only by being "in a community" can we be a part of customs and ceremonies that allow us to celebrate our fallibility and find that we care.

## Community Themes

Communities embody a clear value of commitment to establishing and maintaining primary social relationships. These may be relationships across groups within a community (i.e. horizontal relationships) or segmented relationships that bind particular groups within the community to those groups that share interests with larger entities (i.e. vertical relationships). They call on individuals to obligate themselves to relevant groups, including families, neighbourhoods, community groups and social organizations; and they ask people to make value judgments as to whom they consider relevant. Unfortunately, those who are stigmatized are often considered to be outside the mainstream and not relevant to many community relationships.

McKnight (1987) identified six themes of community: capacity, collective effort, informality, stories, celebration and tragedy. *Capacity* recognizes that the sum of the capacities of each member of the community contributes to its power, and that communities depend on accepting the weaknesses and strengths of each of their members. This theme sanctions the capacities of all individuals, including those with disabilities and other special needs. *Collective effort* indicates that the essence of community is people working together and that community work requires shared responsibility and many talents. Therefore, an individual with special needs who has been stigmatized can find support in the collective endeavours of a community that can mould itself to meet the needs of each of its members. *Informality* characterizes the transactions of value that take place in a community, transactions that occur without advertising or the exchange of money. According to McKnight, these transactions allow authentic relationships to develop and permit care to emerge, which he distinguished from service. The informal transactions of community make relationships across groups possible, and individuals come to meet and know people with special needs whom they would not normally meet in their daily interactions. *Stories* are the means by which persons in a community come to know. They allow individuals to know through their common history, their individual searches for knowledge about truth, and their direction for the future. Stories, including those told in children's books, poetry, plays and dances, can affirm the existence of people with special needs and legitimize their contributions to community living. *Celebrations* are part of community, and they include parties and social events associated with recreation, religion, work and other aspects of community life. Celebrations provide opportunities for people with disabilities and other special needs to rejoice, commemorate and honour important aspects of group living. McKnight stated that individuals know that they are in a community when they hear laughter and singing; and they recognize that they are in an institution, corporation or bureaucracy if they hear the silence of long halls and reasoned meetings. *Tragedy* is an indication of community experience, suggesting a common knowledge of adversity, suffering and death. Sharing misfortunes and suffering grief provide

opportunities for all individuals in a community to seek and receive emotional, social and financial support. Tragedies provide opportunities to offer help that transcends the usual social boundaries between people with and without special needs.

## Community Mobilization

Community development can be approached from a variety of perspectives, including community coalitions, community collaborations and community partnership activities. These structures provide approaches for communities to organize and take action. In this chapter we will focus on the processes for mobilizing communities. Three processes that contribute to effective community mobilization have been identified. They are: (i) a heightened sense of community, (ii) enhanced mobilization capacity, and (iii) increased readiness for focused action (Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), 1997). Although these processes are interactive, they may also be seen as occurring sequentially. For example, a community may have to develop a heightened awareness about barriers to access for the physically disabled before it can mobilize for action to remove them. From another perspective, however, once a degree of readiness for action on behalf of the physically disabled exists, the sense of community may be strengthened in relation to other special populations, only some of whom may have constraints regarding mobility, e.g. people with HIV/AIDS.

*A heightened sense of community* exists only as long as a communal purpose and activity exist. Therefore, it does not necessarily relate to geographical boundaries. However, community membership becomes limited to those who engage in community endeavours. Short-term interest and some community involvement may result from a dramatic event (e.g. a person in a wheelchair is hit by a bus because an appropriate crossing place does not exist); however, sustained involvement by broad aspects of a community appear necessary to establish ongoing programmes to meet the complex long-term recreational and vocational needs of persons with mental retardation or other developmental disabilities. CSAP (1997) identified five indicators of a sense of community, which occur when two or more people exhibit the following five characteristics: (i) they share a sense of membership or belonging, i.e. the extent to which community members identify themselves with the efforts of others engaged in it, and feel fully connected to the group effort; (ii) they acknowledge their mutual importance to, and concern for, each other, i.e. the extent to which they depend heavily on each other for collective success; (iii) they profess common beliefs, shared values and shared emotional ties, i.e. their common aspirations dictate the activities of the community; (iv) they come together periodically to bond or network, i.e. they enjoy one another's presence and look forward to spending time together; and (v) they accept

mutual responsibility for sustaining or enhancing the quality of their interrelationships, i.e. they show continued concern for community health and well-being.

An *enhanced mobilization capacity* results when community members move from dormancy in preexisting or yet-to-be-formed groups toward action. It involves community members who may mobilize on their own behalf (e.g. people with HIV/AIDS creating a group to gain access to community celebrations) or to support some larger process (e.g. individuals with mental illnesses organizing to garner support for legislation that will provide funds for outpatient services, including leisure and arts education). CSAP's report (1997) indicated that mobilization approaches can be divided into three broad categories:

- *grassroots approaches* are characterized by high citizen participation and low key-leader participation. They are often very successful in responding to short-term crises and specific problems.
- *Social programming approaches* are characterized by low citizen participation and high key-leader participation. These approaches appear to be effective for situations in which the objective is to incrementally improve existing services.
- *Community development approaches* are characterized by high citizen participation and high key-leader participation. The community development approach is most promising when community members are seeking to effect change related to complex social problems. The approach is particularly effective when formal systems that provide social programmes are strained to the limit of their resources, as would be the case with many programmes providing services to special population groups. One of the basic processes of community development efforts is empowerment. *Collective empowerment* is 'the process by which individuals, small groups, organizations, and segments of the community operate in concert to improve the quality of life for themselves and their overall community' (CSAP, 1997, p. 13). Other aspects of community development include active engagement of members or community groups and the cooperation and support of community leaders.

CSAP (1997) identified six indicators of mobilization capacity, based on the work of Butterfoss *et al.* (1993), Alinsky (1971), and Kibel and Schneider (unpublished observations). They are: (i) sustained leadership, i.e. the extent to which the mobilization effort is guided by one or more leaders throughout all its phases; (ii) formalization, i.e. the extent to which the effort has formalized rules, roles and procedures to guide it; (iii) rewards and incentives, i.e. the extent to which perceived benefits of participating in the effort outweigh expected costs; (iv) internal and external communication, i.e. the extent to which members communicate with each other and with the community at large to share information and resources regarding the effort; (v) community organizational know-how, i.e. the extent to which at least one active



community member has experience in organizing communities; and (vi) behind-the-scenes support, i.e. the extent to which the mobilization effort receives logistical and technical support from paid staff or volunteers.

Although a community may have all the components necessary for a mobilization effort, it needs an increased *readiness for focused action* to be effective. For a community to be mobilized for 'results-oriented action,' the components have to be combined in a strategic and timely manner. CSAP (1997) has identified six indicators of readiness for focused action: (i) clarity of goals, i.e. the extent to which the community-based effort has a specific set of measurable objectives that is linked to a timeline; (ii) feasibility of the plan, i.e. the extent to which the effort has a flexible action plan that can be updated based on feedback; (iii) capabilities and resources, i.e. the extent to which community members have the capabilities of and access to resources needed to achieve the action plan's goals and objectives; (iv) citizen participation and control, i.e. the extent to which members who are benefiting from the effort play a major role in its design and implementation; (v) passion for immediate action, i.e. the extent to which members are taking immediate action to change conditions, which enhances enthusiasm and involvement; and (vi) high-performance team functioning, i.e. the extent to which members make use of individual and collective strengths and work efficiently to reach their goals.

## **Meeting the Leisure Education Needs of Special Populations Through Community Mobilization**

Leisure and recreation professionals working with special populations should advocate for the inclusion of leisure education as a component of a heightened sense of community. They have to create opportunities with their affiliated neighbourhood, community and professional groups to champion the benefits of leisure and recreational pursuits in enhancing the quality of lives of those with either disabilities or chronic illnesses. One approach would be to use the four educational components identified by Mundy (1998): leisure awareness, self-awareness in leisure, leisure skills and leisure resources. These components illustrate how leisure and recreation activities can be used to: enhance a sense of membership and recognize the mutual importance of all community members; promote shared views, values and common beliefs; build networking and bonding among all community members; and foster mutual responsibility for the benefit of the community. These outcomes can result from such special events as festivals, celebrations and cultural events, as well as sports leagues of baseball, basketball, tennis, softball, soccer and swimming.

Leisure education and recreational pursuits can also become factors in enhancing a community's mobilization capacity. Professionals working with special populations can become strong leaders in community efforts and can

help those involved to feel valued and appreciated. One approach would be to recognize people's contributions to community efforts through special awards and cultural programmes. Additionally, many leisure educators have years of successful community organizational experiences that lend themselves to recruitment and resource mobilization. They are experienced in recruiting volunteers who can provide effective support to community team efforts, as well as assisting in the handling of day-to-day logistics and providing technical assistance. Using the leisure resources component can be helpful in distributing community leisure information, enhancing leisure programmes for participation opportunities, and providing additional leisure areas and facilities (Mundy, 1998).

Mundy's (1998) community organization component calls on recreation and leisure delivery systems to act as leisure coordinating, facilitating and development bodies. This approach encourages the development of a repertoire of leisure opportunities and resources for all community members. It seeks to develop partnerships and collaborations between community agencies, including youth agencies, senior centres, adult education programmes, health organizations and agencies serving special populations. These approaches provide: (i) opportunities to enhance a community's readiness for focused action, such as creating a high-performance team; (ii) an array of resources that enhance needed talents, skills and capabilities; and (iii) assistance to members of organizations serving people with special needs in taking the initiative to become active members in community plans of action affecting them.

## **Concluding Remarks and Specific Recommendations**

Meeting the needs of special populations requires a community vision of inclusion and a commitment to social justice. It demands a collective effort and organization to obtain community resources and to help people with special needs gain access to them. These resources include opportunities to participate in leisure education processes and to engage in recreational pursuits. Among other things, leisure education and participation provide people with chances to: (i) identify their leisure values, attitudes and needs; (ii) become self-determining, self-sufficient and proactive in relation to their leisure lives; (iii) know themselves in relation to leisure; (iv) increase their options for satisfying quality experiences; and (v) enhance the quality of their own lives through leisure (Mundy, 1998). In order to achieve these goals, the following specific approaches and strategies are suggested in working with community members:

- identify special populations and their particular needs;
- recognize stigmas and the effects of a discredited social identity;

- learn the negative effects of prejudice, discrimination, stigmatization, marginalization and oppression, especially in blaming people and distancing them from community life;
- discuss a community vision that is inclusive of all its members;
- explore the community themes of capacity, collective effort, informality, stories, celebration and tragedy and their contributions to enhancing the meaning of community to people with special needs;
- work to create a heightened sense of community in establishing ongoing programmes that meet the complex long-term needs of special populations, including: a shared sense of membership, acknowledgement of mutual importance, an affirmation of common beliefs and shared values, a coming together to bond or network, and an acceptance of mutual responsibility for the well-being of the community;
- develop enhanced community mobilization capacity to assist the community in moving from dormancy toward action, including: sustained leadership, formalization of procedures and ground rules, providing rewards and incentives for community efforts, creating internal and external communication avenues, including members with community organizational know-how, and establishing effective behind-the-scenes support;
- build readiness for focused community action, including: establishing clear goals, creating a feasible plan of action, utilizing collective capabilities and resources, providing active participation and control of those with special needs, taking immediate action to change conditions, and fostering high-performance team functioning; and
- create opportunities with affiliated neighbourhood, community and professional groups to champion the benefits of leisure education and recreational pursuits in enhancing the quality of life for those with either disabilities or chronic illnesses.

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# Leisure Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities

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JAY SHIVERS

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Leisure offers opportunities for the positive development of people if they have the intelligence, background, education and/or experience to take advantage of the time available. Essentially, this means participation in a wide variety of recreational experiences with the expectation of enjoyment, personal satisfaction, and the practice of a skill or employment of knowledge and appreciation. Such experiences should go far to stretch the individual in terms of finding new outlets for old talents, using ingenuity, bringing creativity to bear, or simply doing one's personal best. Leisure is the free time required to undertake certain activities which are valuable to the individual in terms of building strength, skill, flexibility, social relationships, health, satisfaction and equality.

To a certain extent the provision of recreational service to individuals with disabilities has not been as effective or as accessible as for other potential users. Until legislation was enacted that would mandate leisure service opportunities to disabled individuals, barriers of a physical, social and professional type were erected to prevent or disallow the routine provision of adapted and generalized recreational services during the leisure which persons with disabilities had. There is now a greater appreciation and understanding of the desirability for recreational services to persons with disabilities both in the community and treatment settings. This has largely been brought about by anti-discrimination laws and the recognition that all people have a certain amount of leisure available to them and disabled people need to participate for the same reasons as do non-disabled persons.

The goal of adapted leisure services is to provide opportunities for stimulating interest and participation in an almost limitless variety of pleasurable pursuits. The goal should be as readily accessible to the disabled as to their

able-bodied peers. Historically this has not been possible and despite advances is not totally so in society today. The fact that it is not gives added significance to the need for developing good adapted and therapeutic leisure programmes which can accommodate those who are disabled.

## **Conflicts and Inequality**

Perhaps the greatest inequity insofar as leisure is concerned is seen in the field of recreational service. The basic principle of equal opportunity for all of the people all of the time has suffered in practice. This principle has had little application to disabled persons in a variety of settings, whether they are in treatment centres or in the community itself. This principle has been distorted to the point where it must be translated to mean equal opportunity to all, except the disabled.

Explicit evidence as to the therapeutic value of recreational activity for disabled persons has not yet been confirmed, outside of anecdotal reporting. However, to the extent that recreational experience during leisure has proved to be of value to people in general, there is no reason to believe that disabled persons would not also benefit from such participation. Confronted with the same problems, in many instances more exacerbated and complex as a consequence of their affliction, the disabled person requires at least the same opportunities as his/her more fortunate peers to associate with and in various groups that offer the possibility of enjoyment through positive leisure activities.

In the same way, the absence of recreational service within the treatment setting and its community counterpart deprives many disabled persons of leisure opportunities. Homebound persons, permanently disabled, mentally retarded, blind, deaf, outpatients of mental health services, all require the same positive leisure opportunities as do non-disabled people, because as human beings they all have the same physical, social and psychological needs. As in some treatment centres, community authorities are either unwilling, unable, incompetent or ignorant of the need to provide such professional services.

## **Leisure and Recreational Values**

One of the most important values of positive leisure engagement is enjoyment. Participation, whether active or passive, promotes a feeling of pleasure in the individual and adds the necessary emotional inducement to further experience. Wholesome leisure involvement in recreational activity is beneficial to those engaged in one of its myriad forms and its continual attraction bears out the idea that what is enjoyable is sought out.

While it is true that people participate in activities which may be laborious and even painful to them during the learning process, they perform the

repetitious movements necessary with the objective of achieving the kind of skill that will provide them with pleasure. But the opportunity to participate must be available.

The individual learning any physical skill, for example, which requires hand-eye coordination, stamina, balance, flowing movement, agility, strength, or speed must literally punish him or herself in the learning process. The disabled person is at an even greater disadvantage because the disability must be overcome or compensated for to effect the same results. Unless there are willing preceptors, counsellors, or other instructors to assist and teach the person to adapt, the opportunity that leisure affords will be negated.

### ***Self-actualization***

By its very nature, positive leisure use can provide much individual satisfaction. Satisfaction may best be understood as the fulfilment or completion of some drive which alleviates tension and produces equilibrium. Motives stimulate action and behind such stimulation are energizers which the individual perceives as initiating activity. There are physiological, psychological, social and cognitive drives which require activity. Satisfaction may be viewed as a mediating force between extremes, a resolution in the sense that stress or anxiety are no longer manifested.

Through recreational activity, participants may achieve satisfying expression which meets particular needs and contributes to good mental health and physical capacity to perform. Personality growth and development as well as personal adjustment of the normal life processes can be assisted in the selection of and participation in recreational activity. Individuals tend to express themselves naturally and completely during leisure, and personal idiosyncrasies are apt to flourish in the more permissive arena of leisure pursuits. Individual proclivities are more easily expressed in an environment that is established to promote personal realization and self-direction. In such a climate, the individual is free to do those things which appear to be beneficial and enjoyable. The person may start and stop at his/her own convenience, test him/herself under whatever conditions are chosen, be passive or active, innovate or copy. He/she may seek isolation or the companionship which group organization provides. Whatever kind of activity stimulates his/her behaviour is available, and engagement or preoccupation with one, some or many recreational outlets is the individual's to control.

Satisfactions can be transitory in nature. Whatever needs impel the act can be fulfilled. With fulfilment the person is free to respond to other insistent drives and needs which continually replenish themselves as long as the organism lives. The needs are real in the sense that they demand fulfilment, but satisfaction does not lead to satisfaction. Too much of a good thing may obliterate whatever sense of enjoyment or satisfaction was originally gained. Certain



activities are entered into because the pleasurable sensation is replicated over and over again. Despite this reliance upon certain activities for enjoyment, there are always other experiences which elicit the same response. It is obvious that an activity which is repeated time and again with the same result can become boring. On the other hand, the individual who repeatedly engages in the same activity is constantly changing, and the conditions under which the activity is carried out may also change so that each experience is potentially new. The outcome may be the same, but the process by which the result was achieved has been transformed, even if minutely.

Another aspect of satisfaction is exemplified by the fact that the individual desires physical activity because human physiology requires some movement. Similarly, the ability to perform produces the need to perform. Individuals with artistic ability invariably participate in artistic expression, those with mechanical ability engage in pursuits which require mechanical dexterity or technique, and so forth. In other words, existence not only affords the foundation for performance, it also stimulates performance.

If there is no capacity as represented by ability, muscularity, strength or gift then the likelihood of individual participation is greatly decreased. It may therefore be asserted that self-realization begins with whatever personal resources or human potential is available. The individual who can begin to accomplish certain objectives is fulfilling an innate desire and thereby satisfying him or herself. To the extent that all persons, unless genetically deprived, have overt or latent talents, knowledge, skill or capacity to perform, there is a direct relationship between their level of achievement and the realization of potential through self-expression. All abilities of an individual should be cultivated so that he or she can accomplish as much as possible and experience the concomitant satisfaction.

### ***Recognition***

Properly directed, the desire for recognition can motivate an individual to be successful in a chosen field. Just as frequently, frustration may prove to be too severe and the individual can be warped. Failure to succeed and the concomitant adjustment problems may manifest themselves in socially unacceptable ways.

Desire for recognition may be positively or negatively derived. Self-structure is the focus around which personality centres and which all people try to maintain and enhance. People want to believe that they are significant and have a place in the world. For this reason, they seek recognition by others. Generally, most people learn to evaluate themselves in accord with the values of peers and the environment in which they live. Self-image develops in terms of how we think of ourselves and of subtle and overt expressions of others about the way they regard us. Self-esteem is an important mechanism

on which the ability to confront and handle problematic situations is based. The individual with a positive self-image is secure as a human being and behaves in ways which radiate personal confidence in who he/she is, what he/she is, what he/she does, and how he/she does it. With increased feelings of certainty about him/herself, an individual is more sure of his/her impulses and looks upon him/herself as responsible and reliable.

People who are able to cope with the exigencies of life are more likely to act in ways that will ultimately benefit them when they face situations of frustration or failure. In many ways, positive leisure or recreational activity may bring the individual the self-confidence and success that is required to effectively raise self-esteem and thereby achieve the recognition that is sought. The permissiveness of recreational experience and the expectation or level of performance which the individual is offered should provide a readily acquired platform of achievement. Whatever the capacity of the individual, there is some activity in which he/she can participate. Setting reasonable goals, and with appropriate encouragement to attain the goals, can do much to re-build flagging self-esteem and restore the confidence which has been sorely tried in other arenas.

While it is true that exploratory behaviour and new experiences may be satisfying to the individual, personal accomplishment and adequate performance may provide even more satisfaction. Individuals should have some purpose in life. The efforts to achieve success in reaching predetermined objectives enrich a person's life. The desire to perform in ways that are acceptable to oneself and to others, as well as to attain one's personal goals, is only satisfied in accomplishment. Whatever other setbacks the individual has had may be offset by progressive accomplishments through experiences which afford a chance for self-expression, recognition, ego-enhancement and security. Where there is an outlook toward the future, the sense of accomplishing objectives permits a healthy attitude and perhaps contributes to a higher quality of life. What better way to sustain this effort than by learning the arts and skills of leisure? Individuals should attempt to prepare themselves for the future. They need to invest in new goals in the form of absorbing interests which will have lifelong value. In this way, eagerness for existence is enhanced and the individual has this reserve to fall back on when illness, accident or disability prevents the enjoyment of normal occupation.

## **The Community Setting and Adapted Recreational Services**

In every community there are numerous disabled persons of every age. These people obviously have special needs. In leisure, as in other venues of living, these people require adaptations to be made which will enable them to participate to the fullest extent in the leisure life and recreational experiences that are available to others who are not disabled. This really means

that the community is obligated by humanitarian concern, if not by law, to make accessible facilities, places and activities so that persons with disabilities may engage to the limit of their capacities those experiences which are conducive to enjoyment, success and the feeling of personal accomplishment.

In the past, the provision of community recreational service has depended upon a certain degree of self-sufficiency on the part of participants. Those who had the capability to perform, either within the organized programme or in activities of their own choosing, could participate; others, less fortunate as far as disabling conditions were concerned, were omitted from these leisure opportunities. The public recreational service department, which is supposed to have responsibility for the provision of leisure opportunities for all people residing in the community, failed to respond to the needs of these individuals. Instead, a steady stream of excuses was presented about why the public agency, i.e. the community, could not undertake to serve this minority. It was averred that lack of specialized personnel; insufficient funds to carry out the primary mandate for which the department was originally established; poorly designed and equipped recreational facilities preventing access; and realization of incompetence on the part of practitioners were some of the reasons. To these excuses might be added public apathy and the unwillingness to investigate or attempt to understand the needs of this neglected segment of the community.

### ***Changing attitudes provide opportunities***

It is incumbent upon recreationists in all circumstances, but particularly in community or public recreational service agencies, to stop supporting the ignorance and apathy of society and begin to advance valid reasons for offering opportunities and service to all. The primary principle on which the field is based is provision of recreational services to all people, not just for those who are sound in mind and body or who have the personal resources to get along without any special assistance whatsoever. This most basic principle means what it says – service to all, whatever their condition, wherever they may be found, at whatever level they are functioning. If they reside in the community, then the community and the agencies which represent it must function to provide continuing services to enhance the lives which they touch.

In many communities, there is a growing realization that modern society has an obligation to help those who require special attention and assistance because of particular physical, mental or emotionally incapacitating restrictions. We have come to a time when we look upon all people as having a right to the pursuit of happiness.

To a considerable degree, society's concept of disability has changed from that of absolute bias and disregard to the recognition that an otherwise

disabled person may contribute productively to his or her community and may lead a satisfying life through socialization with peers and participation in the fabric of the community.

### ***Adapted leisure services rationale***

It has been stated repeatedly that recreational activity is as important to the health and well-being of people as physiological sustenance and social equilibrium. The disabled individual requires recreational activity to the same extent, if not more so, as his or her non-disabled counterpart. The adaptation of recreational experiences permitting the exercise of such pursuits transforms diversion into a restorative or preventative function. The act of modifying recreational activities decreases the limitations placed upon the individual by affliction, thereby enabling him/her to compensate for any loss while stimulating whatever capacity remains. Adaptation supports the individual psychologically and encourages pursuits that build confidence in one's ability to perform what was previously thought to be impossible. This by itself should improve morale and sustain self-confidence.

The ability to cope with health, physical or mental problems, despite restrictions, is an indication of the human capacity to free oneself from the despair brought about by impairment. If activity is to have any meaning in the life of the individual, it must be something in which the person can participate. What has been lost through accident, incident or genetics cannot be restored by recreational activity, but the individual may engage in compensatory activities if opportunities are provided. Once stimulated to perform, personal drives may be directed to seek and develop new or latent interests and talents as well as to reintroduce old or formerly disused skills.

Meaningful activity is fundamental to the health of the individual through his/her life cycle. Leisure activity, adapted to meet this need satisfactorily, serves in both restorative and preventive ways. Furthermore, adaptation can open up new avenues and broaden the horizons of persons with disabilities. By offering opportunities which do much to stimulate active physical participation or arouse attention to some heretofore neglected artistic, educational or social contact, the preservation of emotional stability and increased fitness are encouraged. An efficient, joyful and satisfied person possesses the self-sufficiency and patterns of behaviour to liberate him/her from emotional stress, irrational conflicts and illogical positions. Such an individual looks forward to the change and sweep of living while developing an attitude that facilitates coping with and contributing to the continually changing panorama of one's environment.

Fundamental human needs do not change merely because an individual loses some capacity to function either mentally or physically. Persons with disabilities still have the same need for love and affection, security, to belong, to use their ingenuity, to be significant, and to experience new ideas, new

situations and new horizons. These very human needs remain, but they are emphasized as a consequence of vulnerability. The rising incidence of disease-related crippling, genetic impairment, war-produced trauma and other incident or accident disabilities have thrust themselves upon the consciousness of the public. This impact has forced the sensibilities of people everywhere to recognize the necessity for more and better services of every kind to those who require them. Human potential must not be thrown away. The benefit that accrues from offering leisure opportunities for persons with disabilities is felt in almost all sectors of the community. Through such opportunities, disabled persons are enabled to work and serve to the best of their ability; and it is the humane thing to do.

## **Conclusions and Principles**

1. All community residents should be offered opportunities for positive leisure use.
2. Discriminatory practices against persons with disabilities must be abolished.
3. Educating the general population about the leisure needs of persons with disabilities is a professional obligation.
4. Engagement in recreational activities during leisure is necessary for people with disabilities.
5. Leisure engagement in recreational experiences may assist in compensating for certain dysfunctions.
6. Adapted recreational activities permit participation for those who might be omitted from programmes in both the public and private sectors.
7. Self-actualization for those with disabilities may be one significant outcome of recreational participation during leisure.
8. Recognition seeking and self-esteem may be enhanced through the provision of leisure opportunities for persons with disabilities.
9. Human needs remain constant and may be fulfilled during positive leisure engagement.
10. Equal opportunity for positive leisure use should be enjoyed by all.

# The Role of Leisure Counselling for Special Populations in Facilitating Successful Adjustment to Life in the Community

9

MICHAEL J. LEITNER

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## Introduction

For the purposes of this chapter, leisure counselling is defined as a helping process designed to facilitate maximal leisure well-being. Leisure education is also a process designed to facilitate maximal leisure well-being. However, it is more of a self-help process. Leisure counselling can be viewed as an aspect of leisure education.

## Background and Rationale

Leisure counselling can be a helpful intervention tool in work with a variety of special populations, such as the physically disabled, developmentally disabled, juvenile delinquents, substance abusers and elders. For example, for elders, it can assist in making the transition to the increased leisure that retirement brings; for juvenile delinquents, it can help direct youth to positive leisure pursuits that can prevent boredom and thereby prevent youth from engaging in activities with negative consequences. The ability of leisure counselling to positively affect behaviour has been documented in the research literature.

McDowell (1976) tested the effectiveness of a leisure counselling model in an experimental study. The major findings of the study were that the leisure counselling programme had a positive effect on leisure attitudes, leisure self-concept and work self-concept. McDowell's study is significant for several reasons. First, the study provides concrete evidence of the positive impact leisure counselling can have. The study is also significant in that it

provides a clear rationale for leisure counselling services, especially if research on leisure and mental health is considered. Leisure attitudes and self-concept are important factors in determining psychological well-being. Keeping this statement in mind, and recognizing that McDowell's study indicated that leisure counselling had a positive effect on leisure attitudes and self-concept, it appears that leisure counselling has great potential to have a positive impact on mental health. The potential of leisure counselling to positively affect mental health provides a clear rationale for the existence and growth of leisure counselling programmes for special populations, as a tool to facilitate their successful adjustment to life in the community.

## **Types of Leisure Counselling**

There are three major types of leisure counselling: leisure resource guidance, developmental–educational and therapeutic–remedial. The leisure resource guidance approach is most appropriate for clients who do *not* seek to expand their leisure horizons, but rather are seeking information on recreational opportunities available to them. The procedures of the leisure resource guidance approach are outlined below (based on McDowell, 1976):

1. Initial interview to get acquainted with the client.
2. Administration of leisure-interest inventories and collection of demographic data.
3. Analysis of data collected (preferably computer-assisted).
4. Matching of client's leisure interests and demographic characteristics with appropriate recreation programmes.
5. Discussion of the results of data analysis with the client, and referral to appropriate programmes.
6. A follow-up meeting with the client to examine the client's satisfaction with the programmes to which the client was referred.
7. The counselling process is terminated once the client has satisfactorily been matched with appropriate programmes and is participating in his/her desired recreational activities.

In summary, the leisure resource guidance approach to leisure counselling focuses on the dissemination of information on leisure resources. This approach is most appropriate for individuals with well-defined leisure interests, but who lack adequate information on leisure resources available to them.

### ***The developmental–educational approach (Leitner and Leitner, 1996)***

The developmental–educational approach to leisure counselling is also suitable for individuals without specific problems, but it is a more involving process than leisure resource guidance leisure counselling. The developmental–

educational approach is appropriate for a wide range of individuals, whereas the leisure resource guidance approach is appropriate only with high functioning individuals, and the therapeutic remedial approach is appropriate only for lower functioning individuals or those with specific leisure-related problems. In the developmental–educational approach, the counsellor works closely with the client to discover new leisure interests and activities, in an attempt to broaden the client’s leisure horizons. An important objective of developmental–educational leisure counselling is to help the client identify an ‘ideal’ leisure lifestyle, and then assist the client to bridge the gap between their real leisure lifestyle and their ideal leisure lifestyle through goal setting.

Some of the other objectives of developmental–educational leisure counselling are:

1. To better understand the importance of leisure in one’s life and the effects of social change on leisure.
2. To help identify personal attitudes and values toward leisure which serve as barriers to leisure fulfilment.

Developmental–educational leisure counselling efforts should include the following steps (adapted from McDowell’s (1976) suggested leisure counselling process):

1. *Pre-counselling assessment.* In this step, the client completes leisure-interest inventories and other relevant questionnaires which can be analysed by the counsellor prior to the first counselling session in order to expedite understanding the client’s leisure attitudes and behaviour.
2. *Establishing rapport.* In this step, the counsellor should attempt to develop a warm trusting relationship with the client. In order for meaningful interaction to occur in which the client self-discloses a great deal, a trusting relationship is imperative. Thus, this stage of the counselling process should continue until the counsellor feels assured that the client feels comfortable with confiding in the counsellor. If the counselling process skips to the next step before rapport has adequately been established, discussions are likely to be shallow and not truly beneficial.
3. *Defining concepts.* Some of the more important concepts to discuss and define in this step include: leisure, recreation, work and ideal leisure. Often, counsellors and clients define these terms differently. If these concepts are not defined and discussed at the beginning of the counselling process, discussions in the latter stages will be confusing. A counsellor and client could talk about leisure and yet be talking about entirely different concepts (e.g. leisure as free time vs. leisure as a state of mind). Therefore, it is important to reach mutual understanding of key concepts with the client before proceeding further.
4. *Identifying leisure needs.* In this step, the counsellor helps the client identify the relationship of basic human needs (e.g. the need for physical activity, social interaction, new experiences, etc.) to leisure. First, the counsellor must



be assured that the client understands that the term 'need' is being used to refer to a desirable component of one's life, *not* an urgent want or lack of something desired.

Next, the counsellor should help the client to identify and understand basic human needs most relevant to their life. Recreational activities in which the client is currently involved which meet these needs should be identified. The counsellor should also help the client explore 'ideal' means of meeting these basic human needs, identifying desirable recreational activities the client is *not* currently engaged in (or is not performing as frequently as is desired) that would meet the needs identified.

It is useful for the counsellor to chart notes related to this stage as exemplified in the following table:

Need and description	How met (real)	How met ideally
Physical activity (doing enjoyable activity which improves flexibility, strength or endurance)	Rollerblading (30 min day <sup>-1</sup> ) Tennis (weekends only) Dancing (twice per year)	Rollerblading (1 h day <sup>-1</sup> ) Tennis (90 min day <sup>-1</sup> ) Swim (20 min day <sup>-1</sup> ) Surfing (3 × weekly, 4 h each time) Dancing (2 × weekly, 2 h each time)

Each need should be treated in-depth, with real and ideal means of fulfilling the need listed in different columns. Occasionally, clients claim that they are meeting their needs ideally and that they cannot think of any other ways to achieve their needs. In these situations, the counsellor should use resource materials to stimulate the client's thought on the topic. For example, some resources for ideas on how to meet the physical activity need are: the local college's physical education department course listings and descriptions in the college catalogue; a sporting goods catalogue; listing of clubs in the local phone directory; listing of classes and activities offered by the local parks and recreation department and community centres; and listings of sporting events in the local newspaper.

Thus, this step helps the client to more fully understand the value and benefits of recreational activities. This step also prepares the client for the next step, goal-setting. Once real and ideal means of satisfying needs have been identified, goals designed to bridge the gap between real and ideal leisure lifestyles become more apparent.

**5. Identifying leisure goals.** The purpose of the goal-setting phase is for the client to set realistic goals for improving his/her leisure, both in the short-range (within the year), and long-term (beyond 1 year). Notes taken during the needs phase should be referred to in order to facilitate the goal-setting process. Goals should be set for each need identified, based on the discrepancies between the 'how met' vs. 'ideally how met' columns. Goals should focus on bringing clients' real leisure lifestyle and fulfilment of needs closer to their ideal

leisure lifestyle and ideal means of fulfilling needs. In order to encourage clients to set goals, emphasize that there are no risks in goal-setting, that the goals are *not* set in concrete, and can be changed.

**6. *Obstacles to goal attainment.*** In this phase, the counsellor helps the client to identify potential obstacles to attaining the goals identified in the previous phase. The counsellor and client also discuss how the obstacles can be overcome.

The purpose of this phase is to ensure that goals set are realistic. If goals are not feasible or challenging enough, they should be revised. Discussion on obstacles should focus more on internal obstacles (e.g. guilt, procrastination, motivation, etc.) which the client can act on to overcome, as opposed to discussing external obstacles which the client has little control over (e.g. weather, cost, etc.).

**7. *Identifying performance criteria.*** In this stage, goals are further refined so that each goal has clearly identifiable behavioural indicators which will serve as criteria for success in goal attainment. The key concern in this phase is to be sure that goals are stated in terms of observable, measurable behaviours, and that the desired direction of change is stated.

For example, suppose a client identifies 'to ski more' as a goal. After clarification of what is meant by 'skiing more,' a clearer way to state the goal might be: 'to increase time spent skiing from 10 h per month to 20 h per month.' Similarly, performance criteria for the successful attainment of each goal should be identified, and each goal should be stated in measurable terms.

**8. *Leisure alternatives and consequences.*** In this step, alternative ways to approach meeting each goal are explored and evaluated. After examining the consequences of alternative means of meeting a goal, the most feasible alternative should be selected as an action plan for meeting the goal.

For example, if the goal is to increase time spent skiing from 10 h per month to 20 h per month, the alternative ways of accomplishing this objective should be examined. Some alternatives might be: (i) make one 3-day skiing trip per month, and ski 6–7 h each day; (ii) go on four weekend ski trips each month, and try to ski for approximately 5 h each weekend; (iii) go on five 1-day ski outings, attempting to ski for approximately 4 h each day. The feasibility of each alternative should be examined, considering cost, travel time, physical conditioning and other factors. Finally, the best alternative for meeting the goal should be selected.

**9. *Disseminate information.*** The purpose of this phase is for the counsellor to provide the client with useful information on leisure resources which will enable the client to enact their chosen alternatives for meeting their goals. The counsellor should provide the client with agency names, phone numbers, programme information, and other relevant information.

**10. *Participation and evaluation.*** The purposes of this phase are to ensure that the client does become involved in the recreational programmes and activities identified during the previous phases and to evaluate the client's progress in

terms of goal attainment. Goals should be revised as necessary, or alternative means of meeting goals should be re-examined.

**11. Termination and follow-up.** Once satisfactory progress toward goal attainment has been achieved, the counselling process should be terminated. The last session should summarize the counselling process in a manner which leaves the client with a clear direction for continuing to work to improve their leisure. Follow-up contacts should be made with the client after terminating the process in order to check on the client's progress.

Thus, the developmental–educational approach to leisure counselling is an in-depth approach which attempts to help clients to expand their leisure horizons and improve their leisure well-being. This approach is most appropriate with those who do not have specific leisure-related problems but wish to enhance their leisure.

### ***The therapeutic–remedial approach***

In contrast with the developmental–educational and leisure resource guidance approaches to leisure counselling, the therapeutic–remedial approach is most appropriate for lower-functioning individuals or those with specific leisure-related behavioural problems. Some examples of behavioural problems which can be related to misuse of leisure time are boredom, chronic television watching, social isolation, depression and alcoholism. Therapeutic–remedial leisure counselling necessitates a close, empathetic relationship with the client. Topics such as leisure attitudes and self-concept, coping skills, behavioural problems and impairments, and support systems should be carefully examined. The therapeutic–remedial approach is similar to the developmental–educational approach in that it is an in-depth approach and should cover the 11 steps described in the previous section of this chapter. However, the therapeutic–remedial approach differs from the developmental–educational approach in that the counsellor is more directive, and focuses more on the remediation of specific problems rather than the exploration of broadening leisure horizons. Although it has several objectives which the developmental–educational approach does not, therapeutic–remedial leisure counselling would still follow the same 11 steps of the developmental–educational approach.

## **Considerations in Leisure Counselling**

The following is a list of suggested techniques and procedures to follow in leisure counselling with a variety of special populations:

- 1.** Plan sessions to last between 30 and 45 min. Allow at least 20 min after the session for taking additional notes on the session.

2. Conduct sessions a minimum of once a week, preferably two or three times a week.
3. Every session should have a clearly defined purpose which is clearly stated at the beginning of the session in order to orient both the counsellor and client to the topic at hand.
4. Note-taking and tape recording are helpful sources of information and are encouraged, but should be open to the client so as not to arouse suspicion or mistrust.
5. Select a style of counselling most suitable to the situation. Be flexible enough to change styles (e.g. become more confrontive) if the original method chosen becomes ineffective.

It might be necessary and sometimes more desirable to conduct leisure counselling sessions in small groups instead of on an individual basis. Working in small groups can be more effective than individual counselling if the clients feel more comfortable being in a group than being in a one-to-one counselling situation, and if the dynamics of the group are good, making the sessions more enjoyable and enlightening for all.

One final tip which applies both to group counselling and individual counselling is to make the sessions fun. The sessions do not have to be all talk; they can incorporate some activity. Having refreshments can also make the atmosphere more relaxed. Remember that the means are just as important as the end product. If the sessions are enjoyable, participants will want to continue coming to the sessions and will benefit more from the sessions.

## Special Populations and Special Needs in Leisure Counselling

How leisure counselling is used as a tool to facilitate successful adjustment to life in the community will vary greatly depending on the needs of the particular special population with which it is being used. For example, for elders, leisure counselling can be offered at senior centres and senior day care centres, with the intention of helping elders to make better use of their free time when they are not at the centre. Leisure counselling workshops can also be offered as part of pre-retirement workshops, in order to ease the adjustment to retirement living in the community.

For almost any special population group that is *temporarily* in an institutional setting with the goal of being discharged into the community, leisure counselling can play a central role in preparing individuals for the *unstructured free time* that will be encountered once they are living in the community. For higher functioning individuals with well-defined leisure interests, the counselling sessions can be conducted in the framework of the leisure resource guidance approach; for individuals without specific problems, but lacking clear leisure goals, the developmental–educational approach is most suitable; and

for those with specific leisure-related problems, the therapeutic–remedial approach is advisable. Pre-discharge leisure counselling sessions can and should be offered to clients in a range of institutional settings, varying from correctional facilities and rehabilitation hospitals to substance abuse treatment centres. Effective leisure counselling services can lessen the likelihood of periods of depression and the occurrence of negative/destructive behaviours during free time. In summary, adjustment to life in the community is more likely to be successful if leisure counselling is incorporated into the intervention plan.

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# Serious Leisure for People with Disabilities

10

ROBERT A. STEBBINS

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Leisure studies specialists have all but ignored the leisure patterns and needs of people with disabilities. As a result, says Prost (1992), little is known about the meaning of leisure among such people. McGill (1996, p. 8), makes a still more sweeping condemnation:

Leisure as defined in human service terms, has not been recognized as a realm in which people with disabilities can explore or discover who they are and who they might become. There has been little recognition that supporting and allowing people with disabilities to experience the full range of leisure expressions is important to their finding meaning and creating balance in their lives.

Instead, she notes, leisure service professionals and even many family members concern themselves primarily with keeping such people busy. The thought that people with disabilities might take up a form of leisure capable of providing deep satisfaction through personal expression and a valued identity is simply incongruent with the view of them held by most professionals and family members (see Patterson, 1997, p. 24, for a review of the research supporting her observation).

The stereotypes and flagging research interest aside, people with disabilities face still other problems. Prost (1992) goes on to note that many are chronically or sporadically unemployed, conditions so dispiriting that they are widely believed to stifle the pursuit of leisure of any kind, whatever the person's situation in life (e.g. Kay, 1990, p. 415; Haworth, 1986, p. 288). Furthermore, due mainly to the factor of unemployment, people with disabilities are commonly poor; this deprives them of the enjoyment of a number of

leisure activities easily available to much of the rest of society. Finally, leisure is seen by many people as trivial and therefore hardly worth promoting for anyone, those with disabilities notwithstanding.

Nevertheless, a handful of scholars in the field of leisure studies have begun to entertain the idea that people with disabilities can benefit from pursuing the more substantial forms of leisure – referred to in this chapter as serious leisure. Based on his research on people with spinal cord injuries, Kleiber (1996, p. 13) suggests that serious leisure activities could become an important element in the rehabilitation process of the disabled, possibly by reconnecting with the self what was temporarily ‘lost’ or in setting a new direction for a new self. Patterson (1997) forged an even more direct link between disability and serious leisure by explaining how the latter can serve as a non-paying substitute for work for people whose disabilities force them into unemployment. In serious leisure, he observes, these people can find many of the same positive benefits they once found in their jobs:

If people with disabilities are able to successfully participate in serious leisure pursuits, this can form the basis for self-respect and through their accomplishments something that can be viewed with great pride. Serious leisure activities create the situation where initiative, independence, and responsibility for one’s own success or failure is the ‘modus operandi.’ Whether participating in a scientific project, an artistic performance, or an athletic contest the person is making a contribution to society that is appreciated by someone.

(Patterson, 1997, p. 26)

The two main goals of this chapter are to inform leisure educators, broadly defined here as including leisure counsellors and leisure volunteers, about serious leisure and to suggest ways to apply it in the field of disabilities.

## Serious Leisure

Leisure activities can be classified as either serious or casual, with each form offering its participants sharply different experiences, and each generating for them sharply different states of mind. Serious leisure is the systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist or volunteer activity that participants find so substantial and interesting that, in the typical case, they launch themselves on a career centred on acquiring and expressing its special skills, knowledge and experience (Stebbins, 1992, p. 3)<sup>1</sup>.

Amateurs are found in art, science, sport and entertainment, where they are linked with professional counterparts. Hobbyists, by contrast, lack a professional alter ego, even though they sometimes have commercial equivalents and often have small publics who are interested in what they do. Leisure science classifies the scores of hobbyists in one of five categories: collectors; makers and tinkerers; activity participants; competitors in sports, games and

contests; and enthusiasts in the liberal arts. Volunteers willingly help others for a combination of personal and altruistic reasons.

Serious leisure is often contrasted with casual leisure, defined as immediately, intrinsically rewarding, relatively short-lived pleasurable activity requiring little or no special training to enjoy it (Stebbins, 1997, p. 18). Although an oversimplification, casual leisure can be generally described as all leisure falling outside the three basic types of serious leisure. Casual leisure forms abound in an almost bewildering variety; they include strolling in the park, observing a fireworks display, going on a picnic and taking an afternoon nap.

Serious leisure is further defined and distinguished from casual leisure by six special qualities (Stebbins, 1992, pp. 6–8), qualities found among amateurs, hobbyists and volunteers alike. One is their occasional need to persevere, as when confronting danger or managing stage fright or embarrassment. Serious leisure research shows, however, that positive feelings about the leisure activity come, to some extent, from sticking with it through thick and thin, from conquering such adversity. A second quality is, as already indicated, that of finding a career in the endeavour, shaped as it is by its own special contingencies, turning points, search for rewards and stages of achievement or involvement.

Careers in serious leisure commonly rest on a third quality: significant personal effort based on specially acquired knowledge, training or skill, and, indeed, all three at times. Examples include such valued acquisitions as showmanship, athletic prowess, scientific knowledge and long experience in a role. Fourth, eight durable benefits, or outcomes, of serious leisure have so far been identified, mostly from research on amateurs: self-actualization, self-enrichment, self-expression, regeneration or renewal of self, feelings of accomplishment, enhancement of self-image, social interaction and belongingness, and lasting physical products of the activity (e.g. a painting, scientific paper, piece of furniture). A further benefit – self-gratification or pure fun, which is considerably more evanescent than the preceding eight – is the one most often shared with casual leisure.

A fifth quality of serious leisure is the unique ethos that grows up around each instance of it, a central component of which is the special social world within which participants realize their interests. David Unruh (1980, p. 277) defines the social world as an amorphous, diffuse constellation of actors, organizations, events and practices which have coalesced into spheres of interest and involvement for participants [and in which] it is likely that a powerful centralized authority structure does not exist. Another key component of the social world of any particular pursuit is its subculture, which interrelates the diffuse and amorphous constellations by means of such elements as special norms, values, beliefs, moral principles and performance standards.

The sixth quality revolves around the preceding five: participants in serious leisure tend to identify strongly with their chosen pursuits. In contrast, casual leisure, although hardly humiliating or despicable, is none the less too



fleeting, mundane and commonplace for most people to find a distinctive identity within it.

## Leisure Education

In my view, leisure education should centre on serious leisure, for the most part; it should consist mainly of imparting knowledge about the nature of serious leisure, about its costs and rewards, and about participating in particular serious leisure activities. This conception of leisure education intentionally excludes casual leisure, on the grounds that such leisure requires little or no training or encouragement to engage in it and find enjoyment there. The preceding literature review indicates that, today, the leisure of most people with disabilities is nevertheless casual.

Further, there should be two kinds of serious leisure education. The first would educate or train people with disabilities to find satisfaction in an amateur, hobbyist or career volunteer activity. This kind of education involves informing them in detail about one or more of the activities which appeal to them and for which their disabilities do not disqualify them and then about how to participate in those activities. Thus one component of the job of leisure educator in the field of disabilities would be, for instance, to help people who are blind learn how to knit sweaters or play the piano, but not how to fish with flies or collect stamps.

This example indicates that particular disabilities are compatible with particular forms of serious leisure and incompatible with others. Rather than fill this chapter with lengthy lists of compatible activities for each disability, let me suggest that leisure educators present a list of all serious leisure activities (accompanied by descriptions where necessary) to the individuals with disabilities with whom they are working and then encourage them to select the two activities they find most appealing. The two can then be explored, after which each person can decide which one to pursue, or whether to pursue both of them simultaneously. This procedure has the advantage of avoiding the subtle influence of stereotypes held by some of the non-disabled about what people with particular disabilities can and cannot do. As for the list, it could be developed from my discussion (Stebbins, 1998) of over 300 serious leisure activities and types of activities and augmented with selections from the practical bibliography of books describing how to get started in them.

In this regard, the liberal arts hobbies are possibly the most appropriate type of serious leisure for the largest number of people with disabilities. As long as the disability does not inhibit reading at a general level of comprehension (i.e. the person is not blind, mentally retarded or handicapped by a reading disability) every liberal arts hobby should in principle be accessible for him or her. This having been said, it is important, however, not to ignore the many leisure constraints that place some of these activities well beyond the reach of

some people whose disabilities are not in themselves barriers. For example, Henderson and her colleagues (1995) found in their study of women with physical disabilities that, when it came to leisure, they were more often constrained by energy deficiency, dependency on others and concern for physical and psychological safety than women without disabilities. In other words, to participate in one of the liberal arts hobbies, the enthusiast must be in a position to acquire reading material: have money to buy it, find someone who can get it, have it available in a language he or she can read, locate a quiet place where reading can be done, among other requirements. As a general rule, disabilities from the neck down should not, in themselves, disqualify a person from participating in most of the liberal arts hobbies.

The second kind of serious leisure education would consist of instruction of a more general nature: informing people with disabilities about serious leisure as a kind of activity distinct from casual leisure. Here training would be the same for people with disabilities as for those without them. Since the general public is largely unaware of the concept of serious leisure, the first educational goal here would be to inform them about its nature and value. Such information is important to anyone, disabled or not, who is searching for an *optimal leisure lifestyle*, or the pursuit during free time of a substantial, absorbing form of leisure. More particularly, such education would be composed of instruction on the nature of serious leisure, the general rewards (and costs) of such activity, the possibility of finding a leisure career there, and the variety of social and psychological advantages that can accrue to the person who pursues it (e.g. special identity, routine, lifestyle, organizational belonging, central life interest, membership in a social world). In some instances, people will have to be told how to get started in the pursuit that interests them. Elsewhere, I (Stebbins, 1998, chapter 6) provide information on how to do this in North America, although this may sometimes be inappropriate for other parts of the world. Thus, to more effectively guide the people they are working with, including those with disabilities, leisure educators outside North America may have to gather information on how to get started that is specific to their country and local community.

Two other dimensions should also be considered when discussing serious leisure with people who have disabilities: the time of onset of the disability and the prognosis for its rehabilitation. Thus, for each person being served, it should be established whether the disability was acquired after age 12–15 or at birth or in early childhood. And, regardless of when it is acquired, it is important to know the prognosis for reasonable rehabilitation. Why age 12 to 15? Because, by this age, some children have already developed considerable skill, knowledge and experience in a serious leisure activity, most often an art, sport or one of the hobbies. Should they acquire a disability after this age and it does not disqualify them from participating in this leisure, there would appear to be little that leisure educators can or should try to do in such cases. Even where the disability does disqualify them, their earlier experience with a

serious leisure activity could become a building block for educators working with the person to develop a new lifestyle based on a different physically or mentally compatible form of leisure. For the newly disabled person already understands the idea of serious leisure; he or she knows it can bring substantial rewards, offer an exciting social world and personal identity and so on. None the less, such people might still want to examine the broad list of activities to find the 'best fit' for their personality and interests as seen in the light of their new condition.

A disability that holds out hope for a reasonably complete recovery in a relatively short period of time (say, 3–5 years) could differentially affect motivation to adopt a new leisure pursuit when compared with a disability predicted to last indefinitely, perhaps a lifetime. For example, a person disabled by a stroke who is told that he or she will fully recover within 4 years may well be much less inclined to take up a new form of serious leisure than someone whose multiple sclerosis will, with growing certainty, permanently remove him or her from a sizable range of activities. Part of the educator's job in these instances, then, would be to learn the prognosis for rehabilitation of the people with whom he or she is working and adopt a pitch for engaging in serious leisure in harmony with that prognosis.

## Conclusion

The two main goals of this chapter have been to inform leisure educators, including leisure counsellors and leisure volunteers, about serious leisure and to suggest ways to apply it in the field of disabilities. Taken separately, the educators, the counsellors and the volunteers are trying to describe and explain to their target groups leisure as it relates to their distinct functions, and this chapter has exhorted them to include serious leisure in the instruction they provide. Additionally, when compared with the educators performing their traditional role of classroom teaching, the counsellors and volunteers are perhaps more likely to be involved in assisting actual participation in serious leisure. Such help is not unusual in itself, since people from all walks of life occasionally need guidance and encouragement in taking up and routinely pursuing a serious leisure activity. What is unusual, however, is that people with disabilities may more often need assistance of this sort than many other categories of people, if for no other reason than that some of the former lose (or fail to gain) the confidence they need to engage in complex, challenging activity of any kind (Niyazi, 1996).

Furthermore, counsellors and volunteers should work closely with individuals with particular disabilities to ensure on a practical level that they receive the training, equipment and physical space needed to reasonably and effectively pursue their chosen leisure interest. This implies that, to provide this service, counsellors and volunteers working in this area should be acquainted

with a wide range of serious leisure activities. It implies further that they should not only know how the activities are done and where neophytes can learn how to do them, but also what the distinctive costs and rewards enthusiasts in general and the disabled in particular are likely to experience. These workers do not, however, have to be proficient in all of these activities, clearly an impossible requirement.

Judith McGill's (1996) pilot project shows the broad scope of the leisure educator's role on this practical level. Herself a leisure consultant, McGill formed a committee from among the staff working at the Brampton Caledon Community Living Association located in Ontario, Canada, to work with and thereby help 11 people with disabilities. This was effected in two ways: developing, strengthening or maintaining strong leisure roles and related identities of the 11 and, through memberships and social relationships in its clubs and associations, strengthening their sense of belonging to the local community. Reaching these goals required, in the first instance, getting to know the 11 people, which the staff accomplished by holding several informal conversations with each one. In these sessions, the staff learned about personal leisure preferences and passionate leisure involvements as well as about the meaning of and motivation behind each person's leisure pursuit and his/her patterns of participation in it. The staff and the 11 disabled people also explored the hopes and dreams of the latter and the barriers to fulfilling these dreams. Then a staff member worked with each person to develop a plan for circumventing the barriers, thus turning the dream into reality.

By no means all of the 11 subjects in McGill's pilot study wound up pursuing a serious leisure activity, in part because they were never informed about such leisure in the manner and detail recommended in this chapter. None the less, her research does provide a variety of practical suggestions for helping people with disabilities develop, maintain and strengthen their leisure roles and identities, which could be roles and identities founded on serious leisure were her approach used in conjunction with a list of its many activities. Perhaps the most important recommendation to emerge from McGill's research and from this chapter is that leisure educators must listen closely to the leisure hopes, fears and desires of people with disabilities as they work with them to help them achieve an optimal leisure lifestyle organized around a serious leisure pursuit.

## Note

- 1 I use the term 'career' broadly in this definition, following Goffman's (1961, pp. 127–128) elaboration of the idea of 'moral career'. Such careers are available in all substantial, complicated roles, including especially those in work, leisure, deviance, politics, religion, and interpersonal relationships (see also, Lindesmith *et al.*, 1991, p. 277; Hewitt, 1991, p. 246).

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# Leisure Education, Quality of Life and Populations with Special Needs

11

ATARA SIVAN

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## Introduction

The constructive and meaningful use of leisure has been recognized as an important channel for enhancing people's quality of life. Although the right to participate in leisure activities through different forms of play and recreation has been acknowledged as basic to all people, its implementation needs to be strongly supported and encouraged in many countries. There is a wide range of factors which determine the quality of life of individuals. Among those are environmental factors related to living conditions and personal factors such as disability. The present chapter discusses the role of leisure education in enhancing the quality of life of populations with special needs. Drawing upon the main characteristics of the process of leisure education, the chapter refers specifically to the concept of integration and social interaction through recreational activities. Examples are provided from one charity organization in Hong Kong which has been successfully implementing integration programmes.

## Leisure Education and Quality of Life

Leisure education is a lifelong process which plays a major role in people's socialization. The major goal of such a process is to help people to enhance their quality of life. Through leisure education, individuals learn to understand the role of leisure in their lives, to develop positive attitudes toward their leisure and learn the necessary skills for their optimal leisure involvement.

Quality of life may be defined in objective and subjective terms (Man, 1983). While examining the objective conditions, one can refer to five areas: economic, political, environmental, health and social. The economic aspect refers to the welfare of people and the political points out their rights such as the right to vote, while the environmental refers to environmental factors that can affect people's lifestyles such as the density of the place. The other two components refer to the health of people and to social conditions, focusing on aspects such as social acceptance. The subjective conditions, on the other hand, refer to the feelings of people concerning their lives which can be solicited through questions such as: how do you feel about your life? Although different studies of quality of life focus on different conditions, it can be argued that in many cases the objective and subjective conditions are related to each other. This interrelation may especially be applied to disabled people. When applying the above concept on a micro level, we can find that the subjective definition of quality of life could easily be affected if the disabled people are not being facilitated or well accepted by others. When attempts are made to enhance people's quality of life through leisure education, and especially for populations with special needs, the relationship between objective and subjective conditions should be acknowledged.

## Populations with Special Needs

There is an extensive literature on populations with special needs, but different terminology has been used in different contexts and times. Smith *et al.* (1996) have pointed out the differences between the term disabled and handicapped, indicating that whereas disability refers to an impairment or disorder, being handicapped is a result of the actions of people with disability or by society. With regard to this distinction, Dattilo (1994) raised the need to revise the terminology so as to best represent people with disabilities. Smith *et al.* (1996) further referred to the term 'special populations', indicating that this is a general term which 'describes those who have special needs because of some social, physical, mental, or psychological difficulty' (Smith *et al.*, 1996, p. 22). This is the definition adopted in this chapter.

Some of the major obstacles imposed on people with special needs derive from their disability as well as from the attitudes of the society towards them. They are dependent on others' assistance and care and they need to develop skills so that they can become more independent. When referring to their leisure, in many cases they may have more free time than those without special needs (Berner *et al.*, 1984; Joswiak, 1989). They may suffer from what has been defined as 'enforced leisure'. Lack of mobility in case of physical disability may cause distance from important information resources related to leisure involvement.

Apart from these constraints, there are societal obstacles which derive from the negative attitude of others. Dattilo (1994) has referred to this

approach as attitudinal barrier, arguing that it tends to be the most difficult barrier to overcome. In his view this barrier derives from the fear that people have of the disabled, their lack of knowledge as well as communication problems. Bullock and Mahon (1997) have distinguished between intrinsic and extrinsic barriers. Whereas the intrinsic barriers derive from the limitations that people with disabilities have, the extrinsic barriers are those that are imposed on them by the society, whether physical (such as lack of accessibility) or attitudinal, (which refer to negative attitudes towards them). The negative attitudes towards people with special needs may affect their self-esteem and self-concept as well as causing them to develop feelings of helplessness. Labelling people with special needs may cause them to behave in a manner that matches the way they are being labelled and furthermore 'the labels themselves can act as stigmas' (Dattilo, 1994, p. 24). Such labelling causes the establishment of stereotypes, which may badly affect the lifestyles of these individuals.

The above barriers prevent individuals with special needs from interacting with others and result in them having insufficient channels for socialization. Although the attitudinal barriers have been identified as difficult to change (Dattilo, 1994; Bullock and Mahon, 1997), several ways have been offered for bringing about changes in attitudes towards people with special needs. Of these, one of the most common and effective has been the interaction of people with and without disabilities (Dattilo, 1994; Smith *et al.*, 1996; Bullock and Mahon, 1997). Furthermore, in the area of leisure and recreation, the concept of integration through recreational activities has been strongly recommended as a vehicle for changing attitudes and thus overcoming some of the most difficult barriers imposed by the society.

## **Social Interaction and Integration through Leisure Education**

Being the major socializing agents in the community and the institutions common to all communities, educational frameworks can play a major role in integrating children and adolescents with special needs into the community. Having the potential to educate for leisure, schools have also been recommended as the most appropriate institutions for undertaking this process (Sivan, 1995). Alongside the fight for integration in education within the formal educational institutions, the concept of integration has been strongly advocated in relation to community recreation and leisure services. Such advocacy has been strengthened in light of the growing recognition of the importance of leisure activities for the promotion of health, the provision of social relations and the development of new skills (Schleien and Ray, 1988). Integration provides people with disabilities with opportunities for social interaction, and at the same time can help to change the attitudes of those without disabilities (Dattilo, 1994), and 'dispel the notion that non-disabled participants "lose out" when programs are integrated' (Schleien and Ray, 1988, p. 14).



Leisure education, when implemented through educational frameworks within the community, can utilize various informal channels (Ruskin and Sivan, 1995) among which are special social activities in different sections of the community as well as active recreational school recesses. The use of leisure education strategies which are based on the principles of trial and error in supporting environments, enjoyment, reciprocity, freedom of choice, structural flexibility and community involvement (Sivan, 1996) can establish the positive climate necessary for facilitating the social interaction between people with and without disabilities. Based on the principles of integration and leisure education, the underlying reasons for using leisure education as a channel for social interaction are as follows:

1. To recreate in supporting environments – the integrated programmes allow participants to take part in activities, which are more flexible and less competitive than those implemented in formal settings such as schools.
2. To discover oneself and others – through the interaction, both people with and without disabilities have the opportunity to learn more about their abilities in different areas, which are diverse in their nature.
3. To foster the development of values and positive attitudes – the more opportunities for interaction during a range of leisure activities, the more likely it is that positive leisure attitudes are developed. People learn to appreciate the potential of leisure activities for their own development as well as for the development of others who have different abilities.
4. To acquire skills – social interactions through leisure activities can serve as forums for the development of social and interpersonal skills, which set the foundation for the socialization process.
5. To eliminate fears and raise awareness – interaction with people with special needs offers opportunities to better understand them, to learn more about their abilities and to prevent the development of stereotypes. Furthermore, such encounters can enhance sensitivity to others and encourage the development of people's responsibility for those with special needs.

### **Social Interaction, Integration and Leisure Education: the Case of Hong Kong**

The concept of integration has been strongly advocated as an educational channel to be employed in schools in Hong Kong. In a document on integration published by the Hong Kong Rehabilitation and Rotary Rehabilitation Centre (1989), it has been described as the best means of fulfilling the right of people with disabilities to participate in the regular life of their community. There, the notion of integration has been advocated to start at a very early age, while establishing the appropriate frameworks for its implementation within the educational settings of the community. In order to ensure successful integration, it

has been emphasized that proper preparation should be given to the children with disabilities as well as to their teachers and parents. Furthermore, certain modifications have been recommended in order to facilitate integration, such as better access, changes in classroom seating and provision of transportation to the schools. The same document has portrayed several possible ways of integration in education, ranging from full integration in the classroom to special schools for only handicapped pupils.

Despite the above advocacy for integration in schools, it is only recently that an integrated education pilot scheme has been tried out in Hong Kong. However, outside the school context and with the support of various community agencies, some programmes have been employed for the last two decades to bring together people with and without special needs. These programmes have utilized the principles of social interaction and integration while following the strategies of leisure education.

Growing recognition of the significant role of leisure in people's lives and the need for leisure education in Hong Kong has also been acknowledged (Ng, 1983, 1986). As one of the countries with the highest population densities in the world, the need to establish channels for recreation has been emphasized, for example through the 50 camps located in the countryside and utilized for this purpose (Lau and Degraaf, 1999). Various programmes are conducted in these camps by non-profit organizations, with the aim of fostering the development of children and young people through recreational activities. One of these organizations, TREATS, has been successfully carrying out such activities, which promote integration between young people with and without disabilities.

TREATS was founded in 1979 and is a member of the Hong Kong Council of Social Services and partly supported by the Hong Kong Community Chest. The organization is committed to promoting integration and developing personal and social skills among children and adolescents through recreation and play. In order to achieve its goals the organization initiates and organizes a wide range of activities within Hong Kong society, while bringing together young people with and without special needs. Underlying its activities is the notion that 'recreation and play are an essential part of a young person's development, crucial to the learning process and a powerful medium to discourage segregation and discrimination and encourage friendship' (TREATS, 1998). It develops and conducts programmes, which provide co-operative and team-based learning opportunities for young people of all abilities to participate as equals and develop life skills (TREATS, 1997a).

Building supportive environments for interaction and utilizing some of the strategies of leisure education, the organization has established a good foundation for bringing about changes in attitudes of young people with and without special needs. It operates with the support and involvement of several socializing agents such as schools, peers, family and the community as a whole. Most of its programmes involve social interaction through recreational

activities in natural and supportive settings. For example, using the informal and natural setting of a campsite, the organization provides inclusive programmes through games and play in non-threatening environments to several groups of children with different abilities. Activities are designed around a theme and conducted in small groups interacting with each other. Children are prepared for the integration through pre-camp activities and there are also pre-activity meetings with teachers, social workers and parents. The camps organized by TREATS include large-group interactive games as well as activities in small groups to facilitate interpersonal relationships, and workshops such as arts, drama and theatre to encourage creativity. Children are participating in a process which aims at promoting awareness, understanding and acceptance through the development of co-operation, team building and trust (Yee and Yuen, 1998). The camps are organized around themes, and facilitate sharing and interaction among the participants while implementing some of the strategies of leisure education which involve experiential learning, facilitation, and trial and error.

Apart from the camps, which are organized for children and adolescents aged from 8 to 15 years old, TREATS organizes development programmes for adolescents aged 15 to 18 years old. In these programmes the organization brings together adolescents with and without special needs to train them to run integrated recreational activities for their peers.

In order to further reinforce the concept of integration within the family and the community, the organisation leads several family programmes which include the families of those who participate in the youth development programmes and in the integrated recreation activities.

On the community level, the organization conducts and supports collaborative ability awareness projects that aim at raising awareness, understanding and acceptance of people with disabilities. During 1997, two Ability Awareness challenge days were organized within two districts in Hong Kong with the aim of improving attitudes towards people with disabilities and towards their accessibility (TREATS, 1997b,c). The underlying rationale for organizing these activities was to raise public awareness of the difficulties that these people have to face in day-to-day life in their community. The project involved ten teams of eight people aged 15–25, which comprised people with and without disabilities. The teams conducted a survey on the attitudes and the accessibility in their district. Results of the project have been shared with the district boards of the two districts.

The ability awareness projects ended up with an Ability Awareness celebration, which was organized in one of the biggest parks in the territory. The park provided various interactive stations at which people with and without disabilities had a chance to get involved together in games and other recreational activities, through which awareness and acceptance could be promoted. Acknowledging the importance of simulations as a way to change attitudes towards people with disabilities, an Ability Awareness area was established.

Within this area people could assume a disability such as using a wheelchair or walking blindfolded, or learning more about Braille and sign language from young people with disabilities. In other stations, people who are physically challenged had the chance to produce creative arts and crafts products. Some areas were allocated to activities undertaken by different sports associations for the physically challenged people. In these areas, people without special needs had the chance to participate in some of the sports activities for the physically challenged such as wheelchair fencing. All activities provided chances for young people, whilst interacting in a fun way, to talk about their disabilities – making everyone more aware of and sensitive to the challenges of others in their community.

TREATS regularly provides training in integration through games and play to students of various higher education institutions, the Social Welfare Department and other related agencies in Hong Kong. Constant updating of TREATS expertise is facilitated by regular overseas staff training and participation in and contribution to international conferences. The organization works collaboratively with the Support Committee on Integrated Education, which is a support group consisting of parents and professionals who advocate for integrated education in mainstream schools. TREATS programmes facilitated the Integrated Education Pilot Scheme recently employed in Hong Kong. The work of TREATS is indeed a good example of utilizing the strategies of leisure education constructively while bringing together people with and without special needs in the community through recreation and play.

## **Concluding Remarks**

The process of leisure education aims at assisting people to identify their leisure values, developing their skills for leisure participation and fostering positive attitudes towards leisure. The major aim of leisure education is to enhance people's quality of life. This aim is especially important to populations with special needs who often lack the opportunity for socialization. One of the main strategies which has been strongly advocated for enhancing the quality of life of populations with special needs is integration. This chapter has described some forms of social interaction between people with and without disabilities, which aim at integration. These forms can serve as the foundations for fulfilling the aims of leisure education in terms of knowledge, values, attitudes and skills. The interaction can enhance people's awareness of the special needs of accessible and integrated programmes. It can also help in identifying leisure values through the various integrated activities and help in the development of personal and social skills necessary for people with special needs for their socialization. Apart from fostering positive attitudes towards leisure, these forms can develop positive attitudes towards people with special needs and thus can prevent some of the barriers imposed by the society. The above

forms can be most successful if they are supported by activities on the community and society levels and are undertaken by well-trained personnel with the co-operation of educational, social, medical and voluntary organizations within the community. Strategies such as utilization of informal settings, experiential learning, and trail and error in supporting environments could be used to best facilitate the integration between children and adolescents of different abilities.

In today's information age, recent developments in technology should be utilized for opening an additional channel for communication and sharing between people of the global community to raise the awareness of special populations' needs, disseminate knowledge of resources available for their pursuits and prevent their isolation. Furthermore, there is a growing need for more investments and subsidies to enable on-going research and facilitation of people with special needs so that their right to use leisure constructively can be best translated into practice.

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# Active Living for People with Disabilities: Toward the Concept of Equality of Well-being and Human Existentialism (Authenticity)

12

JOSEPH LEVY

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## Introduction

The ways in which post-modern, affluent and civilized society provides opportunities for self-fulfilment for people who, for one reason or another, are more socially, physically, politically or economically dependent throws into sharp focus the overall values, beliefs and culture of that society. Whether the 'population' in question is unemployed/underemployed youth, single parents, disenfranchised minority groups, injured workers or disabled citizens, the question of personal self-fulfilment and human authenticity in post-modern global society is paramount when any discussion on health and social planning is raised.

This chapter proposes for discussion a paradigm (Levy, 1998) based on the principle that one of the most optimal models for *equality*, *dignity* and *human authenticity* for all citizens in our society, is one that is based on *well-being*, *wellness* and *human authenticity* as an outcome. The concept being developed in this chapter is based on the premise that all human beings – in spite of their plethora of biological and psycho-social differences or numbers in society – are entitled to be considered and respected as equals and have the legal, ethical and moral right to *authentically* participate in the social, cultural, educational, sport, political and economic fabric of a society (Levy, 1998). This is today described in many health and social circles as the *wellness* (Levy, 1998) or *well-being* (Roehrer, 1993) model of society:

Well-being has a number of components including equal achievement of self-determination, participation and inclusion in social life, and the exercise of



fundamental citizenship rights. Equality itself would be an end not a means to meeting other social goals. Self-determination includes notions of choice, personhood and dignity. In its broadest sense this would incorporate Lukes' notion of a society with equal respect as one in which: 'There are no barriers to reciprocal relations between relatively autonomous persons, who see each other and themselves as such, who are equally free from political control, social pressure, and economic deprivation and insecurity to engage in values pursuits, and who have equal access to the means of self-development.'

(Rioux and Bach, 1994, p. 86)

## Post-modern and Post-industrial Holistic Human Systems Framework

This 'systemic' approach to human services is the post-modern effort to move beyond individual risk factors and victim blaming. In the individual-based model of society, professionals, academics and bureaucrats undertake to 'fix', 'cure', 'educate' and make people 'fit' into a preconceived linear model or paradigm designed by the majority (power) for the minority (powerless). While addressing specific 'ecosystems,' Levy *et al.* (1998) capture the essence of the post-modern, holistic and systems approach to macro and micro human sustainable development:

Human activities are transforming the global environment at an ever-increasing rate. These changes manifest themselves in many forms including ozone depletion, tropical deforestation, and increased atmospheric concentration of gases that trap heat and may warm the global climate. The atmosphere, oceans and soil base are limited in their capacity to sustain life; the deterioration of resource stocks cannot continue indefinitely without threatening the survival of humanity. In *Methodology for Large Scale Systems* (Sage, 1977:1), Andrew P. Sage argues that a 'systematic method of dealing with complex systems has much to offer with respect to ameliorating many problems confronting us today.' Sage's emphasis on 'systems thinking' is a valuable contribution to protecting the global commons, because it offers a broader, more holistic approach to integrating human well-being, institutional renewal, and ecological stewardship.

(Levy *et al.*, 1998, p. 31)

## Existential Pluralism–Authenticity and Social Evolution: *Sine qua Non* of Human Life Plans

Diversity of national, racial backgrounds; of socio-economic and educational advantages; of values and lifestyles, of necessities for and experiences of personal fulfilment, and of contributions to and requirements from society are so multifold and vociferous today that any thought of clinging to the traditional

dream of a monolithic/assimilative society, is not only irresponsible and irrational, it is also illegal (see, *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*<sup>1</sup>) and actually dangerous.

No longer may diversity be dismissed (as it has been, as least implicitly, since the birth of nationalism in the modern world) as but the temporary by-product of a system which assures ultimate and uniform satisfaction to all. The times demand that we, as a democratic, self-determined and just people, make the existential confrontation that fundamental differences do exist among us, differences along every dimension that is important to human experience and welfare. Such differences exist, will continue to exist, and will increase. Indeed, one of the clear products of our social, cultural, political and technological evolution is the continual increase in human diversity, a finding in contrast to the views of the classic social theorists ('survival of the fittest') of the 18th century.

The manifest meaning of this social evolution is that a public policy be developed to guarantee that a continued and significant diversity among the persons who make up post-modern society be protected. This is the great global challenge to democratic society. In a world that is moving toward religious, cultural and political secularism and fundamentalism (Quebec in Canada, Ireland, Bosnia, Iran, Iraq, Israel) this must be seen as a 'world macroproblem' as serious as pollution, overpopulation, nuclear warfare and exhaustion of natural resources.

In oversimple terms, the world macroproblem is whether humans can learn to live with their diverse humans and with their finite world, before our conflicts destroy us. This chapter on the active living needs of the disabled is but another aspect of the call for a workable pluralistic conception of society which will make places for more people's needs, modes of being and patterns of life and community. In short, the optimal course of human phylogenetic and ontogenetic development is through an existential pluralism model.

## **Social Well-being Model of Human Pluralism and Authenticity: Quality of Life from Within**

Traditional Western pluralism, democracy, equity and self-determination has operated on the following thesis: all shades of opinion should be allowed voices in the social arena. Those views which are most reasonable and/or most persuasive in their appeals to most people will become the will of the majority. Those in minority, having had their chance, must abide by the will of the majority, as is only 'fair'. They may try again, of course, to convince others so that in time they may become the majority. The pluralism/democracy/equity/self-determination of this view resides in the open forum of controversy which is not only tolerated but often extolled as providing the only

equitable way for all views to be heard and given their fair opportunity to become the king-for-a-day, the will of the majority.

Careful thought about the majority model of pluralism reveals that it is basically a monolithic pattern in its implications. Often this is rationalized by an almost mystical belief in the magical rightness of the will of the majority. It seems to be a favourite tack of would be patriots to suggest that in some unexplained way, the majority – or what passes for it at any given time – senses the truer destiny and is justified to define the meaning and essence of quality of life. Others, more pragmatically argue that it is the only practical and human way to take some account of human diversity and that hopefully the majority, being supposedly satisfied, will ensure a reasonable tranquillity and continuity of the governmental institutions. After all, such exponents are apt to say, you can't have six, eight, or 20 different laws, value systems, ethics and agencies, or can you?

The majority-rule model calls for all persons to 'abide by' and 'aspire to' the rule of the majority. Thus it encourages diversity in debate but not in practice. By and large, however, we have little experience of and much hesitation about thinking in terms of true pluralism when considering issues involved in dealing with disabled people – work, play, family, marriage, death, dying. Clearly, the underlying stumbling block in the majority rule form of pluralism is the seldom confronted assumption that having the greater number of supporters and believers somehow indicated the essential virtue of desirability of a point of view. Moreover, there is the seductive possibility of enforcing that point of view on others who see, feel and think things differently. Thus the majority rule form of pluralism may very easily devolve into a more subtle form of the old claim that 'might makes right'.

In Canada, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, was introduced to deal with the majority abuse of the minorities in Canadian society. As we move into the post-industrial age when diversity of all kinds is the norm not the exception, we must seek a new model of pluralism. Today existential (authentic) pluralism is, however, more a vague conception than a fully worked out plan awaiting implementation. Pluralism is, of course, a philosophic and religious conception with a long history, but it has not to the author's knowledge, been fully developed in terms of psychological, sociological and political coordinates into a programme for social action. Perhaps the most ambitious attempt at proposing a pluralistic framework with respect to the disabled is being made at the Canadian Roeher Institute (1993).

Recognizing the limitations of the post-war framework in the face of current realities have left social, economic and political institutions in Canada without clear direction for reform and development ... A new framework for well-being is needed to manage government's responses to the growing and diverse interest groups which turn to government for public provision and regulation ... A framework for well-being could help in making judgements about public provision and regulation and help adjudicate between various interest groups ...

A framework for well-being could provide a foundation for fairness in Canada. *Self-determination, democratization and equality* provide the basis for a revised concept of well-being.

(Roeher Institute, 1993, p. 28)

One of the most fundamental premises of the social well-being model of a pluralistic society is the principle of human authenticity. Here we draw on the work of such philosophers as Descartes, Kant, Rousseau, Locke and John Stuart Mill. To be authentically human is to acknowledge that:

There is a certain way of being human that is my way. I am called upon to live my life in this way, and not in imitation of anyone else's ... This is the background understanding to the modern ideal of authenticity, and to the goals of self-fulfilment or self-realization in which it is usually couched.

(Taylor, 1991, 28-29)

Summarized in Table 12.1 are the most salient concepts describing the three major elements of the Roeher model of social well-being. The present chapter is simply an incremental attempt to contribute toward the development of a genuinely pluralistic (authentic) frame of reference for those who work with the disabled in the active living field.

Perhaps the most salient Canadian public policy and administration landmark event that has attempted to frame a new wellness model for active living services for the disabled was the *1986 Jasper Talks*. These introduced the five guiding principles of active living for Canadians with disabilities, which has since been adopted by all major public policies for persons with disabilities (Active Living Alliance, 1998). It is now 12 years after the Jasper Talks. In this chapter, the author, wearing his health planner hat, would like to assist with the future analysis of their impact upon Canadians moving toward the concept of pluralism and authenticity of equality of well-being among disabled citizens, and from which the rest of the world can perhaps learn a few salient lessons. To assist with this analysis of the blueprint of principles and goals, the social well-being framework developed by the Roeher Institute (1993), will be used as a template to analyse the principles of active living for persons with disabilities.

## **What is Active Living? A Canadian Model in Keeping with Healthy Communities**

Before proceeding with the application of the blueprint of principles and goals (Active Living Alliance, 1998) and the social well-being model proposed by the Roeher Institute, we should review the principles of active living, since many readers will not be Canadian. Active living is an essential component in the quality of life of all people. Its genesis is related to the Healthy Communities work done in Canada and by the WHO in the late 1970s and

**Table 12.1.** Framework of a pluralistic (different) society.

Elements	Key concepts
Self-determination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freedom 'from' and freedom 'to'</li> <li>• Control</li> <li>• Lifestyle choices</li> <li>• Charter to life, liberty and self-determination</li> <li>• Development of capabilities</li> </ul>
Democratization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition of diverse groups and regions</li> <li>• Enabling democratic participation</li> <li>• Equal participation of diverse interests in decision making</li> <li>• Without democratization, diversity and minority views fail</li> </ul>
Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free from political control, social pressure and economic deprivation</li> <li>• Equal access to self-development</li> <li>• Women, disabled and minority groups have not been equally situated</li> <li>• Institutional recognition of differences</li> <li>• Equality provisions of the <i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms</i> – equality does not imply similar treatment</li> <li>• Accommodations and support to ensure equal freedom to pursue diverse languages, identities and cultures</li> <li>• Value differences, address disadvantages</li> <li>• Opposite of traditional pluralism: the majority rule model</li> </ul>

Adapted from Roeher Institute (1993).

early 1980s (Levy and Levy, 1996). Active living is defined as a way of life in which physical activity (e.g. recreation, sport, fitness, and movement in work, home and community) is valued and is integrated into daily living. These activities are guided by the three principles described in Table 12.2.

### **Five Guiding Principles of Diversity and Authenticity and the Social Well-being Framework as Applied to Active Living for Canadians with Disabilities: Disabled Determining their own Life Authentic Plans**

Disabled Canadians, like all other Canadians, wish to take charge of their own life plan. A life plan is not a technical exercise managed by social workers, educators, coaches or other care givers. A life plan, is a narrative of a person's

**Table 12.2.** The principles of active living.

	Principles
Individual	Active living is individual. People are involved in active living for many reasons – play, work, achievement, health, creative and cultural expression, personal development and social interaction. There is no best way to live actively. Although experts can provide guidance, the individual is the best judge of how to implement an active lifestyle consistent with one’s own aspirations, abilities and preferences. The principle supports individual empowerment and the right of individuals to make choices and participate in collective decisions affecting how they may wish to live actively
Social	People live in complex societies where social institutions and cultural activities are ubiquitous. Factors such as social roles and norms, cultural traditions, social values, availability of resources, community characteristics and leadership abilities all play important roles in shaping opportunities and choices for active living. To integrate active living into Canadian society we need systems, processes and institutions that are responsive to the changing needs, aspirations and values of Canadians
Inclusive	Active living should be a right of all Canadians. All individuals should have opportunities to participate in physical activities, regardless of ability, age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic status, education level or geographical environment

Source: *Policy Implications for Active Living*. Active Living Alliance for Canadians with a Disability in collaboration with Health Canada/Fitness Unit. Ottawa (1997).

past and present circumstance and future hopes, a narrative that is a condition for an integrated and holistic self.

The notion of a ‘life plan’ is what provides the glue for the five principles of social well-being (Table 12.3) which are supposed to reflect the values and beliefs that are supposed to serve as a reference for organizations wishing to plan, evaluate and modify their active living life plans for Canadians with disabilities.

## Note

- 1 Under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (Roehrer Institute, 1993), people with ‘mental disabilities’ are specifically listed as a class of person entitled to equality; that is, they have a prima-facie entitlement to equality. The Charter also specifically excludes programmes established to redress discrimination from being classified as discriminatory. In other words, special measures are deemed to be consistent with equality.

**Table 12.3.** Blueprint for action and social well-being: toward existential pluralism, life plans and quality of life. Five Blueprint principles and goals (1998).

	Self-determination	Democratization	Equality/justice/public policy
Principle 1: quality of life is a fundamental right of all people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Autonomous choices about how to express one's quality of life through active living – write your own script of life</li> <li>Governments play active role in enabling achievement of quality of life – assist with autonomous plans as a normal course of entitlements, not as 'special' hand-out. 'No free lunches!'</li> <li>People do not achieve quality of life all on their own – victim blaming does not encourage self-determination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality of life is not a zero-sum game – all are winners in society</li> <li>Decisions about quality of life made at all levels of society – the Gaia principle</li> <li>All positions and aspirations on quality of life do not count equally. As a society, all forms of happiness cannot be condoned. Smoking may have to be banned. Transportation may have to be selected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accept the principle that not all people are situated to experience equality in quality of life. The disabled have not been treated equally in terms of resources and services. Unfair distribution of resources leads to unfair distribution of quality of life</li> <li>Nationality, gender, race and ethnicity, religious beliefs, disability, etc., are not reasons for denying people their quality of life – might does not make right in all aspects of life. Football fields must be just as important as children's playgrounds or bicycle paths</li> <li>Institutions must value differences, address disadvantages and recognize that people have differing quality of life needs – 'social bargaining on the meaning and essence of quality of life'</li> </ul>

Principle 2:  
empowerment  
is the key

- Self-determination needs to move beyond 'victim blaming' if it is to empower people
- Innovation in the design, implementation and evaluation of programmes occurs when consumers have self-determination
- Canadians have championed the cause of empowerment through self-determination
- Empowerment achieved through the 'politics of recognition'
- Mutual respect and recognition for difference
- Participation in decision making is not inherent, voluntarily exercised – need to work with 'uninformed' disabled groups through media, education and vocational systems
- Absence of barriers to empowerment
- Equal access to empowerment
- Marginalization prevents empowerment
- Move from efficiency and effectiveness to 'equality' of well-being through self-empowerment – do the 'right thing' not the 'thing right.'

Clear sidewalks in the winter instead of 'limo service'

Principle 3:  
every  
community  
should be  
involved

- Sense of individual control comes from having community involvement
- Sense of control moves people from *survival* mode to *sustainable* mode
- Support for community involvement must come from internal and external sources
- Mutual recognition at heart of community development
- Decision making at community level should integrate all systems: economic, social, political
- Democratization is an integrating community force
- Equality versus inequality at heart of healthy community
- All communities cannot be treated the same – different starting points
- Shared interests among community members increase interactions between them and lead to a greater sense of belonging to a community

*Continued*



Table 12.3 Continued

	Self-determination	Democratization	Equality/justice/public policy
Principle 4: equal access must be guaranteed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equal access is a myth. Needs to be developed. 'Primary Goods' – resources, goods, services, education, training at heart of access through self-determination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too many disabled have access to services and programmes they did not create, e.g. Special Olympics. Recognition of democratic decision-making before access can be granted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Idea of community as fluid and dynamic reality. Not unitary, simple or static</li> <li>• Equal access not necessarily 'equitable'</li> <li>• Equality must first deal with absence of barriers before equal access can be guaranteed – starting point of disabled precludes equal access. Swimming pool with ramp not enough</li> </ul>
Principle 5: respect and dignity are the foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Without self-determination, respect and dignity do not exist</li> <li>• 'Narrative ethic' should be self-determined to be respected. Too many narratives not written by disabled</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communitarian philosophy prevents value relativism: anything goes. Avoid a <i>priori</i> categories, diagnosis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Justice must be seen as equality to promote respect and dignity</li> <li>• Equality means seeing issues from the inside out</li> <li>• Structure of disabled group and community must be treated fairly in order for dignity and respect to grow</li> <li>• Quality of life, pluralism, life narrative is all about just and equitable public policy</li> </ul>

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# Community Empowerment, Poverty and Leisure Education

13

ELISHEVA SADAN

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## Introduction

This chapter addresses the question: how are 'leisure' as a theoretical concept, and 'leisure education' as a practical concept relevant to the lives of the poor in society. It emphasizes that for people who lack vital resources for mere subsistence, it is a matter of survival to use leisure in order to acquire better access to these resources.

In order to achieve personal and community empowerment, people do need spare time over subsistence requirements, and this makes leisure education (LE) important. But in order for LE to be relevant to the lives of people in stressful social conditions, free time must be created for these groups. Community development must also be promoted as a serious leisure activity and not merely as the context, or as a by-product of recreation and sports activities.

## Leisure as a Contested Concept

Can leisure be defined as time free from paid work?

Chris Rojek (1985) thinks that the sociology of leisure avoids important social aspects that influence leisure. He argues that leisure research deals with forms of leisure and its characteristics, but not enough attention is paid within the field to social processes that affect leisure.

Rojek states that the term 'free time' does not have a meaning of its own, and that freedom should not be connected with leisure, for leisure is not free activity, but is heavily dependent on how systems of social legitimization allow

people to behave. His main example is the different ways that leisure time and leisure space change when gender is concerned. This point will be discussed further later. Carol Pateman (1970), and Eileen Green (1996) argue in the same way, that LE is part of society and thus employs the same differential mechanisms as all other social intervention systems, like school education, training, employment and institutions.

Pateman (1970) rejects the idea that leisure has a central role in the lives of working people, since they work less today and have more free time, and for most people 'work' has only instrumental value. As a result of this situation, and in search of meaning and personal development, people concentrate their ambitions on leisure. This line of argument maintains that people will develop their collective and political ability through LE. Pateman claims that this is partly true, and only for some people. First, 'work' (or 'no work') is not just the source of people's subsistence needs and the determinant of their social status, it also affects what they do in public in cooperation with others. Usually, people who are involved in public affairs, act in this arena within the framework of their leisure. In fact, in most cases they enter this kind of leisure as a natural and direct extension of their other concerns in 'work'.

The social structure, with its power, authority and domination systems, influences all aspects of men and women's lives. This is why the splitting of life into work and leisure, does not always result in a quest for more leisure activities in order to compensate for frustrations created during the time of work. Usually, the opposite is true – the working person continues to be outside working hours the same frustrated person he or she is at work. Research indicates that the people most likely to participate in leisure activities defined as 'public activity' – in voluntary organizations and in political activism – belong to the higher socioeconomic groups, in which self-fulfilment is developed during paid work as well.

Michel Foucault argues (1980) that we live in disciplinary society – a society that finds ways to rule people with sophisticated means of self-discipline, instead of the brutal and overt methods used in earlier periods of power relations in Western society's history. Disciplinary power, according to Foucault (1970), concentrates on manipulation of the human body, which is treated not unlike a machine that can be regulated and adjusted. This is a kind of efficient and productive discipline that enhances the production efficiency of the body, and at the same time diminishes its independent orientation. An efficient use of the body means that nothing is left without use or purpose. We are trained how to sit, in what position, when, where and how fast in order to write or to shoot.

It is important to explain at this point that according to Foucault, power relations and manipulations are expressed through daily routine practices, with no awareness of the consequences of their outcomes. There is no central intention – no conspiracy – which regulates social processes.

The disciplinary society exercises discipline and ensures obedience by manipulating human bodies effectively through time and space. Foucault

(1980) speaks about social exclusion as a general strategy, which is executed by several means. For example, by 'enclosure': people are made to be relatively secluded from their environment and from each other. Hospitals and prisons are extreme examples, but other social institutions like schools, factories, offices and caravan sites act in similar methods. The practice is to enclose people in separate spaces in order to control and regulate their lives and behaviours in more efficient and more scientific ways.

Another example of spatial manipulation given by Foucault is 'partitioning'. Each individual is allocated an individualized location that is his/hers for periods of the day, the year or for life. In this way an 'analytical space' is created where people are watched as they are placed in rows, lines or cells, with permanent spatial and temporal partitions between them.

These time-space partitions have two exclusionary outcomes:

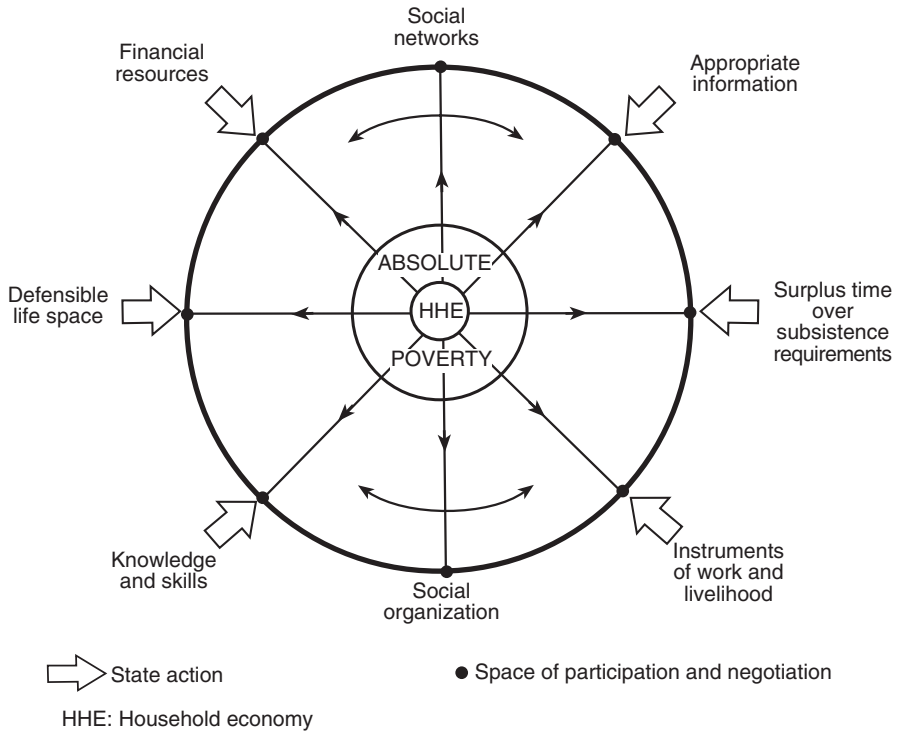
1. They help to avoid the creation of large groups that might be a source for the creation of independent will or opposition, e.g. they oppress collective efforts and voluntary organization.
2. They enable direct manipulation of individual activities and avoid waste created by idle human encounters. They are productive and efficient.

Anthony Giddens (1984) noticed that Max Weber, as well as Foucault dealt with the separation of units of space and time, and with the control of these units. Weber stressed a phenomenon that is important for the discussion of leisure as no work – the importance of the complete separation between the locations of the workplace and the worker's home. Thus, Giddens adds that the journey to work (or to school) is another important mechanism of partition and control used to manipulate and control people in the disciplinary society. Working from home, a relatively recent phenomenon, seems like a big revolution in this domain, or it might not be, and will be discussed later when we take a look at who works from home.

To sum up, according to several social theorists, the same control mechanisms are used throughout all social relations. The field of LE is a social function and as such it adheres to the same social rules and norms, and takes place in the same power arenas as all social relations. LE does not have a different social role by merely claiming to have one.

## Poverty as Social Disempowerment

In order to understand how LE can make a difference, it is useful to introduce John Friedmann's multi-dimensional (dis)empowerment model (1992) (Fig. 13.1). This model defines lack of financial resources as only one component of poverty. Friedmann argues that poverty is lack of social power, which is the result of lack of relative access to bases of social power.



**Fig. 13.1.** Friedmann's (dis)empowerment model. From Friedmann (1992, p. 67).

Social power involves access to the resources of civil society, and powerlessness means being barred from these resources. Empowerment is the process by which more access to the bases of social power is created, and disempowerment is the situation where barriers and obstacles are increased and this access is denied, or made very difficult.

The model is concerned with collectives and not individuals. Since social situations affect and differentiate between groups and not between individuals, the way out of poverty must be a collective process as well.

One of the eight bases of social power indicated in Friedmann's model is 'surplus time over subsistence requirements'. Friedmann counts this base as second only in its importance to 'defensible life space', which is the first barrier people must overcome. This means that once people have secured a roof over their heads, their next priority is to obtain control over spare time. A secure and permanent foothold in a friendly and supportive neighbourhood is indeed the most highly prized social power. Homeless people are absolutely powerless, as are agricultural seasonal workers. The same is true of people

who live in insecure and threatening physical environments: they will stay shuttered inside their place of residence, enclosed there in a totally powerless way.

After a 'defensible life space' is accessed, 'surplus time' is needed. This is the time available to people over and above the time necessary for gaining a subsistence livelihood. Surplus time is a function of many things, such as the time spent on the journey to (wage-paying) work; the ease with which basic consumption items such as food, water and fuel can be obtained; the frequency of illness in the household and access to medical services; the time required for the performance of essential domestic chores; and the gender division of labour within the household.

The eight bases of power are distinct, yet interdependent, because they all refer to means for obtaining other means in a spiralling process of increasing social power. Yet because they cannot be collapsed into a single dimension such as 'money', or 'vouchers', which mainstream doctrines regard simplistically as 'empowerment', they are also independent of each other. Within this frame of argument it is important to understand that without access to surplus time, people's options are severely constrained.

People first need some firm grounding for their activities. Surplus time is often a second priority, and both may be used for, or be dependent on, people's social networks and participation in local organizations. Once these needs are realized, people may set very different priorities for themselves, pursuing different ends.

It is important to note that there are no spaces for participation and negotiation with agents of the state for either social organization or social networks. These are, according to Friedmann, power bases of civil society from which the state is excluded. Acting in collaboration with others and beyond the state's reach, people can increase their chances of gaining access to the remaining bases of power.

This model may be viewed as a model of collective empowerment and development, as well as one showing how poverty and deprivation are structured socially. The model's limitations are in its local reference. The local is where people can perceive their interests most clearly and are also motivated and engaged. But there are serious constraints on what can be achieved locally, for poverty is a condition caused by systematic policy – structural mechanisms confine access to social power and keep the poor struggling at the level of day-to-day survival. The change, then, must be structural too, and go beyond Friedmann's local model.

While this is kept in mind, it should also be acknowledged that local changes, although only partially effective, are achieved through immense efforts on the part of the poor. Practitioners who work with poor and disadvantaged people know the huge sacrifice that people make to be able to stay with the process and not to give up. What is important to stress here is that community empowerment cannot be an exclusively grassroots process, the



help of external change agents is critical. It is especially needed in order to advance from the local to the societal arenas of action and influence.

To sum up some of the points the model helps to stress:

1. Community empowerment is not only a collective activity, but is also a political activity. Social change means change in social power relations. The social change needed is the one that initiates processes that help people who are denied access to important power resources to gain this access and to overcome powerlessness.
2. Poverty is a multi-dimensional situation and a continuum on which all citizens in a given society can be assessed. (This point rules out racist pseudo-scientific orientations that treat poverty as a culture or a special personality structure.)
3. Poverty cannot be 'solved' by one simple solution, and certainly not by technical means.
4. The model hints at the possible roles of external change agents, leisure educators among them. They are expected to help the access of people to the bases of social power, and for LE surplus time is an imperative base of resources. Leisure educators tend to take for granted the access of all citizens to spare time, and to ignore their own role as enablers of this aspect of the right for leisure.

## **Poverty, Lack of Access to Surplus Time and Leisure Education**

When specific groups are concerned, there is a need to ask how is LE relevant for these people? And how can it improve their lives? Since it is impossible to talk about the poor as one group, the discussion will be divided into three sections, and will refer to women, to unemployed men and to people with physical disabilities. Each of these groups is only an example. The discussion could have included other groups as well (e.g. the elderly, the developmentally disabled, children). Each of these examples represents a whole world of needs, life conditions, social barriers and expectations for enabling change efforts.

### ***Women and leisure education***

How is 'free time from paid work' relevant when women, who are heavily involved in unpaid work and caring responsibilities for children and old people in our society are concerned? Their free time – uncommitted time – is at best limited and at worst non-existent. Most research indicates that the experience of leisure is very much gender dependent.

Women who do unpaid work at home, and have young children provide a good example of the serious limitations on leisure in the first years of

married life (Aukley, 1974, cited in Rojek, 1985). They worked 77 hours a week in the household, including shopping and care. This is an inaccurate, and probably underestimated calculation, for it is much more difficult to separate between unpaid work and leisure than between paid work and leisure.

For husbands and fathers, leisure is one of the main rewards of paid work, but for wives and mothers who work in the home and care for children and adults, this is not the case. They dedicate a lot of their thoughts to leisure spent out of the home. In fact, says Rojek, this is their main fantasy. Women stay at home, watch television, read and engage in home-based crafts. Spare time is often taken in snatches between cooking, cleaning and caring for others.

When men are at home their leisure activities are similar to those of women: it is outside the home that leisure is very different. Women are expected to stay at home. Men have physical activities, with special spaces allocated for them, such as bars, pubs, clubs, football games, evenings out with friends, and even standing on street corners. The only public spaces assigned to women were until recently public toilets! Now there are some leisure facilities assigned to women, but not all of them are legitimated by society, and most of them are not accessible to poor married women. These women are rarely engaged in sports of any kind. When the research focuses on ethnic groups, it indicates that leisure becomes more restricted. Muslim women are the most blocked from leisure activities in public spaces. Their roles at home are highly valued, and there is among them, as among Asian women, an understandable fear of racism and the threat of sexual harassment that prohibits the use of public sports venues.

It can be safely concluded that women as a whole are more limited in the use of public leisure facilities. The outside environment is not a safe place for women, especially not at night, and especially not on their own. The more traditional the society, the stronger the feeling of insecurity in public spaces. In the case of poor women, the lack of independent economic means is added to their greater responsibility for maintenance of the house, and to male control over their lives.

Examination of the work–leisure relationship indicates that being in paid work increases women’s financial resources and expands their social networks and in some cases enhances their sense of entitlement to personal leisure. But the ‘double shift’ of work outside and inside the home takes its toll, and most women fail to take advantage of this situation by gaining more time for themselves.

There is an argument that self-employment of women, and women working for wages from the home, opens options for more flexible time and leisure opportunities for women. Green (1996) says, ‘once we scratch below the surface, what is actually going on is a desperate attempt to manage the dual roles more effectively’. A survey in Israel showed much the same results for self-employed men – they testified to having no surplus time at all. The women who worked from the home expressed increased satisfaction with their lives

since leaving large organizations. They also admitted that they were exhausted. They could not even work as much as they wanted.

Feminist research shows how women's spatial mobility is restricted in many ways, by physical violence against them, by ogling in public places, by letting them feel and know that they are 'out of place'. Women's leisure experiences show that leisure is experienced by them as another part of the power and domination relations imposed by society.

### ***The unemployed***

The discussion on unemployment is dedicated to men. Women are unemployed too, but for reasons that cannot be articulated here, this situation affects them less severely than it affects men (Andersen and Larsen, 1998).

In this group, the issue of leisure takes an interesting turn, since the unemployed have seemingly all the time in the world to pursue their interests. The problem with this time is that it is enforced on people who do not have 'work' to structure the time and space needed for making leisure legitimate and enjoyable. To the painful confusion of the unemployed are added the loss of livelihood, of social status, of self-respect and of self-identity. Many more unemployed than we suspect, become ill and die (P.R. interviews with employment agencies' officials in Israel, 1998).

Structural causes of unemployment, such as those now prevailing in Israel, call for LE as a solution. Among poor, unskilled workers, the expectancy is that men above the age of 45 who have lost their jobs, will not be able to find employment again (P.R. source as above). This situation calls for revisions in social policy concerned with the unemployed, for the most dangerous aspects of unemployment are not economic, but the distress caused by humiliation, social exclusion and the loss of meaning. People who are unemployed lose interest in life. Where women are concerned, the question is how to create surplus time in their lives, when men are unemployed they become the focus of attention and the question is how to restructure time and space in their lives in a way that will enable them to become active again, and to feel free to use the surplus time that they have so much of to their own benefit.

### ***People with physical disabilities***

The physically disabled are another group that among its characteristics usually have both a high rate of unemployment and enforced surplus time. This is the result of living their life in a situation of constant dependency on special public allocations. For the disabled, society offers a wall of barriers and inaccessible resources. This situation is made even graver by the heavy dependency on others for daily care and, in more severe cases, for survival.

Even though these are people with the ability to act, to think, to understand and to be productive, they get treated as if they lack all abilities. They are expected to be satisfied and even grateful with monotonous work that pays very low wages and is provided infrequently and arbitrarily. Their leisure is constructed in a similarly arbitrary and boring way, and is usually adapted to the needs and routines of the carers.

Here too, there is plenty of spare time, which weighs heavily because it is not used to create meaningful life experiences. This group is exposed to constant humiliation and boredom. The disabled get almost no attention from LE services. They need a challenging programme that suits their situation and answers their need for productivity and creativity; they need to use their brains and initiatives and be able to contribute to their own community and to society.

Marisa Lawton (1993) describes a process of planning and developing a leisure project with physically disabled people who live in the community. The project was a success because it included a thorough and complex process of creation of a partnership with practitioners from a variety of community services. The partners attended a 3-day workshop where they learned how to work together. After the workshop, what had changed were the orientations of practitioners and their perceptions as to what disabled people can and cannot do. The practitioners, and not the disabled, were the ones who experienced, and in fact needed, the most meaningful change in this project, in order to provide the LE programme which disabled users would appreciate.

## Conclusions

Freedom and free choice are values commonly associated with leisure in Western society, but it is important to stress that these are misleading concepts if we assume that they are easier to access through leisure education than through other social venues. The time and space dedicated to leisure is controlled and regulated through the same legitimization systems that prescribe what is allowed and what is forbidden in society.

This indicates that LE uses the same social practices of exclusion, enclosure and partitioning that are practised in the society it is part of. The conclusion should be that in order to achieve desired results through LE, community empowerment strategies should be some of its basic tools.

### *Recommendations for empowering leisure education*

1. The access to surplus time over subsistence requirements is of critical importance for people who are powerless and poor. Hence, the first effort of LE should be to make surplus time more accessible for people who lack it.

2. The process of empowerment is a process of developing the capabilities and skills of the people involved in it. As people proceed in the process of empowerment – both personal and collective – they become more effective at mobilizing resources for the community and for their own development as individuals and as leaders of community. In order to motivate this kind of process there is a need for a *supportive barrier-free environment and for helping practitioners*.

### ***Recommendations for a barrier-free leisure environment***

1. A supportive environment means designing LE frameworks and facilities that encourage the active participation and initiatives of the users. Since there is a clear connection between the physical message a place gives to users and the services offered there, it is important to understand that sometimes people use or do not use a facility or a service because they can sense the qualities of the place just by feeling the atmosphere in the reception area.

2. LE frameworks should beware and avoid the ‘dominating, overseeing gaze’ (Foucault, 1980, p. 152). Facilities which are designed with the intention of controlling and monitoring all movements of the users make people uneasy and are the opposite of what is perceived as ‘free’ and ‘well’.

3. LE frameworks should avoid physical symbols of domination and hierarchy, like separate bathrooms for staff and managers, separate dining areas, etc.

4. LE frameworks should respect privacy and encourage social encounters. They should enable people to gather and talk in semi-public areas in a spontaneous, unplanned manner.

5. Ethnic sensitivity and acceptance of local culture call for participatory planning of the physical facilities with future users.

### ***Rules and regulations of leisure education***

1. LE frameworks should not enforce their own rules and regulations, but develop these through a shared process with users.

2. LE frameworks should avoid examinations and criteria for acceptance that might discriminate or marginalize potential users.

3. Measures of ‘success’ and ‘failure’ should be considered carefully or avoided completely. These may construct new barriers and harm social solidarity.

### ***Empowering outcomes of leisure education***

1. The signs of desirable outcomes are derived through empowering evaluation processes, which adhere to the principles stated above. Evaluation should be participatory, ethnically sensitive and take the diversity of the users and their problems (including the difficulties of sparing time) into consideration.

2. Social deprivation does not mean solely the lack of economic resources, but also the lack of belief in one's ability to influence others, to fulfil a socially valuable role, to take responsibility in the public domain beyond private interests, and to be involved on an ongoing basis in the environment relevant to the community's well being. Individual changes in all, or some, of these parameters are signs that a meaningful process is taking place in the lives of the people involved in LE. Thus, the first step in the process of gaining more control over life is a growing self-efficacy – the growing belief that one can make a difference in the world.

3. Social exclusion is the social process that interacts with disempowerment and results in powerlessness, marginality and alienation. This is why an important outcome of LE should be the creation of a collective, self-help group by the users. This means the beginning of actual involvement and commitment to an organized endeavour in the 'public' domain.

4. The important personal social skills that deprived and poor groups should achieve through LE are:

- To treat oneself and others as equals.
- To express assertively feelings, wishes and desires (and not just needs and problems!).
- To fulfil socially valued roles.
- To develop political efficacy, e.g. to act with others; to participate in collective efforts; to negotiate; to achieve desired results in the face of opposition.
- To fulfil complex organizational tasks; to commit to a peer group and to a role; to take responsibility and to care for the environment.

5. The above-mentioned outcomes are achieved in the context of a developing critical consciousness that includes an intellectual understanding of social and political processes. This is a personal and social process that has not been researched enough, and is described by participants in community empowerment processes as acquiring wisdom.

### **Summary**

This chapter has inquired into the meaning of leisure in our society, by looking at it through the perspective and needs of people who lack access to

important social resources. What is important to understand is that freedom and choice, which are the values most commonly connected with leisure in Western society, are not necessarily more available to people when they are connected with leisure than they are for the same people in other spheres of society. Leisure is dependent on the same systems of meaning, legitimatization and domination which control and regulate what is allowed and what is forbidden, and who is allowed what in leisure activities and LE, exactly as is the case with any other social activity.

If the domain of leisure is created and structured in the same way as other social structures, than it must be changed in a similar way as well. This is why community empowerment is a relevant strategy for leisure education.

We wished to emphasize the importance of community empowerment, and how cardinal it is to struggle within its realm for the right for surplus time for groups that cannot access this time without external help. Another idea developed here was that the meaning of leisure experience is very different in the lives of different groups of people, that could be defined *en masse* as 'poor', but beyond this definition are diverse in their lifestyles and their needs. Each group needs different strategies and different means of intervention in order to use time for developing and creating community.

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# Establishing a Multi-purpose Model for the Rehabilitation of Children with Special Needs

14

SAM RAZ

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## Introduction

Millions of children and young people around the world are subject to physical, emotional or mental impairments which interfere with their ability to carry out normal activities such as education, work, self-care, recreation and social interaction. In many cases, these youngsters require professional intervention, special training, medical treatment and/or supportive devices to facilitate their development and to increase their functional capabilities. Disabled children and youth, particularly those whose impairments are readily apparent, often are shunned because they are considered different. Consequently, they find themselves on the fringe of the education system, and isolated from the mainstream of community activities. Add to this the fact that some in our societies have tended to stigmatize and stereotype handicapped individuals, and it is no surprise that handicapped children often doubt their ability to progress and therefore lower their self-expectations (Bender *et al.*, 1984). A negative self-appraisal creates additional problems for disabled children which must be dealt with, beyond those related directly to their disabilities. Fortunately, attitudes are learned and can be altered on the basis of new information, experiences and, most important, ongoing education aimed at changing public perceptions about the need to support this special population by making it possible for them to have opportunities similar to those of the general population.



## Sports and Leisure

In society's attempts to support the needs of disabled children, sports and leisure activities can and should play a decisive role. This is not only because it is the right of every individual in today's progressive societies to enjoy these forms of activity, but also because the condition of disabled people, in general, and disabled children, in particular, can be improved enormously by their involvement in sports and leisure activities. At Variety (an international philanthropic organization) we see it as our moral obligation to make sure this happens. In order to move this idea forward, one needs to clarify what these terms mean in relation to special needs children. The notion of leisure and certain sports activities for this population consists of several underlying features (Bender *et al.*, 1984). It is done mainly in a child's free time (Braaten, 1977), it must be conceptualized in terms of leisure knowledge and awareness, skills acquisition and improvement, adoption and recognition of certain values and attitudes, and decision-making (Burdette and Miller, 1979); it is a personalized effort, the aim of which is to achieve self-fulfilment through leisure and sport pursuits (Bender *et al.*, 1984).

Obviously, a person who is disabled requires more individualized and direct learning experiences in pursuing these two areas than one who is not handicapped. Over the years this realization has brought about a change in attitudes within the professional community, leading to agreement among the various disciplines concerned as to the importance of sports and leisure education in improving the lives of disabled people. These professionals include special educators, therapeutic recreation specialists, physical education instructors and others, all of who are involved to some extent in developing and implementing leisure- and sport-related programmes for the handicapped.

### *The contribution*

Leisure and sports activities contain cognitive, affective and motor elements, and provide an infinite variety of sensory stimuli. For many disabled children, in addition to the relaxation, enjoyment and pleasure experienced, leisure and sports activities may encourage greater individual achievement; a higher level of performance in other life arenas; the potential for developing a more positive self-image; more satisfying relationships with adults and peers; greater self-acceptance; and a higher level of self-confidence (Bender *et al.*, 1984). These are only a few of the prime motivators for exploring new growth-producing activities among people and particularly among children, and if this is true for the general public, it is at least that much and more beneficial to the disabled population. At the same time, the inactivity common to far too many disabled children, may result in poor hand-eye coordination, manual clumsiness, reduced cardiovascular endurance, diminished agility,

underdeveloped dynamic, static balance and weakened muscular strength (Wehman and Schleien, 1981), leading to a general deterioration in body, mind and spirit, unless countered by effective means such as sports and leisure activities.

### ***Call to attention***

Israel has thousands of physical education teachers of various levels and specialty areas who are involved in a variety of sports and leisure activities. That these two areas are very popular with the people of Israel is expressed in a variety of ways; for example, every community and school has modern sports halls, usually with all or most of the sports equipment they need; and the amount of support these two fields receive reaches hundreds of millions of dollars annually from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport, the municipalities and the national lotteries. Yet very little money is allocated in support of sports and leisure programmes for disabled children, few sports facilities in Israel are built with this population's special needs in mind, and relatively few physical education teachers have the appropriate training and understanding for working with disabled children and youth.

Some attention is given to sports for disabled adults, in large measure because many of them are army veterans who are backed by the defence establishment. Disabled children, however, have hardly anyone in a meaningful position to call attention to their plight in regard to the lack of possibilities for them to be engaged in sports and leisure, a situation that we at Variety are attempting to change. For example, it has taken a great deal of effort to explain to prominent decision-makers in our sports and educational establishment, the difference between the competitive sport interests of, say, adult wheelchair basketball players and autistic, blind or learning-disabled children who would like to engage in leisure activities and sports, and not necessarily competitive ones. One basic distinction between the two is that many of the former enjoyed normal life while growing to adulthood, and became disabled as a result of work, home or traffic accidents, or while on military service. As unfortunate as their current situation is, despite their injuries many of them can speak up for themselves and call attention to their interests, while disabled children are relatively helpless in commanding the attention they need and deserve.

### **The Mission**

These children need someone to speak for them, and one institution in Israel that calls attention to these children's plight in regard to sports and leisure is the Variety Center. We do this mainly by showing the good that can come out

of introducing disabled children to leisure and sports activities, from as early an age as possible. Our mission is not only to bring a smile and brightness into the lives of the hundreds of destitute children who come through our doors, but also to help additional thousands of disabled children throughout the country and beyond, by developing a multi-purpose sports and leisure model geared to these children's specific needs for use in their local settings. We are developing this model with the children who attend the Variety Center, who include blind and visually impaired, deaf and hearing impaired, mild to border-line retarded, learning disabled and autistic, and those who suffer from communication disorders, or behavioural or emotional disturbances. In addition, recently we have ventured into attending to the emotional and other needs of children at risk. These include, for example, children who have been removed by court order from abusive families or from parents who are drug addicts or habitual criminal offenders who spend most of their lives in and out of jail. These children have been placed in protective shelters but since they have suffered severe emotional and, at times, physical traumas, they need a helping hand in recovering, which we provide through specially designed leisure and sports programmes.

## The Aftermath of Integration

Over the past few decades, modern societies have slowly but surely begun to change their approach in regard to dealing with disabled children. The idea was introduced that many of them will be better off if they are integrated with regular children. One of the first attempts in this regard was by Forness (1977), who came up with a design for the transition of handicapped children from special to regular classes. This was accompanied by terms such as *normalization*, *mainstreaming* and *integration* which were used interchangeably (Gunn and Peterson, 1978) to indicate, in broad terms, the educational arrangement of placing disabled students in regular classes with their non-handicapped peers to the maximum extent appropriate (Turnbull and Schulz, 1979).

Until recently, most disabled children in Israel attended special schools, but as a result of a massive mainstreaming movement tens of thousands of them have been placed in regular schools, where they are supposed to receive some special attention. However, since very few meet these new challenges, many students with moderate to borderline disabilities who were placed in regular education environments have found that inadequate provisions were made in preparing for their entry. The overriding purpose of the Variety Center is to fill this gap, conceptually and pragmatically, and to complement the integration effort through building a flexible multi-purpose intervention process using leisure and sports as a means to reach the desired outcomes with these thousands of mainstreamed students.

## Basic Multi-purpose Model

Sports and leisure activities have become one of the most important enrichment and rehabilitation instruments we employ at the Variety Center as part of our interdisciplinary, multi-purpose approach to enrich the lives of disabled children, expand their knowledge and strengthen the process of their rehabilitation. To ensure increased effectiveness, we developed an interdisciplinary network under one roof, comprised of diagnosis, placement, rehabilitative programme implementation and follow-up, via a wide range of enrichment modalities. These include:

- sports and leisure activities
- music enrichment therapy
- animal-assisted enrichment therapy
- drama enrichment therapy
- art enrichment therapy
- science enrichment therapy
- games enrichment
- introduction to proper nutrition
- acquisition of independent living skills
- traffic safety training
- computer enrichment therapy
- sensory stimulation

## The Process

To achieve the stated objectives, children and adolescents come to Variety for one or two visits a week throughout the school year, and in the summer many attend on a daily basis our Special Summer Sport Camp, which is the only one of its kind in the region for disabled children. Each visit lasts for 3–4 h, during which the above activities take place in a relaxed atmosphere at the various ‘activity stations’, which are appropriately equipped and staffed according to the aims of the specific model activity. The children are placed in small groups of five to seven children each, under the supervision of two specially trained instructors who give attention to the individual needs of each child in their group. Each child is offered the opportunity to go through as many activity stations as he or she can manage effectively during a visit, and on the next visit the child will complete the cycle, attending the remaining activity stations he did not get to on his previous visit. The activities at each station are designed for each child’s attention span and interest level, and on average the children spend 30–40 min at each station. The aims of these activities, in addition to what was mentioned earlier, are to: increase the children’s learning capabilities; build their self-esteem;

develop specific learning skills; overcome communication deficits; improve their physical balance, of fine and gross motor coordination skills; teach them to be alert to dangerous situations in daily life, and how to deal with them; improve dormant sensory abilities; and learn to compensate for sensory loss or deficit.

## **The Evaluation Process**

To examine the impact of the above, we are developing an assessment instrument which will look at the input, process and outcome of the model implementation, observing the child's: (i) preference level; (ii) functional abilities; (iii) physical or sensory limitations; (iv) age-appropriate skills; (v) access to relevant materials and events; and (vi) home environment (Wehman and Scheien, 1981).

### ***Sports and leisure skills preference***

This will ask what skills *vis-à-vis* sports and leisure the children already have and how they presently spend their free time. This will be done by interviewing the children's teachers and family members; introducing the children to our 'free play' areas, which feature toys and sports equipment, and recording what attracts their attention; measuring the time they devote to different objects; describing how they play with the items; and so on. These observations are important not only to determine the child's sports activities and leisure preferences, but also to obtain an initial understanding of what the child can already do and at what level of proficiency.

### ***Functional level and specific educational needs***

This will ask: (i) what behaviours the child is currently capable of, and (ii) as a result, what behaviours and/or component skills should make up the leisure and sports study plan. For example, a disabled child who is unable to attend to any activity for more than a few minutes is described as withdrawn and stays in the corner engaging in self-stimulation (twisting strings), yet demonstrates competence in fine motor behaviour (being able to grasp and pick up objects, squeeze and release). This child's regular school teacher insists that he play cards, even though he does not like card-playing, in part because his approximate functional level is not at parity with the skills required for this type of play. This is an example of capricious skills selection by inexperienced regular school teachers, which can interfere with a child's ability to engage in sport and leisure activities appropriate to his or her capabilities. At the Variety

Center we attempt to assess what will be the best function(s) for a child to learn to perform.

### ***Physical/sensory characteristics***

A child's physical and sensory abilities and limitations will directly affect the selection of the sports and leisure skills that the instructor will recommend for the child's involvement. Take, for example, the blind and visually impaired children at Variety, for whom many common sports and leisure activities might be ruled out. Appropriately adapted equipment, however, such as Braille markings or goalposts that make audible sounds, will make it possible for them to engage in a wide variety of sports and leisure activities, at times at a very advanced level, as these children otherwise are as physically and intellectually capable as sighted children. The choices and adaptations are endless. They require only the instructors' creativity, and an understanding of the principles of motor development in young children and of the contribution occupational or physical therapy can offer in each particular case considering the disability(ies) presented.

### ***Level of age-appropriate skills***

Here the question is: would a non-handicapped child of comparable chronological age engage in the same type of activity that the disabled child will? This is crucial in the context of promoting the integration of disabled children into society. The ability to engage in age-appropriate sports and leisure vastly improves the likelihood that the handicapped child will have opportunities to interact positively with his non-handicapped peers, which is important to his/her social involvement and acceptance.

### ***Access to materials and events***

Without access to materials and events, the most capable child will have difficulty engaging in most sports and leisure programmes. The question therefore must be asked whether the child can get to community events, or has the money to purchase needed equipment or games. At the Variety Center we provide transportation to the hundreds of children who attend our programmes. It stands to reason that any consideration of providing sport and leisure to disabled children must include a look at the amount and types of materials available, the proximity and physical design of local recreational facilities, and the availability of transportation and of skilled recreational and sport personnel to provide the necessary training and supervision.

### ***Characteristics of the home environment***

One of the most critical factors in leisure skill and sports selection is the evaluation of the child's home and neighbourhood environment. This includes the age of the child's parents, the presence of siblings or other relatives and the attitude of family members, which will greatly influence the variety, independence and types of activities the child can become involved with. The child may achieve what we advocate here if the home environment is supportive and offers the necessary equipment, but often this is not the case.

The majority of the disabled children that come to Variety, for example, are from disadvantaged or deprived families where for economic or cultural reasons the range of known or accepted sports and leisure activities is limited, or whose religious or ethnic tradition strongly discourages or forbids certain activities, usually to girls, but sometimes to children of either sex.

### **Summary**

Selecting appropriate sports and leisure activities for disabled children requires careful consideration of a number of interrelated variables, including what the child brings to the process, and factors in the children's life environments that affect the prospects for their benefiting from it, in addition to the simple enjoyment factor. Since some of these elements will change over time, periodic assessment of the input, process and outcomes are recommended, with appropriate modifications made to render more effective the child's continued involvement in sports and leisure. At the Variety Center we not only offer these types of programmes but are working on developing a multi-purpose model that can be duplicated with ease in other settings and countries. The effort is clearly worth it in terms of achieving specific therapeutic and educational objectives, as well as enriching these children's lives with experiences and opportunities that otherwise would be denied to them.

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# Youth at Risk and Leisure Education\*

15

HILLEL RUSKIN

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## Introduction

Children and youth at risk are those who are in jeopardy of sustaining psychological, sociological, emotional and physiological damage from circumstances and situations beyond their control.<sup>1</sup>

Young people are considered deviant who, in pursuit of deviant leisure have violated criminal law or some other seriously regarded moral norm of the community, doing so to the extent that their deviance becomes a way of life. Deviant leisure expressions include vandalism, abuse of drugs or alcohol, other forms of substance abuse, violent activities and certain types of exploitative sexual behaviour.

Four main dimensions of difference and disadvantage among youth have been commonly identified: social class background, gender, locality and ethnicity.<sup>2</sup> In addition, other structures of social disadvantage are documented: being brought up lacking care; having a disability; being in chronic ill health or defined as having 'special needs', having been involved in crime and the criminal justice system.

Unemployment of youth (especially between the ages of 19 and 24) enforces blocks of unobligated free time, and causes material and psychological deprivation which includes:

\* The chapter is based to a large degree on a World Leisure Commission on Education Position paper which was developed during a seminar held in Monterrey, Mexico, 18–20 October 1999, where the author chaired the Drafting Committee of the seminar.

- participation in leisure activity which may be tainted with guilt, since leisure is not earned as a reward from employment;
- low motivation levels which undermine participation links between increased free time and leisure activities;
- diminished quantity and quality of leisure participation;
- withdrawal into home and participation in home-based activities; reduction of out-of-home recreation; and an increase in passive leisure activities.

Lobo (World Leisure, 1998b) suggests that young people are targeted as consumers of leisure not only through goods, but also by *packages* of experience. The work–leisure experience shows how paid occupations influence leisure. In times of high unemployment and underemployment, the quality of leisure may be diminished and quantity reduced, but young people learn to cope with deprivation, impermanence and temporary relationships in new and emerging ways of living. New conditions shape the lives and influence young people through processes of prolonged adolescence, individualization and uncertainty and risk.

Young people between the ages of 14 and 24 years generally have:

- the largest amount of free time, in comparison with most other age groups;
- higher participation rates than other groups in the workforce in most of the popularly ranked leisure occupations such as watching TV/video; listening to radio; reading; listening to music; visiting friends and relatives; relaxing/doing nothing; phoning friends; exercising/keeping fit/swimming; dining out; pleasure shopping; art/craft hobbies; driving for pleasure; indoor games; visiting pubs;
- lower participation rates in activities that require transportation, income or where they are prohibited by law from participating.

Factors which put young people most at risk can include, but are not limited to, the following (World Leisure, 1998):

- poverty,
- malnutrition,
- child labour,
- sexual exploitation,
- disease,
- interrupted development,
- poor housing,
- dysfunctional home-life,
- environmental threats,
- violence,
- institutional bias against children,
- prevalence of harmful drugs.

It is generally accepted that poverty is a root cause. Olson (World Leisure,

1998a) points out that the absolute numbers of people in poverty around the world are increasing, and with this increase comes an increase in the number of children at risk. The recreation and leisure field has a history of service to the needy, underprivileged and neglected; however, recent years have seen a shift away from altruistic recreational service to a more commercial-based approach. The costs of this trend to society are so great that the recreation profession is justified in returning to a *humanistic approach* to programming, with particular emphasis on humanistic programming for children at risk.

By age 18, about a quarter of all adolescents have engaged in behaviours harmful to themselves or others, and another quarter are at moderate risk of engaging in such behaviours (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1995). This problem is not limited to urban areas. Poverty and disadvantage among rural youth is an invisible issue in the United States. The Carnegie report stressed the importance of families and other pivotal organizations in helping young people to meet their enduring needs for healthy development.

## **Growth, Development and Status of Youth At-risk**

Extensive research identifies essential factors in young people's growth and development. Search Institute (1999) suggests 40 'developmental assets' that form a foundation for healthy growth and development, and regards them as key factors that affect health and well being. These developmental factors clearly show the important roles that family, school and community organizations play in shaping young people's lives. There are internal and external assets, grouped into four categories, each as follows:

- commitment to learning: young people need to develop a lifelong commitment to education and learning;
- positive values: youth need to develop strong values that guide their choices;
- social competencies: young people need skills and competencies that equip them to make positive choices, to build relationships, and to succeed in life;
- positive identity: young people need a strong sense of their own power, purpose, worth and promise.

The external assets focus on positive experiences that young people receive from people and institutions in their lives. These include the following:

- support: young people need to experience support, care and love from their families, neighbours and many others. They need organizations and institutions that provide positive and supportive environments;
- empowerment: young people need to be valued by their community and have opportunities to contribute to others. For this to occur, they must be safe and feel secure;

- boundaries and expectations: young people need to know what is expected of them and whether activities and behaviours are 'in bounds' or 'out of bounds';
- constructive use of time: *young people need constructive, enriching opportunities for growth through creative activities, youth programmes, congregational involvement and quality time at home.*

All the above-mentioned assets may be associated with leisure education and meaningful uses of leisure time, as argued later on. Young people who are deficient in one or more developmental assets and above a certain level of deficiency, may be of at-risk status. Providing young people with positive opportunities to enrich, improve and promote each of these assets may prevent the at-risk status.

## Preventing Risk Situations

The best results are likely to be forthcoming when a holistic approach is used that involves cooperation with other community service agencies (e.g. police, health, education, social services, etc.) in developing a successful prevention or intervention strategy (Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1992; Witt and Crompton, 1996a).

Advocates have long called for the prevention or intervention potential of leisure education and recreation programmes. Much of the early public leisure provision in the mid-19th century was stimulated by a desire to alleviate delinquent behaviour (Cross, 1990). Similarly, there is a long tradition of using what might be termed 'pseudo-scientific evidence' to demonstrate the efficacy of these efforts. For example, in 1910, the chief planner for the city of Chicago observed, 'Police records show an extraordinary decrease of youthful crimes in the neighbourhood of playground parks' (Lewis, 1923). However, advocacy, anecdotes and pseudo-scientific evidence are of decreasing effectiveness in today's political arenas.

Witt and Crompton (1996) cite several studies on the effects of informal education or informal recreation intervention. The studies have been published in the USA, all of which have shown positive results on youth at risk. These include aspects such as an increase in school grades and school enrolment and attendance. Also, benefits as a result of a visual performing arts programme, increased perception, increase in self-esteem, teamwork and future expectations about school and employment. Further benefits were seen in increasing interest in maths or art; self-worth; skills for juveniles on probation; orientation to positive role models; specific knowledge, behaviours and attitudes; and decreasing risk-related behaviours for participants in youth sports and in crime rates (a decrease of 31% in crime incidents in the first 6 months after prevention programmes began in Cincinnati, Ohio; a 25% decrease in the rate of

juvenile apprehensions compared to the previous year in areas where basketball programmes in community centres were offered in Kansas City, Missouri; a 28% decrease with similar basketball programmes in comparison with other communities without such programmes in Fort Worth, Texas).

Witt and Crompton (1996c) concluded that leisure and recreation programmes have a role in preventing 'community issues' such as teen pregnancy, school dropouts, delinquency, drug and alcohol abuse, poverty, perceived lack of safe places to play.

Recreation programmes serve as a means of attracting youth to participate in positive and meaningful activities during leisure time. These programmes provide a safe environment for youth to interact and deal with 'unproductive' time within which youth can get into trouble. Witt and Crompton (1996c) propose long-term goals and specific objectives for intervention through leisure activities and programmes which include early identification and intervention; emphasis on prevention and those most in need; and programmes with clearly articulated goals and the involvement of parents and youth as active agents in programme design and planning. Programmes should be accessible, provide appropriate equipment and a safe environment, and opportunity for participants to learn appropriate activity and social skills. They recommend that these programmes should form part of a comprehensive system of services, should be culturally appropriate, provide opportunities for positive social relationships with peers and adults, avoid one-shot programmes and serve children on-site when appropriate (e.g. public housing). Opportunities for mentoring in the programme should be offered as well as intensive and individualized attention with incentives, which are relevant to the youth, served. Rules and behavioural expectations should be clear and respected by the participating youth.

Duck (1998), in a report on Youth at Risk for the Canadian Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, claims that youth do not believe that community members, organizations or businesses understand and respect them. The report identifies emerging issues such as violent behaviour in larger urban areas. This is expressed in gangs, use of weapons, increased violence among girls. It also observes that most often this activity is expressed among multicultural groups. In urban areas there is an increase in the use of drugs, alcohol, hanging around malls, street kids, violence and gang activity. In rural communities the report observes an increase in driving, drinking and youth suicides. Gangs were not only associated with urban settings, but also with areas of very high density and/or multicultural communities experiencing racial or ethnic tensions. Ethnic communities have multiple and complex issues, particularly in reservations and isolated communities which have massive poverty, unemployment and problems of health care, education, suicide, drug and alcohol addiction, youth pregnancy, abuse and early school drop-outs. Also, issues such as multicultural bias, homophobia focused on 'gay guys', violence in school (including among girls), rape, boredom ('no fun things to do or places to go') were identified.

The Duck report (1998) suggests that the youth at risk issue should be viewed as one that requires a broad-based, holistic approach and that there is very strong support for youth empowerment. However, too few youth are coming forward as role models or volunteers, and a process to identify youth and involving them in planning and decision making is needed.

Misperceptions of youth exist in most of the communities. Typical reactions to youth range from intolerance of youth behaviour and attitudes to fear of violent crime. This causes youth to be mistrusted. They are banned from or have restricted use of facilities. Older members of the community may avoid attending facilities where youth are present (e.g. recreational facilities, municipal parks). Intergenerational tension is not uncommon. These attitudes and reactions by community members cause youth embarrassment and humiliation.

The Duck report (1998) recommends a list of 'best practices' which might be helpful to respond to the above issues. They include, among others, the following:

- successful programmes responding to community needs in the areas of children and youth;
- youth empowerment and involvement;
- low cost/high impact programmes;
- fundraising;
- partnership and collaboration;
- programmes for youth currently in difficulty;
- programmes for multicultural youth, especially girls;
- staff and volunteer screening to prevent abuse;
- gathering information on: (i) youth growing up in an urban community, including gang development and behaviour; (ii) behaviour patterns of multicultural youth and their families; (iii) youth growing up in a rural community;
- a strong case of recreation as a positive, effective influence on youth.

Another Canadian report on youth at risk (SMC Management Services and Grassroots Enterprises, 1998) emphasizes the role of appropriate leisure activities in the prevention of risk factors for misbehaviour.

These activities, claims the report, provide a safe and supportive environment where the child/youth can explore their own strengths, develop social and personal skills, and generally test their limits. For some it may be their only opportunity to succeed, be recognized and find acceptance. Through supportive leadership, they gain the 'resiliency' required to overcome the adversity they experience at home, school and within the community.

Appropriate leisure participation for children and youth facilitates good physical health, a sense of well-being with a positive feeling of self, skills to make positive life choices, the ability to establish relationships with peers and adult role models and a sense of psychological well being. To facilitate this

healthy development, recreation activities must (Quality Assurance Program Criteria, PRO, 1998, cited by Duck, 1998):

- allow for a combination of self-directed and staff-directed activities with plenty of choice;
- reflect both assessed and expressed needs;
- provide opportunities for active participation and passive reflection;
- encourage imagination, inquisitiveness, thoughtfulness;
- provide leadership and opportunities where possible;
- value and incorporate cultural, racial and linguistic diversity.

The report stressed the importance of the education sector as the only universal access point to children, and it is an ideal forum for reaching children/youth and their parents. There are major concerns regarding inactive lifestyles of children and youth and consensus for the need for quality daily physical education in the schools. Research supports the premise that physical activity is a prime contributor to healthy child development. The report also states that there is agreement that the *introduction of leisure education for children of all ages into the school system, would be a positive move toward improving the level of activity for children* (Duck, 1998).

## Serious Leisure and Leisure Education

The World Leisure and Recreation Association (WLRA), through its Commission on Education, has paid special attention to leisure education issues at large and leisure education and community development, populations with special needs and youth at risk in particular. In a series of international seminars, several international documents were drafted (World Leisure, 1993, 1998b), many positions and recommendations were made in these areas.

The issue of what is desirable and meaningful for young people received special attention. Stebbins argues (World Leisure, 1998b) that 'serious leisure' can help effect redirection of the pursuit of one or more kinds of tolerable or intolerable deviant behaviour of youth. He claims that wayward youth, defined as adolescents and young adults who, in the pursuit of deviant leisure, nearly all of which is casual, have run foul of the criminal law or other seriously regarded moral norms of the community, do so to the extent that their deviance has become a way of life. Stebbins defines serious leisure as: 'a systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist or volunteer activity that participants find so substantial, interesting and challenging, that they often launch themselves on a career centered on acquiring and expressing its special skills, knowledge and experiences'. Many experts in various areas of leisure research and practice suggest that leisure education is essential for the assessment, intervention,<sup>3</sup> prevention of and rehabilitation from deviant leisure by way of



pursuing personal and social rewards of serious leisure, the characteristics of which are as follows.

### ***Personal rewards***

- Personal enrichment (cherished experiences);
- self-fulfilment (developing skills, abilities, knowledge);
- self-expression (expressing skills, abilities, knowledge already developed);
- self-image (known to others as a particular kind of serious leisure participant);
- self-gratification (combination of superficial enjoyment and deep satisfaction);
- re-creation (regeneration) of oneself through serious leisure after a day's work;
- financial return (from serious leisure activity).

### ***Social rewards***

- Social attraction (associating with other serious leisure participants, with clients as volunteer, participating in the social world of the activity);
- group accomplishment (group effort in accomplishing a serious leisure project; senses of helping, being needed, being altruistic);
- contribution to the maintenance and development of the group (including senses of helping, being needed, being altruistic in making the contribution).

Leisure activities may also assume the nature of *anti-leisure*. These are undertaken compulsively, as a means to an end, as a necessity, with externally imposed constraints, with considerable anxiety, with a high degree of time consciousness and minimum personal autonomy which narrows self-actualization and authentication.

In order to inculcate meaningful patterns of behaviour, such as serious leisure, among young people, WLRA's Position Statements (World Leisure, 1998a) suggest that leisure education will be emphasized in school and community programmes.

*Leisure education* is defined as the provision of pedagogical, experiential and/or recreational experiences that serve to achieve cognitive, affective and kinesthetic domain learning objectives relative to the worthy use of leisure. Leisure education may occur in the schools but it is not limited to formal educational settings and through leisure activities (World Leisure, 1993).

Education for leisure is viewed as an important part of an individual's education and is considered an important component of primary and secondary school curricula.

Recreation is distinguished from leisure education, but it is recognized that

organized recreation can also have an educational component. This component can be instrumental in reinforcing the school curriculum as well as fostering important social, psychological and emotional outcomes.

Leisure education programmes should be organized and operated within the accords of the *Convention of the Rights of the Child*, adopted by the United Nations on 20 November 1989, which calls upon governments to ensure that every child is entitled to the following:

- full rights without discrimination; and
- every child has the right to life, survival and development (including the right to an education, recreation and leisure);
- full right to self-expression.

The WLRA Position Statement made several recommendations for dealing with at-risk youth (World Leisure, 1998a), as follows.

## **Recommendations of WLRA on Leisure Education and Youth at Risk**

### **1. General**

- 1.1 Young people have rights to adequate work, leisure and rest as enunciated in the United Nations Charter. Every step should be taken to ensure that jobs are available to young people commensurate with their qualifications, capabilities and abilities.
- 1.2 Leisure is a legitimate and valuable domain where young people may find their identity. Governments at all levels should ensure that suitable facilities and programmes are made available to young people so that enduring participation patterns and constructive attitudes are developed towards healthy and wholesome recreation.
- 1.3 The developmental nature of serious leisure through activities like sports, hobbies and the arts should be encouraged in young people so that leisure provides interaction with adults, helps with community integration through peer and adult groups, assists with the development of autonomy and sense of control over personal environments, and helps with the development of one's self-esteem and competence.
- 1.4 Young people should be encouraged to be involved in serious leisure as amateurs, hobbyists or in volunteer activity not only for personal self-fulfilment and community development, but also with a view to finding a leisure career through participation in chosen activities. In so doing:
  - 1.4.1 Leisure educators working with wayward youth (i.e. specialists in leisure and recreation programmes, professionals in parole, probation, youth work, high school teaching, volunteers in youth

- work) should receive instruction on the nature of serious and casual leisure.
- 1.4.2 Leisure educators, as defined above, should inform youth with whom they work of the different natures of serious and casual leisure.
  - 1.4.3 Leisure educators should help individual youth discover and get started in up to three accessible serious leisure activities, which are potentially most interesting and satisfying and which can be enduring in their pursuits.
  - 1.4.4 Having equitable access to leisure programmes is a key element in contributing to youth quality of life. Access to leisure should be class and gender free and socially just, so that facilities and services are available to those who are socially disadvantaged.
  - 1.4.5 With a propensity to experimentation, identity and role preparation, young people should have access to a range of leisure activities, so that they can make informed choices for the pursuit of leisure activities well into their late years of life.
  - 1.4.6 Given that young people tend to be the most active age group in the life cycle, every attempt should be taken to ensure that they pursue physical and social activities in a healthy and responsible manner to ensure long-lasting benefits.
  - 1.4.7 The commodification of leisure goods and services for young people through public outlets should be affordable and quality assessed to ensure that young people are getting best value.
  - 1.4.8 Work–leisure relationship patterns of young people, whether extension, opposition or neutral, should be maintained for balance so as to inculcate healthy leisure values when participating in free-time activities.
  - 1.4.9 For young people out of work, every attempt should be made to make people aware of programmes available at public outlets. Operators of services should take into account material deprivation of the unemployed youth and they should offer programmes at reduced rates and at off-peak times if necessary. Motivational sessions should be held to discourage the passivity that may result from joblessness.
  - 1.4.10 Young people need access to leadership to establish personal vision and clear moral values. In this regard, governments should establish youth centres which will provide counselling services for those who seek work or leisure services.
  - 1.4.11 Services at youth facilities should be made available to young people so that they are comfortable with the uses of technology, in order that technology is seen as liberating rather than constraining. Young people should be invited to contribute ideas by which technology may be used to help communities integrate

- more fully. Young people should also recognize the role of technology in aiding access to leisure resources and networking.
- 1.4.12 With the youth facility as an information resource, young people should be able to access non-government and voluntary agencies, and family support groups to complement their individuality in making decisions, which will affect their lives and provide opportunities for alternative and preferred futures.
  - 1.4.13 Studies focusing on the relationship of experience to cognitive and emotional growth in early childhood make it clear that leisure education must be initiated between 3 and 5 years of age.
- 1.5 Leisure education philosophy, policies and practices should consider the following:
    - 1.5.1 Strategies to minimize the effects of poverty.
    - 1.5.2 Attention to dietary and nutritional welfare of children.
    - 1.5.3 Importance of programmes designed to stimulate cognitive, emotional and social growth.
    - 1.5.4 Strategies to protect children from harmful environmental toxicants.
    - 1.5.5 Ways and means of complementing school programmes and encouraging out-of-school learning.
    - 1.5.6 Activities that promote good hygiene and health-maintaining behaviour.
    - 1.5.7 Events and programmes that strengthen the family (extended and nuclear) and support positive social values.
    - 1.5.8 Means of assessing, identifying and giving special help (intervention) to those children identified as most at risk.
    - 1.5.9 Providing children, through after-school programmes, youth centres and the like, a place of refuge from violence, from the uncertainties of the streets, and antisocial behaviour in general.
    - 1.5.10 The importance of political involvement and public relations in order to garner public support for leisure education programmes.
  - 1.6 Leisure education for the training of human resources for various leisure roles which are relevant to the work with youth at risk should be provided through a whole range of educational opportunities involving formal education at higher education institutions and technical courses as well as continuing education, in-service training, associated courses and certification courses adapted to local conditions.
  - 1.7 Leisure professionals should promote leisure for all including forms of serious leisure as a way of personal fulfilment and community development.
  - 1.8 Leisure education should:
    - 1.8.1 Recognize the importance of diagnosis, intervention,<sup>3</sup> prevention and rehabilitation of young people at risk whose development is affected by personal, social and environmental factors.

- 1.8.2 Teach young people at risk the necessary skills to pursue an optimal leisure lifestyle, and foster positive attitudes towards life, leisure and work.
- 1.8.3 Utilize school and school-related contexts, facilities and programmes for leisure education for young people at risk.
- 1.8.4 Employ educational approaches and informal strategies which are sufficiently formative and flexible to be responsive to individual needs and circumstances.
- 1.8.5 Encourage voluntary reciprocal exchange of ideas among young people at risk for better decisions to enhance their personal and social development.
- 1.8.6 Offer inclusive activities which allow integration between young people at risk and those who are not, to bridge gaps and eliminate barriers, stereotypes and biases.
- 1.8.7 Train and support people across a wide range of occupations who work with young people<sup>4</sup> within different institutions, such as schools and families, and to encourage collaboration between these people and institutions.
- 1.8.8 Undertake research on the role and effects of prevention, intervention and rehabilitation of leisure programmes in the lives of young people at risk through continuous planning, action, observation and reflection adapted to local/cultural conditions.
- 1.8.9 Provide appropriate resources (financial and others) to support and demonstrate the importance of leisure facilities for young people at risk.
- 1.8.10 Leisure counselling<sup>5</sup> shall be incorporated into the overall leisure education programme offered by leisure services providers at facilities serving the leisure needs of young people at risk.

## ***2. Prevention of risk factors***

- 2.1 Leisure education should encourage the use of social influence models in designing leisure services for at-risk youth. These models consider the following:
  - 2.1.1 Encourage peer leadership in youth recreation programmes.
  - 2.1.2 Examine why youth engage in unacceptable at-risk behaviour.
  - 2.1.3 Provide youth with strategies and skills to avoid unacceptable at-risk behaviour.
  - 2.1.4 Begin at an early age, before the onset of high-risk behaviours.
  - 2.1.5 Plan for the possibility that some adolescents may rebel against the message.
  - 2.1.6 Recognize the foundation values of an individual or group and then structure a programme to build from there.

- 2.1.7 Provide multiple experiences staggered over time.
- 2.2 Leisure education should provide socially acceptable high-risk and challenge experiences as an alternative to negative recreation such as drug and substance abuse, vandalism and certain forms of exploitative sexual activity.
- 2.3 Leisure education frameworks should design a clearing house for 'best practices and exemplar model' of at-risk leisure programmes.

### ***3. Leisure education and professional associations***

In designing leisure education programmes in the community, strategies should include the following:

- 3.1 Encourage leisure professionals to establish national, regional and/or local, formal professional associations or concerned citizens groups to share ideas, be advocates for needs of youth and to provide continuing education.
- 3.2 Encourage professional associations and governments to conduct youth summits which lead to collaborative support networks for youth and their families.
- 3.3 Encourage professional associations and concerned citizen groups to work with institutions of higher learning to develop service-learning programmes which provide an integrated programme of professional development to improve knowledge and skills needed to work with youth and their families.

### ***4. Leisure education and the mass media***

- 4.1 Government and public agencies, recognizing the educational and socialization value of mass media, should design and disseminate radio and television programmes which promote the values of leisure education, encourage involvement in serious leisure, and promote high values in an entertaining manner.
- 4.2 Recognizing the leisure socialization implications of unrestricted mass media, governments should be encouraged to impose restrictions on the content of television, movies, radio and computer programs. Content which encourages antisocial behaviour, such as racial discrimination, violence and hatred, should be minimized. Content which promotes family and social values, should be encouraged.

## **Concluding Remarks**

Leisure has been recognized as an important and valuable sphere of people's lives. In various classifications of leisure activities, it has been acknowledged that the abuse of leisure could take the dangerous form of delinquent activities,

which are harmful to individuals and the society. Being a life span process, which helps people identify their leisure values, develop positive attitudes towards leisure as well as necessary skills for their leisure involvement, leisure education plays a significant role in enhancing people's quality of life. As major socializing agents for children and adolescents across all communities, schools have an important role in educating for leisure. Leisure education is of especially high value for children and youth at risk, whose development is affected by personal, social and environmental factors. There are many channels through which school and community systems can educate for leisure, as well as strategies and methods to be used in the process and which can lay the foundations for identification, prevention and early intervention with targeted young people.

Leisure education is part of the field of education, but has not been broadly implemented in school and community systems. In the 21st century, new and innovative interdisciplinary structures are needed for leisure service as well as leisure education delivery. Professionals in these areas need to develop programmes, strategies and methods congruent with the evolving needs of youth at large (and youth at risk in particular) in order to guarantee quality of life for all.

## Notes

- 1 Because of the developmental nature of leisure education in this article, it is considered applicable to children, adolescents and young adults. The term 'young people' will refer to all of these.
- 2 In other words, youth face extraordinary disadvantages when they come from a low social class, are female, live in a poor community or neighbourhood, or belong to a depreciated ethnic group.
- 3 Intervention in this sense refers to direct action taken by a leisure educator to assume whatever steps are reasonable and appropriate to ensure the health, welfare and general well-being of children and youth, e.g. the leisure educator recognizes that where children are hungry or in danger, there exists a responsibility to intervene where and wherever possible.
- 4 Leisure and recreation workers, probation officers, professional and youth volunteer workers and school teachers.
- 5 Leisure counselling is a helping process designed to facilitate optimal leisure well-being for all. It can be a helpful intervention tool in work with a variety of at-risk young people such as juvenile delinquents, substance abusers and others.

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# Practical Approaches to Leisure Education for the Elderly

16

DEBRA MARKUS

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## Introduction

There is a vital need to take serious consideration of the ever-increasing older sector of the population. Demographic studies from all parts of the world (Birren, 1983; Woodruff and Birren, 1983; Ottawa, 1991; Israel, 1996) clearly project a picture of impending doom with a greater proportion of the society being over 'retirement' age. This means that a smaller proportion of the population is working and paying taxes to support the increasing numbers of non-working elderly. This is seen as being a top-heavy situation – a burden on social resources. Such a phenomenon in modern society is very much the result of the post-World War II baby boom (known as the 'BB cohort'; Levy, 1999) in addition to the longevity enjoyed by this age group in the present era due to medical, social and scientific advances over the past decades. People live longer and those aging are joining the swelling ranks. This is illustrated by the statistics in Box 16.1 from the USA and Israel.

It becomes a serious social responsibility not only to support financially, but also to help socially this sector of the population. This part of the population is no longer involved in the workforce and, for the simple reason of natural aging, they require more help and support, which becomes a burden to the remaining population. Although 'burden' is not a comfortable word to use, it is perhaps the one we should use to make us sit up and think how this demand can be reduced even when the size of the problem is still growing. It is not enough to supply the needed and varied services for this group, but an evaluation of its potential to self-generated help within its ranks in order to reduce the load on the rest of society is an important consideration. With

**Box 16.1.** Elderly populations of the USA and Israel.

USA			
	1970	Population over 65 years	9.8%
Projected	1990	Population over 65 years	11.2%
Projected	2020	Population over 65 years	15.5%
			(Birren, 1983)
	1900	3 million over 65	
	1980	25 million over 65 (an eightfold increase)	
			(Woodruff and Birren, 1983)
Israel			
	1996	total population: 4,593,200	
	65+	509,200: 11% of total	
	65–74 age group	Males 25.7%	Females 33.5%
	75+ age group	Males 17.0%	Females 23.5%
		(Israel Bureau of Statistics, 1996)	

constructive thinking and recognition of the potential within this particular part of the population, much can be done to reduce the demands that are being made on the social, welfare and health services by the elderly. This can only be done by considering the actual needs of this wide-ranging social group and creating a system they can use to help themselves. Such self-generated, constructive help can be through education for aging and positive use of the free time that becomes available. This free time should be seen as a promise for improving quality of life (Kaplan, 1998) of the individual and of the community as a whole, with the elderly earmarked for special encouragement to become involved. Time free from the demands of work and family provides the potential for creative caring within a group that has the time to seek out, socialize with and support its own members. The amount of time available to the elderly is far greater than for any other age group – it is time for freedom of choice. This is true leisure time. Sadly, too many elderly resent the time they have as they have fewer choices as to how to make use of it. It becomes the all-engulfing void.

## Leisure Time

Leisure time in this specific context relates to the increased non-working time to which the 'retired' are exposed (Donahue *et al.*, 1958). Now time is abundant, not struggled for, or raced against but it provides a challenge in itself (Robinson and Godbey, 1997). It is not just a case of having 'available time' which must be filled, but time should become the essence of life and not a dreaded part of it. Modern society is obsessed with time and is constantly

fighting for every spare moment or extra work time. It is only on retiring that the 'shock' of time being an all-engulfing factor is felt, and many retired people feel as if they are drowning in the very space for which they fought for so many years.

Yet, is considering 'leisure' for the elderly a little facetious? Leisure is indicative of free time – earned as a balance to time spent at 'work' and so it may be presented to those growing old as a time which balances their years of hard work. 'Leisure time' is said to be 'for one's own purposes, differentiating the time obligated to another'. Also, the concept of leisure activities for the elderly are questioned as being unattractive to those elderly who have less energy and less income and are more involved in the *arduous* business of living (Randal, 1970). This enforced free time looms over many as a dreaded storm on the horizon of one's life – does it have to be so? There are those who joyfully take early retirement to indulge in their hobbies and pastimes – to them, time in which to indulge, is bliss.

## Retirement

This age group is vulnerable to forces with which other groups do not have to cope. Added to the element of time and space comes the sudden isolation from workmates and workplace and the natural withdrawal into a smaller and very personal world in the form of enforced retirement. The basic reasons for retirement are stated as follows: (i) boredom or the job being too strenuous; (ii) industry must rid itself of less productive workers and those unable to absorb new techniques; (iii) hazardous or dangerous occupations; (iv) to allow for leisure activities; and (v) to allow a younger workforce to enter the system. Whereas the reasons given for not retiring are: (i) economic; (ii) to avoid becoming a burden on social services and systems; (iii) need for additional finance or boredom; and (iv) being restricted by when the law allows it (Rogers, 1982).

The baby boomers of the post-World War II years will reach retirement age within the next decade. This historic situation will challenge the present economy and social service systems. People are living longer due to medical advances and better lifestyles and this will add to the strain on state and private pension funds. Yet there will be a new economic power in the hands of a new sector of society – the elderly. This sector is established and will control development in spheres such as entertainment and travel, a very different focus from that of teenage economic power in the world of fashion. The New Age elderly are a healthy and dynamic product of ever-changing technology and advancements in health care. They are more likely to expect higher standards of living and care support systems than today's elderly (Wise, 1997), many more having had a modern education and being more active in aspects of politics (Harris and Frankel, 1977).

Then we come to the economic aspect of 'retirement'; long-term pensioners as a result of long-term old age. This has changed very much over the past five decades. We are seeing serious changes in life after working years. There was a time when the prospect of 'being pensioned off' was threatening, but the retirees of today enjoy a state pension and due to years of post-war prosperity, many enjoy personal pensions and savings as well as the security of their own homes (Levy, 1999). But with the next generation will come the effects of today's technological revolution – world recession and unemployment – and thus less welfare will be available to the elderly. Governments are renegeing on their promise of support from 'cradle to grave' and are persuading people to provide for their own retirement and not rely on government support. Various personal pension schemes are being touted to the public and governments are opting out of the obligation to support the elderly in the future. Even now, the increasing burden on state-run social services is being reduced although the number of those needing help is increasing. Studies show a widening gap in services being offered to the elderly by private enterprise compared with those offered by government agencies (D. Markus, unpublished observations). More and more emphasis is being placed on private enterprise and the burden is falling on the individual to make long-term plans to allow for a higher standard of existence in old age.

Next we will consider the humanistic aspects of this group and the vital role that leisure education can play in contributing to their lives. The elderly are not one homogeneous group. Age is only a chronological measure, and physiological and anatomical variation between people can be very wide. Retirement from the workforce is set at 60 for women and 65 for men as a chronological benchmark, enforced by governmental economic necessity and social demands, but many people are fit and willing to work well into their 80s whereas many in physically demanding jobs take early retirement. Finland (Ilmarinen, 1998) is developing a work ability index to evaluate people's work capacity at all ages. This may prove a better benchmark for judging 'retirement age'.

## Characteristics of Aging

Although the elderly are often disabled this is not necessarily due to chronic health-related illness, congenital malformations, genetic flaws, pre-natal problems, skeletal-muscle system disorders, nervous system impairments or as a result of illness (Howe-Murphy and Charboneau, 1987), it is rather that *age* is a disabling factor in itself. As the body ages there are various parts of the body and organs that just weaken and tire with age, lose their functional capacity and develop imbalances in certain of the body's functions; there is a breakdown in actual body tissue strength. The body becomes vulnerable to diseases specific to the elderly (osteoporosis, arthritis, rheumatism, mature-

onset diabetes, etc.). Anything that can be done to slow these degenerative bodily processes must be encouraged. Many studies support physical activity, not as a preventative move, but as a means of slowing the various aging processes of the body. It is important to encourage activities that reduce discomfort in old age and allow active living. Active living helps to maintain independence – an essential item for self-confidence. Rabinowitz in *The Six Ages of Man* (in Hebrew) diagrammatically shows that disability in aging can come from a number of sources: emotional/social/biological/functional/mental. It is stated that generally there is an imbalance and people are often ‘disabled’ in a specific sphere or in a number of areas.

Thus when considering ‘disabilities’ of aging, we need to take a holistic view as to all these aspects that affect a person. This may be due to their social status (with the implications of economic, cultural, ethnical, marital status and family considerations) as well as their physical abilities, which may well be governed by genetic/biological factors. The more disabled one is in any sphere, the closer one is to ‘death’. Any disability makes for vulnerability. Any means we have by which we can reduce ‘disabling factors’ are essential to the well-being of the older person and make for a better life quality for them.

It may be relevant at this point to consider the psychological influence on the present-day elderly, of the rapid changes in technology that have come to pass over the last decade. This leaves many older people feeling isolated and cut off from a system of life that they cannot become part of or relate to or understand. Many of the elderly feel that they cannot cope with all the changes and feel threatened by the huge technological advances that have taken place. Many have been threatened in their workplace by rapid advances in the use of hi-tech equipment leaving them feeling remote from the modern world. It should be added here, that a number of courses in computer technology have been well supported by those elderly people who are determined to bridge the generation gap. These people show that the problem is not insurmountable if there is an interest and will to overcome and get guidance in the large amount of free time available to the retired. Learning new skills is definitely more difficult at an older age but many have proved it to be not impossible. The more exposure a person has to technology at a younger age the easier the older person is able to grasp more technology (Roberts, 1999). The specific ‘disabilities’ of the elderly make them a population with ‘special needs’ for leisure educators (Leitner, Chapter 9, this volume).

It must be taken into consideration that certain illnesses are characteristic in the elderly and these must be a serious consideration when planning leisure education programmes and long-term directives. CVA, Alzheimer’s disease, Parkinson’s disease, heart disease, type II diabetes, osteoporosis and circulatory problems, as well as loss of sight and hearing, are sadly a part of aging. Health is seen to be almost an obsession with the elderly (Markus and Ruskin,

1999) and every effort should be made to maintain healthy standards of living in an effort to ward off these illnesses or at least to develop the skills necessary to cope with them. Life-long health directives will do much to influence quality of life and the enjoyment of leisure time in old age. Thus, part of leisure education must include physical activity as a preventive measure or at least for training the body to cope with physical disabilities as they are confronted. The progression of many diseases of the elderly, e.g. osteoporosis (Simkin and Aaylon, 1997) and diabetes (still being researched), is found to be slowed down by regular exercise. Much has been written, too, on the long-term value of exercise in warding off heart disease. This is thus a serious aspect of education that is a leisure activity from youth to old age. Any means by which health can be maintained will certainly give a better quality of life to older people.

## The Gender Factor

The next generation of elderly is going to be more educated, and women will come from a work-orientated background. This will include a generation of career women and women who have been the family breadwinners. The new generation (elderly) will be more technologically literate, more experienced in travel, and will have lived through social changes that have affected the structure of family life, as well as an era of dramatic historic change and violent social upheaval. They are going to be less likely to accept the 'band aid programmes' or to be 'kept amused'. This is already a generation that has been, and is, economically powerful and a political force. Feminists have changed the role of women and their presence is a growing force in the new aging population. Women no longer hold the role of servers and carers, being dependent on the male of the family in old age, many are now the heads of families and independent of male support. Apart from the physiological fact that women live for longer than men (Woodruff and Birren, 1983), they will be a dominant part of the elderly community with real life experience and thus will demand more from their 'old age'. Women's position in society has changed and they are no longer the 'passive' part of society, most are taking responsibility for their health in old age through preventive measures earlier in life. They are physically stronger and more active in society and promise to be a much more creative, dynamic and healthier generation in old age (Markus, 1998).

Women are very much more adaptable to living alone or using time available. We see women actively involved in domestic chores and skills, such as knitting and sewing, whereas men present more of a problem. Men are more socially rather than home-orientated; they are less creative. When their circle of friends decreases and their own mobility limits their social contacts, they have serious problems and are more vulnerable, therefore leisure education is probably more essential for men than women. Men are socially active in their youth but when mobility (due to health or death of friends) is reduced they

suffer more from boredom and a sense of isolation. Men are seen to like male company and play board and table games. They are more used to being cared for than being carers (in most cases) and are less a source of volunteering. For these reasons, it is perhaps more urgent to direct males towards leisure activities and long-term interests to help them in old age.

For this more 'demanding' elderly generation there will be a need for specific programme preparation for them to make their leisure time in old age constructive and fulfilling (Dattilo and Murphy, 1991). The American trend of retirees taking on voluntary work has become very popular, particularly in Israel, and this socially accepted use of leisure time is part of the serious leisure education ideal presented by Stebbins (Chapter 10, this volume) as a worthwhile approach to use of free time.

## **Intervention Programmes**

Intervention programmes have been on the increase as the extent of the social needs of the older generation has been realized. But these are band-aids to the size of the wound of an unprepared part of society now facing many years in 'old age'. Israel perhaps provides the best examples of the community-oriented services and programmes offered to the aged. These have come about through the realization that social budgets cannot cope with the earlier ideals of providing institutionalized places for all of the elderly in need of support. It should also be noted that there is a wide variety of needs not only within the elderly population in general, but also for the variety of groups within this cohort. Studies have shown the huge diversity within the elderly due to cultural, educational and health status of the older generation of today (Markus and Ruskin, 1998; D. Markus, unpublished observations). Old age for the present 65+ generation is thwart with problems (apart from health-specific illnesses, boredom (37%), loneliness (29%) and not having enough to do (16%); Levy, 1999) from physical disabling by age from a generation who have lived through the years of the Depression and two World Wars. The fact that so many regular activity programmes are being created in community centres, old people's homes and other institutions for the elderly proves the demand for them and the realization that many problems of the elderly can be dealt with in a social grouping. It is suggested that these 'community settings' are ideal for counselling to help develop leisure education ideas to carry over into the home life of the elderly (Leitner, Chapter 9, this volume).

### ***General programmes***

The objective of these many programmes/activities has been to bring the elderly together for active use of their leisure time as well as to support them



socially, in health matters and to give psychological support. The particular needs of the present elderly population have to be recognized as being unique in their physical and social dimensions. This present 'aging group' is the product of a basic disciplined education and particular work ethics as well as the gender mores of a specific sociological and historic era.

As 'old age' becomes a longer process (longevity), and as those reaching retirement age are from a more educated, technologically sophisticated society, so programmes need to be geared towards preparing people to use the extended leisure time for their old age fully and in a satisfying manner. Society needs to accept these large numbers of people as positive members of society, able and willing to help them and others to fulfil rather than waste their lives. Society cannot afford to allow these massive numbers of elderly to be a social burden (Randal, 1970). This is a healthier group of people than in former generations, and one more able to take on the responsibility for themselves and even to relieve pressure on the social services by serious volunteer work to help those within their age group who are more in need and more vulnerable. Such work should be part of education towards leisure time as a constructive programme for use of valuable man- and womanpower. The younger elderly are more likely to want to continue and extend themselves in education pursuits. There is already today, an ever-increasing demand for university education for those reaching retirement age – many universities open their doors to such persons. England and Israel have special university courses known as 'The University for the Third Age'. Preparation for educational pursuits at any age can be instilled from a young age and encourage a life-long pursuit of knowledge.

It is important that as the interests of each generation change, so programmes and educational opportunity levels need to be adjusted. Education for leisure in the 'twilight years' needs realistic planning, heeding the desires and interests and background knowledge of those to be involved. The educated are expected to know how to fill their time in a satisfying manner.

### ***Educational programmes***

Past educational experiences may well have a detrimental effect on the desire of people to learn in adult life. Even more so are feelings of 'having missed so much' and the 'huge generation gap due to the technological advances of the modern world', which can cause older people to avoid the aspect of studying in their leisure time. Learning in such an atmosphere is stressful and hardly a 'leisure' experience they would seek. Yet, it is important for leisure educators to instill the understanding that education is not just for learning working skills but is a fulfilment and a pleasurable experience in itself, which can be carried out in leisure time (UNESCO, 1965).

For the elderly, leisure time is a matter of their perception of this part of their lives – it can be a long-awaited span of time to fill with challenges

that working years have denied or a dreaded span of endless, boring space.

Leisure time for the elderly is a concept of modern Western society. The elderly were traditionally the revered, honoured members of the family, the caretakers of the grandchildren who, when reaching an age when physical work was difficult, were brought into the family circle to be the overseers for the younger members of the family. There was never the concept that old age was a time to sit around and find things to do to keep occupied – life was a long stretch of work in ever-adapting forms (Kleemeier, 1961).

It seems that modern society, with its mobility and family disintegration, has no place for the older members of the group, so this older generation has to be educated to fulfil their later years in another capacity. Society no longer has a specific role for them to play so they are left with much ‘unwanted time’ and in a world where it is easy to feel useless. Hence the role of leisure counselling and education that orientates the elderly into new roles and means of fulfilment of their time and constructive use of their life’s experiences now that the family does not need them. Of course, this is an example of an extreme situation, but it is the major problem in modern society that as well as offering care and community support for the elderly they need to be guided to a more satisfying way of filling their free time. There are many grandparents who take on a serious role of supporting working and single parent families; it is the grandparents whose families have moved far away (modern people travel away from their origins far more than in former generations) that need support. But ideally all should be trained in how to use leisure time, when so that old age is not a problem but an opportunity.

### ***Specific examples of activities***

Time has a cruel edge to its sword – as eyes dim and hearing fades, frustration and intelligent realization of the inability to achieve standards of a former age must be counteracted. The taking on of new challenges must be encouraged so that failure is not allowed to be indulged in.

Suitable skills need to be taught that allow flexibility and adaptation to changing circumstances. A child who loves music, learns to play an musical instrument, performs as a musician, as an adult teaches music and in old age can delight in listening to music; but such a being is a rare species – very few life-long interests can overcome the ravages of age. *Arts and crafts* have a wide range of possibilities and allow experience of working with different media. Such basic skills as knitting and crocheting have given many an old woman hours of leisure and pleasure. They are digital skills that keep the hands and fingers mobile (essential as the joints stiffen) and can be used not only to make items for family members but often can be the means of entry to a group project. The social aspect of such projects is important for

overcoming the natural isolation of old age. *Music and poetry* appreciation comes from a life-long exposure and understanding of these arts. When young, learning to be aware of current historical events makes for a richer old age where *reminiscences* are very much part of social integration. Having been made aware of *historic events*, news and current affairs reports are also useful for stimulating conversation and discussion. Many elderly of today show an interest in returning to study the Bible which was very much part of their young lives – many attended church or Bible classes when young and enjoy this again as an activity when older. Some pursue a more intellectual *study of religion*. But such studies come from an interest that was inculcated at a younger age.

Shakespeare talks about old age being a ‘second childhood’ in a very condescending manner, yet it is the very interests and skills learned in childhood that give pleasure through their familiarity when one is older. It is an important part of respect of the elderly to understand their era and their childhood and build on their natural inheritance of knowledge. Using these interests as a basis from which to encourage more active and adaptive activities can do much to inspire and stimulate the mind and participation of older people. The leisure educator needs to develop programmes for the fulfilment of leisure time from these basic interests and skills from the past. A wide range of life experiences and the ability to adapt in both physical and mental skills will do much to help the aging person to feel an essential being in the community and within the group. Stimulation by interest, social belonging and community involvement, and a feeling of being needed and able to contribute are vital keys to positive use of time for all people.

## Conclusion

The elderly need to be carefully considered as a unique part of society with special needs if they are not to be a population at risk of isolation and in danger of becoming ill through neglect (i.e. lack of social contact). The extremes of abilities, the variations in health status, cultural, ethnic and educational differences make for a uniform education system to educate the present generation or ‘about to be retirees’ for leisure use, an almost impossible task. But this does not mean that the task should not be undertaken and it is already demanded by those coming to retirement age who see life-long fulfilment and satisfaction as a *right* from the cradle to the grave.

The real task is to teach the elderly to be as active and involved as possible to achieve maximum pleasure from their lives and not see old age as a time for waiting to die. This attitude begins with the young – teaching them to be positive human beings and looking to the future to fulfil dreams, educating them to seek pastimes that are not limited in scope, to learn skills that can adapt as age changes interest and abilities.

We need to encourage people to be motivated and inspired so that they fulfil their leisure time to the satisfaction of themselves and those around them. We need to teach adaptable skills, as it must be realized that many hobbies of young people are not suitable occupations for when they are old. The secret seems not to be what to do in one's free time when old, but rather to want to use free time for desired interests, activities and involvement with social integration. Such activities can be at many levels of creativity and be fulfilling to the person. Inspiring people to find what they *like* to do and can get enjoyment from is a defining objective. The retired and elderly have the greatest insight into the true meaning of time for leisure; they should be helped to use it for their own pleasure.

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# Concluding Remarks and Recommendations

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ATARA SIVAN AND HILLEL RUSKIN

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The various chapters included in this book discuss the role of leisure and how leisure education may affect community development and populations with special needs in the community. These discussions point to leisure as a form of human expression that varies from the very casual and informal to the highly committed and formal. Whereas there has been an evolution in the provision of leisure services by the private as well as the public sector, the various leisure authors call upon all leisure entities and commercial developments to reflect the emerging needs of all individuals in the delivery of all future services. Leisure services and programmes have the potential for facilitating career options. Leisure is a social institution interwoven with other institutions, notably work, family, community and education in the age of information technology.

Two forms of leisure are referred to from time to time in this book. The first, developed mainly by Stebbins is 'serious or substantial leisure'. This is a systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist or volunteer activity that participants find so substantial and interesting that, in the typical case, they launch themselves into a career centred on acquiring and expressing its special skills, knowledge and experience. The second form is labelled 'casual leisure' or 'diversionary leisure', which is an immediately intrinsically rewarding, relatively short-lived pleasurable activity requiring little or no special training to enjoy it.

Many authors of this book suggest that a community's vision should be inclusive of *all* its individuals, embodying a clear value of commitment to enhance access to leisure opportunities of individuals with special needs. Therefore, they recommend that leisure education programmes for people

with special needs should play important roles in improving the quality of community life.

At this stage it is relevant to present some recommendations that have arisen as a result of deliberations and discussions in which all the authors of the book were involved.

## **Recommendations for Community Development<sup>1</sup>**

Governments and public institutions and organizations should adhere to the following guidelines.

### **1. General**

- 1.1 Recognize the important role of formal and informal educational systems within the community in the development of leisure values, attitudes, skills and knowledge.
- 1.2 Establish credit and non-credit courses on leisure education and community development that should contain a section on the systematic pursuit of meaningful and lifelong serious leisure and the many contributions it can make to communal life.
- 1.3 Inform educators and leisure professionals, either during their training or as a part of their continuing education, of the considerable role that the systematic pursuit of meaningful and lifelong serious leisure plays in community development.
- 1.4 Inform leisure educators and leisure professionals, either during their training or as a part of their continuing education, of the overuse, disuse, misuse and abuse of leisure.
- 1.5 Use educational and community institutions for implementing leisure education programmes through formal and informal channels.
- 1.6 Establish channels for reaching out to the community and empowering members to make optimal use of available and accessible leisure resources through educational systems such as schools and community establishments for all ages.
- 1.7 Implement educational approaches and strategies that emphasize self-direction. These strategies will nurture facilitation and counselling and support freedom of choice within a non-threatening context of trial and error.
- 1.8 Establish links between educational frameworks, commercial and private institutions and voluntary organizations within the community for optimal use of leisure facilities and resources.
- 1.9 Design, in partnership with organizations providing services to special populations, those leisure activities that meet their specific needs.

- 1.10 Train individuals to become leisure educators, promoters and facilitators of leisure services and development across different ages and life stages within the community.
- 1.11 Organize inter-culturally diverse leisure experiences that foster the participation and integration of all members of the community while eliminating possible barriers or discrimination.
- 1.12 Use information technology for the retrieval, compilation and dissemination of knowledge related to leisure and the establishment of links between members of different community groups.
- 1.13 Identify the importance of serious leisure opportunities for individual self-actualization, self-definition and self-determination and further contribution to the quality of community life.
- 1.14 Recognize that specific groups in various communities (such as women, different ethnic groups, gay men and lesbians, elderly individuals, persons with disabilities, persons of low-income and socio-economic status) are routinely denied access to play and recreation opportunities in parks, beaches and leisure education.
- 1.15 Help community members of groups excluded from community resources to develop visions and strategies and give voice to their rights to leisure and recreation.
- 1.16 Work with people to create an empowerment process that leads to broad-based community support and calls on them to create plans for change that lead to enhanced open spaces, parks and leisure education, and recreational opportunities.
- 1.17 Educate professionals about their ethical responsibilities in advocating for those who are denied essential entitlements to leisure education and recreational opportunities.
- 1.18 Organize an advocacy programme that focuses on the equal distribution of recreational resources, equal access to services, and opportunities to recreate in safe and healthy environments.
- 1.19 Utilize the effects of advocacy groups to promote community-building activities that are based on common interests and that meet the needs of diverse community groups.
- 1.20 Use 'trigger' community events to identify leisure and recreational deficiencies and to mobilize community members to obtain long-term change for human development and self-actualizing experiences.
- 1.21 Provide training for teachers and community centre personnel in leisure counselling techniques to enable them to implement leisure counselling services.
- 1.22 Provide leisure counselling services in various community facilities including pre-schools, primary and secondary schools, community centres and camps, to both teachers and children.



## ***2. Leisure education, community empowerment and poverty***

Discretionary time is of critical importance to people who are marginalized, powerless and economically disenfranchised. One of the roles of leisure educators is to facilitate access to such time for those who can not mobilize it on their own and to develop optimal strategies for creative use of this discretionary time. Therefore, governments, public institutions and organizations should:

- 2.1 Stimulate the process of personal and collective empowerment to create supportive environments through leisure education, and mobilize community leisure resources for the community.
- 2.2 Facilitate the establishment of leisure education programmes that are developmentally and socioeconomically appropriate.
- 2.3 Support the creation of leisure and community activities that use youth/adult partnerships and peer education.
- 2.4 Understand that physical spaces and recreational facilities communicate messages about their services. Therefore they should demonstrate that:
  - 2.4.1 They are safe public places, and accessible and supportive environments for all people regardless of age, gender, socioeconomic status and ethnic origin.
  - 2.4.2 They do not reinforce societal structures of domination and hierarchy.
- 2.5 Recognize the importance of *all* people in engaging in a shared process of decision-making to determine the nature and rules related to community services such as:
  - 2.5.1 Criteria for acceptance, including processes for overcoming barriers like fees and costs.
  - 2.5.2 Implications of programme designs on measures or criteria of 'success' and/or 'failure'.
- 2.6 Establish an evaluation programme as an integral part of the empowering process, including signs of desirable outcomes.

## **Recommendations for Populations with Special Needs<sup>2</sup>**

Governments, institutions and community frameworks should adhere to the following guidelines.

### ***1. General***

- 1.1 Recognize, develop and promote the principle that quality of life should be fundamental for all.

- 1.2 Recognize, develop and promote the right of all individuals to participate in leisure activities regardless of their ability or disability or age.
- 1.3 Identify special populations and their particular leisure needs.
- 1.4 Recognize the existence of stigmas and their effects on people with discredited social identities in leisure.
- 1.5 Understand the negative effects of prejudice, discrimination, stigmatization, marginalization and individual oppression, especially in labelling people and distancing them from community leisure.
- 1.6 Advocate that respect and dignity are the foundations of all public programmes, services and institutions.
- 1.7 Accept that society is comprised of many diverse groups with different leisure needs and desires.
- 1.8 Develop equal leisure access for people with special needs through such structures as transportation, housing, work and other life necessities and community services.

## **2. Education**

- 2.1 Integrate people with special needs within the educational mainstream and the community.
- 2.2 Employ educational approaches (such as guided discovery and reinforcement) to foster the development of positive attitudes towards the benefits and use of serious leisure.
- 2.3 Teach people with special needs the basic serious leisure skills so that they may pursue an optimal use of leisure.
- 2.4 Establish opportunities for the socialization and enhancement of self-esteem of people with special needs and thereby reduce societal prejudices and increase coexperience through leisure education.
- 2.5 Educate essential personnel (e.g. caregivers, social service professionals, family members and support groups) to undertake educating people with special needs about the benefits of leisure.

## **3. Community**

- 3.1 Explore leisure themes and their contributions to enhancing the meaning of community to people with special needs.
- 3.2 Empower leisure opportunities through the process of self-determination, self-enhancement and self-actualization.
- 3.3 Educate society to accept that healthy communities are comprised of many diverse groups with different leisure needs.
- 3.4 Provide adequate leisure facilities and physical space for special populations to help them realize leisure benefits and facilitate their mobility.

- 3.5 Utilize modern information technology to allow easy local and international access to leisure resources. This implies a supply of telephones, computers, networks, community and international communication capabilities and other facilities that would prevent the isolation of people with special needs.
- 3.6 Create special leisure-interacting events within the community for raising awareness and acceptance through experimental learning atmospheres in supportive environments.
- 3.7 Encourage collaboration with and the interest of various agencies within the community in the delivery of leisure services to the disabled.
- 3.8 Advocate for and invest in subsidies to support and demonstrate the importance of facilitating leisure for people with special needs.
- 3.9 Advocate for and invest in ongoing theoretical and applied research for the development of better technology and equipment to enable the improvement of leisure opportunities of people with special needs.
- 3.10 Discuss, develop and implement a community vision that is inclusive of all its members.
- 3.11 Work to create a heightened sense of community in establishing ongoing leisure programmes that meet the complex long-term needs of special populations including:
  - 3.11.1 A shared sense of membership.
  - 3.11.2 Acknowledgment of mutual importance.
  - 3.11.3 An affirmation of common beliefs and shared values.
  - 3.11.4 A coming together to bind or network.
  - 3.11.5 An acceptance of mutual responsibility for the well-being of the community.
- 3.12 Develop an enhanced capacity for community mobilization to assist the community in moving toward positive action, including:
  - 3.12.1 Developing sustained leadership.
  - 3.12.2 Formalizing procedures and ground rules.
  - 3.12.3 Providing rewards and incentives for community efforts.
  - 3.12.4 Creating internal and external communication avenues.
  - 3.12.5 Having members with community organizational know-how.
  - 3.12.6 Establishing effective behind-the-scenes support.
- 3.13 Build readiness for focused community action by:
  - 3.13.1 Establishing clear goals and objectives.
  - 3.13.2 Creating a feasible plan of action.
  - 3.13.3 Using collective capabilities and resources.
  - 3.13.4 Providing for the active participation of those with special needs.
  - 3.13.5 Taking immediate action to change conditions.
  - 3.13.6 Fostering high-performance team functioning.
- 3.14 Create opportunities with affiliated neighbourhood, community and professional groups to champion the benefits of leisure education and

recreational pursuits while enhancing the quality of lives of those with special needs.

#### **4. *Children with special needs***

- 4.1 Leisure education programmes for disabled and other special needs children play an important role in improving the quality of life of these children. Appropriate government ministries, public institutions and organizations should take the necessary steps to enhance the quality of life of children with special needs by increasing their level of interaction with other children in a way that will better their prospects for becoming self-supporting, accepted and involved members of society.
- 4.2 Therefore, these agencies should develop and implement a programme of effective leisure education, for disabled and other special-needs children and youth. This programme should:
  - 4.2.1 Develop an index of leisure activities to engage these children's attention and energy.
  - 4.2.2 Propose ways to ensure that appropriate steps will be taken to enable these children to fully and safely participate in the activities proposed.
  - 4.2.3 Establish the necessary infrastructure (e.g. personnel, facilities, equipment and access by ability level) by working with local authorities so that recreational facilities will be accessible from children's homes.
  - 4.2.4 Recommend appropriate modifications to ensure that the physical design of facilities will accommodate the disabled.
  - 4.2.5 Promote public and other means of transportation to ease accessibility and independent movement.
  - 4.2.6 Organize promotional campaigns to publicize relevant activities programmes, events and leisure skills training that will benefit disabled children.
  - 4.2.7 Assure continued community support through designing leisure programmes so that all such activities can be enjoyed by disabled and non-disabled children alike.
  - 4.2.8 Conduct an overall assessment of how particular groups of children spend their free time.
  - 4.2.9 Develop a simple measurement scale to determine what leisure-related skills children currently have.
  - 4.2.10 Determine what types of equipment and other adaptations are needed to make various leisure activities accessible to these children, giving their specific limitations.
  - 4.2.11 Prepare activity plans for children with different types of disabilities.

- 4.2.12 Assess the kinds of sports and leisure activities that will enhance socialization between children with and without disabilities.
- 4.2.13 Promote the training of personnel to provide the necessary supervision for the activity plans prepared.
- 4.2.14 Identify factors in the children's home environments that affect the prospects for their benefiting from specific or general sports and leisure activities.
- 4.2.15 Assess characteristics of the children's home (parents' ages, the presence of siblings, etc.), cultural and neighbourhood environments that may be conducive to activating specific types of leisure activities.
- 4.2.16 Promote the introduction into schools and community centres of models for developing sensory abilities, motor coordination and basic sports skills through integrated body movement and sensory stimulation, as forms of leisure support activities.
- 4.2.17 Develop these children's abilities to interact with their peers, through individual and group sports and games activities using special assistive equipment.
- 4.2.18 Promote models for serious leisure skills development through a system of multi-dimensional leisure activities, such as music, drama, art, crafts, sport, nature-oriented activities, special events, computers and other lifelong leisure activities.

## ***5. Leisure counselling for special populations***

- 5.1 Leisure counselling<sup>3</sup> will be incorporated into the overall leisure education programme offered by leisure services providers at facilities serving the leisure needs of people with special needs of all ages.
- 5.2 Institutions that discharge clients into the community, such as correctional facilities, substance abuse programmes, hospitals and rehabilitation settings will require the completion of a leisure counselling programme/course before discharge.
- 5.3 Governments, public institutions and organizations should provide:
  - 5.3.1 Leisure counselling services in pre-schools, schools and camps to both teachers and people of special needs of all ages.
  - 5.3.2 Training for teachers in leisure counselling techniques to enable implementation of leisure counselling services to people of special needs of all ages.
  - 5.3.3 Training for community centre and other leisure agencies personnel in leisure counselling techniques to enable implementation of leisure counselling services to people of special needs of all ages.

## Notes

- 1 These recommendations are based upon the WLRA International Position Statement on Leisure Education and Community Development, 1998.
- 2 These recommendations are based upon the WLRA International Position Statement on Leisure Education and Populations of Special Needs, 1998.
- 3 Leisure counselling is a helping process designed to facilitate optimal leisure well-being for all. It can be a helpful intervention in work with a variety of special-needs populations, such as the physically disabled, developmentally disabled, juvenile delinquents, substance abusers and elders.



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